

Third Session - Fortieth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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The Honourable Daryl Reid
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MELNICK, Christine	Riel	Ind.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	NDP
ROWAT, Leanne	Riding Mountain	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	St. Paul	PC
SELBY, Erin, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	NDP
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	The Pas	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 12, 2014

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Mr. Speaker: Introduction of bills?

PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: We'll move on to petitions.

Tabor Home—Construction Delays

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Morden's population has grown nearly 20 per cent in five years.

(2) Twenty-three per cent of Morden's population is over the age of 65.

(3) The community worked for years to get the provincial government's commitment to build a new personal-care home, and as a result, construction of the new Tabor Home was finally promised in 2010.

(4) The Minister of Health initially indicated that construction of the new Tabor Home would commence in 2013.

(5) The Minister of Health subsequently broke her promise and delayed construction until spring 2014.

(6) The Minister of Health broke that promise as well, delaying construction again until fall 2014.

And (7) in March of 2014, the Minister of Health broke her promise yet again, once more delaying construction of Tabor Home until 2015.

(8) Too many seniors continue to live out their final days and months in facilities far from home and family because of a shortage of personal-care-home beds in the area.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to stop breaking their promises, stop the delays and keep

their commitment to proceed with the construction of Tabor Home in 2014.

And this petition is signed by A. Holenki, M. Wiebe, J. McLeod and many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: In keeping with our rule 132(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to have been received by the House.

**Provincial Sales Tax Increase—
Effects on Manitoba Economy**

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to the petition is as follows:

(1) The Premier of Manitoba is on record of calling the idea of a hike in the PST ridiculous.

(2) Economists calculate that the PST hike has cost an average family \$437 more in taxes after only six months.

(3) Seventy-five per cent of small businesses in Manitoba agree that the provincial taxes are discouraging them from growing their businesses.

(4) The Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association estimates that a 1 per cent increase in the PST will result in a loss to the economy of \$42 million and threaten hundreds of jobs in that sector.

(5) Partly due to the PST, overall taxes on new investment in Manitoba recently stood at 26.3 per cent whereas the Alberta rate was 16.2 per cent, the Ontario rate was 17.9 per cent, according to the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce.

(6) The Manitoba Chambers of Commerce are concerned that the PST hike will make an already uncompetitive tax framework even more unattractive for job creators in this province.

We petition that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the job-killing PST increase.

(2) To urge the provincial government to restore the right of Manitobans to reject or approve any increases to the PST through a referendum.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is submitted on behalf of K. Gregorashok, D. Furness, J. Malpas and many other fine Manitobans.

**Beausejour District Hospital—
Weekend and Holiday Physician Availability**

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The Beausejour District Hospital is a 30-bed, acute-care facility that serves the communities of Beausejour and Brokenhead.

(2) The hospital and the primary-care centre have had no doctor available on weekends and holidays for many months, jeopardizing the health and livelihoods of those in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, IERHA, region.

(3) During the 2011 election, the provincial government promised to provide every Manitoban with access to a family doctor by 2015.

(4) This promise is far from being realized, and Manitobans are witnessing many emergency rooms limiting services or closing temporarily, with the majority of these reductions taking place in rural Manitoba.

(5) According to the Health Council of Canada, only 25 per cent of doctors in Manitoba reported that their patients had access to care on evenings and weekends.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government and the Minister of Health to ensure that the Beausejour District Hospital and primary-care centre have a primary-care physician available on weekends and holidays to better provide area residents with this essential service.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by C. Little, M. Haywood, R. Ewasko and many, many more fine Manitobans.

**Highway 10 North and 3rd Street North
in Swan River—Traffic Signals**

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

Local residents have expressed concerns regarding properties located at the intersection of Highway 10 north and 3rd Street North in Swan River, including the Swan Valley Regional high school, the Tim Hortons and the Co-op gas bar quadrisect.

There are no traffic lights or pedestrian crosswalks at this intersection. Students from the high school run across the highway to access Tim Hortons and the Co-op gas bar. When the daycare centre opens, children will need to cross the highway if they wish to access the wellness centre.

Highway 10 north is a major haul route for farmers and logging trucks, increasing the potential for a collision involving students and/or motorists.

This intersection is a dangerous corner for motorists, including school buses making left-hand turns onto the highway from either direction, especially in the hours before and after school and at lunchtime.

The traffic on this highway and at this intersection will only increase in the near future with the opening of the wellness centre and the daycare facility.

Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation is only offering to provide a painted-line crosswalk with unlit signage but nothing to actually stop the traffic for pedestrian crossing safety. Motorists often disregard the painted-line crosswalks, creating a false sense of security for pedestrians who use them.

On October the 3rd, 2013, Winkler mourned the loss of one of their 16-year-old students killed at a crosswalk consisting only of signage.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation consider installing a set of traffic lights, including pedestrian lights, at the intersection of Highway 10 north and 3rd Street North in Swan River.

And this petition is signed by J. Delaurier, G. McKenzie, T. Burick and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: Any further petitions? Seeing none, committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from École Lacerte, we have 57 grade 4 students under the direction of Carole Danneels, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Radisson (Mr. Jha).

And also in the public gallery today, from Gilbert Plains Elementary School we have 15 grade 6 students under the direction of Jodie Frykas, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Municipal Government (Mr. Struthers).

And also, seated in the Speaker's Gallery today we have with us Sandra Holmberg, manager of Members' Allowances, and her daughters and sons-in-law Julie Frederickson, Doug McNeil, Robyn Wellman and Scott Wellman.

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

*(13:40)

And on the topic of our guests in the Speaker's Gallery this afternoon, as I've just mentioned, we have Sandra Holmberg, who's seated in the public gallery along with her family members, and Sandra will be retiring before this House next sits, and so day—so today we have asked that Sandra join us so that we can honour her.

Sandra started with the Assembly in 1992. She first worked for the Assembly in the Administration and Finance branch as a part of a two-year government management trainee program. At that time, her work consisted of general administration and HR. The Assembly kept their eye on the young trainee, and as soon as the chance presented itself, Sandra was hired to head up the Members' Allowances program. At the time, the allowances program consisted of two staff, one of whom was Sandra. Over the years, with hard work and dedication, Sandra moved into the role of manager and in 2011 became the director of Members' Allowances.

The allowances program has gone through many iterations of rules and regulations and legislation, and Sandra has been instrumental in implementing those changes. Sandra maintained a strong commitment to the members of the Legislative Assembly and has always worked hard to ensure that members are safely protected within the acts and regulations.

Sandra has worked—and I know this, having seen them working long past the usual business hours—Sandra has worked countless hours ensuring that members receive precise and accurate information and always insisted on maintaining an open-door policy to assist anyone with their concerns and was more than welcoming of anyone who dropped by for a quick visit.

We wish her many years of good health and happiness and ample time to enjoy her hobbies, which include gardening, cake decorating and, of course, doting on her grandchildren, the love of her life. Thank you, Sandra, for your commitment and hard work and dedication to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And I beg the indulgence of the honourable members too. We have with us—as I've been going through this last week, been introducing to members pages who will be leaving us at the end of the session. And, of course, we have with us three pages this afternoon.

And, of course, Eric Schillberg here with us, presently in grade 12 at West Kildonan Collegiate with an average school mark of 92 per cent. He will be attending the University of Manitoba for civil engineering under a full scholarship, and he's working full-time for the summer with Water Ski and Wakeboard Manitoba as a national athlete and coach.

Emily Biggar, who is also in the gallery, along with her grandparents, Robert and Carol Biggar. Emily is graduating from Fort Richmond Collegiate this year and has an average of 96 per cent. She is entering the University of Manitoba faculty of arts, and Emily played defence for the Fort Richmond Centurions this year's women's—in women's hockey.

We also have with us this afternoon page Nicole Gomes and is presently in grade 12 in West Kildonan Collegiate. Over the past year, Nicole, in addition to her high school studies, has been taking two university courses. High school average was over 90 per cent, and, of course, she'll be attending the faculty of education at the University of Winnipeg in

studies of English and political science. Who would have guessed? Career aspiration is to become a defence lawyer. Loves to volunteer and, of course, is the chair of the Students Working Against Tobacco.

So on behalf of all the members of the Assembly, I say to our pages, thank you very much for your work during this session of the Legislature, and we wish you all well in your future career and education choices. Thank you for your service.

And my last pleasant duty is to introduce five of our pages for the coming session. We have Hannah Payumo, Shannon Furness, Veronica Kessler, Zachary Berry and Samantha Both, all of whom will be in the coming session, and we look forward to working with all of you in the next session of the Legislature.

So I thank the indulgence of all the honourable members of the Assembly.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Speaker: And it's now time for oral questions.

Legislative Session Fall 2014 Plans

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, Mr. Speaker, this sitting of the Legislature is—really has flown by, and I want to wish you and all of us in the House and our guests today and pages and everyone here, including members of the media, I guess, the best this summer for a well-deserved break and time with family and friends.

I know that this session, it almost seems, compared to last year, that we haven't done enough, that we haven't been here long enough. But I think, for many of us, we'll welcome the opportunity to reclaim a sense of more balanced life. So I wish everyone the best this summer.

With that in mind, I will ask a question of the Premier that has been crossing the lips of a number of his colleagues and, of course, many in this place, given that this may be the last opportunity to ask this question: Is he intending to resign prior to the next sitting of the Legislature?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): First of all, I'd like to thank all the pages and all the staff for the service they've provided.

And the member opposite may not think that he's done very much during this session, and I would agree with that, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we believe we've made substantial progress for Manitobans: providing good jobs to Manitobans, building roads and flood protection for Manitobans, making sure that Manitobans have apprenticeship opportunities, making sure that our schools are properly funded, expanding daycare opportunities in Manitoba for working families.

Mr. Speaker, those are just some of our accomplishments. I look forward to doing much more every single day as we go forward.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. Order, please.

PST Increase NDP Election Promise

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, I think a lot of Manitobans, in hearing that answer, would say, enough already, okay?

What has the government done? They have raised our taxes. They have lowered our job numbers to bottom of the barrel. They have raised our inflation to the highest level in the country. They have raised our debt, in this gentleman's term, from \$18 billion to over \$30 billion.

And, Mr. Speaker, that is not a record to be proud of. Rather, that's a record that should drive a thinking premier to resignation.

So let me ask the Premier again, since I didn't get an answer to that question: Would you admit that, having exchanged your integrity for a 1 per cent PST hike and having run on a promise not to do exactly that, that your record is one of broken promises?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, in that long preamble to the question, the Leader of the Opposition has once again demonstrated that when it comes to making a point, the facts don't matter.

He says we have the highest inflation rate in the country. Since July 1st of last year, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's inflation rate has increased 1.5 per cent, the third lowest in all the provinces of Canada. Dead wrong on the other side. He's dead wrong on the facts.

Wages since July 1st have increased by 3.2 per cent, the fourth best in the country. Manitobans are getting better salaries. Manitobans

are working. Manitobans have among the lowest inflation rates in the country.

And, Mr. Speaker, he said that they didn't lay off teachers and nurses when he was in office. The facts say otherwise. Over 700 teachers lost their jobs, and by any objective measure, there were 1,500 less nurses when he was in office. Now we have a record number of more nurses.

The only person that sold off his credibility is the Leader of the Opposition. Every time he opens his mouth, he puts misinformation on the record.

Legislative Session Fall 2014 Plans

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): What a poor, desperate gentleman, Mr. Speaker. He compares—the record of misinformation didn't begin with him when he made the promise to the people of Manitoba that he wouldn't raise the PST. His record speaks for itself.

*(13:50)

The reality is quite different from what the Premier portrays, and it makes little difference, I think, to Manitobans now because they will not be fooled again by this gentleman or by his colleagues. The reality is quite different from the one he portrays.

Manitobans are living that reality. They are living a reality that the Premier fails to recognize in his comments. They understand that comparing an inflation rate on July 1st last year to a convenient rate this year reveals a person who doesn't understand that people don't shop on two days of the year, they shop all year. And they're getting less for their money, and they're getting less for their work, and they're living in fear, whether they're civil servants or not, of a government that can't get its act together and can't manage with the future in mind.

So I ask the Premier again: Will he do the right thing, go across to the Lieutenant Governor's residence, knock on the door and say, call an election, I'm resigning?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the only person that resigns in this Legislature is the member opposite who did it before he got the job done.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is a person that likes to have it both ways. He likes to say one thing and do another. He likes to put a pink shirt

on one day and say he supports an inclusive society, and then he votes against legislation to allow transgendered people to properly record their births and their names. He likes to say that he supports people, and then he votes against antibullying legislation.

He even tried to block a vote on the—recognizing Nellie McClung and the tremendous service she provided to Manitoba when she brought in the right to vote in 1916. He tried to vote against that. He tried to block that event.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? He even—he says he supports children, and then he votes against legislation that protects young people on playgrounds from pesticides.

That's his record: Say one thing, do another.

Contract Tendering Process Economic Impact

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Well, Mr. Speaker, to quote the Premier himself, that's nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, a competitive procurement process in government is imperative in order to ensure that Manitobans receive the best value for the tax dollars that they spend here.

Unfortunately, under this NDP government there appears to have been a culture of disrespect that has permeated government departments, and proper tendering practices have not been upheld in this province under the NDP.

Can the Minister for Jobs and the Economy—simple question—indicate today what kind of an impact these practices have had and will have on the Manitoba economy?

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Jobs and the Economy): I thank the member for the question.

We know that the office of the Auditor General did a review of tendering practices, made some very solid recommendations, which we will follow.

But, most importantly and notably, I think, missing from the narrative of the member opposite, is the fact that in our \$5.5-billion infrastructure plan, we got very good advice from industry about tendering processes and bundling and ensuring that we move our process up in order to take advantage of the construction season and follow a process recommended by them that, of course, is approved by the auditor.

We've made those changes, Mr. Speaker, because we actually think that building infrastructure is a good idea.

Mrs. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, we know and Manitobans know that a competitive procurement process in government helps ensure that Manitobans get—Manitobans get the best value for the money that they pay in taxes. It's unfortunate that this minister just doesn't get that.

The more competitive the process, the more Manitoba businesses have a chance to bid on government tenders, Mr. Speaker. This creates more opportunities for Manitoba businesses, and more opportunities for Manitoba businesses means more jobs created right here at home, which is a good thing for the Manitoba economy.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister for Jobs and the Economy just admit that by not following proper tendering processes, her government has put jobs in jeopardy in Manitoba?

Ms. Oswald: Once again, I'll repeat for the member that the office of the Auditor General did a very specific report on this. We've received that report and we embrace those recommendations.

And, furthermore, I would say to the member that when we put forward our \$5.5-billion infrastructure plan, part of that plan was to work with industry to ensure that tendering processes were transparent, accountable, but they were also amended in such a way that were advantageous for Manitobans.

Now, this report, of course, has been reviewed by the Conference Board of Canada, Mr. Speaker, showing that it will be great for our economy; it will, in fact, create 58,900 jobs.

On this side of the House we support the Conference Board of Canada. I wonder if the member opposite could ask her leader if he would just apologize for slugging them.

Fiscal Management Government Record

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Mr. Speaker, this NDP government has been unable or unwilling to control its spending. They have overspent by billions of dollars in 13 of 14 budgets.

The context is a time of record transfer payments, record low interest rates, record revenues from income tax. And in that context, this

government broke its fundamental pledge to Manitobans and hiked the PST, raking in an additional half billion dollars each year, not to mention record fee hikes.

Why is this NDP government so fixed on making hard-working Manitoban families pay more because of their financial mismanagement?

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Jobs and the Economy): I have listened to questions from this member for the course of this session, and I have not yet once heard him acknowledge the fact that we are among, if not the most affordable province in which to live in this nation.

We get this assessment not just from our own caucus or from our own analysts. We hear this from the Province of Saskatchewan, who, in their analysis, make note of the fact that when you look at the costs of auto insurance in Manitoba, you look at the costs of electricity, you look at the costs across the board and you look at the fact, Mr. Speaker, that personal income tax and property tax have actually come down under our watch, we're an affordable place to live.

Why won't he just say it, just once?

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, day after day in question period we have heard from this minister, and she has yet to acknowledge that she broke her word to Manitobans when they raised their PST illegally.

Just 24 months ago this NDP government reaffirmed a commitment to return to balance in 2014. The promise was clear: eliminate the deficit by 2014. And where are they now? The NDP has broken that promise as well, predicting another massive deficit for this year.

In a time of record transfer payments, in a time of record low interest rates, in a time of record revenues coming from income tax and with an additional \$500 million a year flowing in from an illegal PST, will that Finance Minister just admit today that theirs is a record of mismanagement and mismanagement of the Manitoba economy that is costing Manitoba families more and more?

Ms. Oswald: Well, Mr. Speaker, what I would say to the member opposite, and I sure hope that he's listening, is that certainly there are different approaches when you face an economic downturn.

But he doesn't have to listen to me, but I would certainly hope that he would listen to former Bank of Canada governor David Dodge, who expressed very

clearly that government should expand at this time their investment in infrastructure while restraining growth in their operating expenditures so as to gradually reduce their public-debt-to-GDP ratio.

Experts in finance, Mr. Speaker, say very clearly that you need to invest in core infrastructure. You have to mind the store, to be sure, but invest in infrastructure, create good jobs. That's the way to do it.

Their plan to slash and hack in one year and try to balance no matter who they hurt, that's not our plan.

Health-Care System Management Record

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, NDP health failures continue to grow and put Manitobans at risk.

There's the botched STARS untendered helicopter contract. There's taxicab medicine, where three patients were sent home from ERs only to die on their doorsteps. There's highway medicine because of 19 closed rural ERs. We have the worst ambulance off-load times on record in Winnipeg, and we've got the longest wait in Canada between an appointment, between a specialist to actual treatment.

Rather than focusing on these health problems and fixing her failures, this Minister of Health would rather stand in here and fear monger.

So I would like to ask this Minister of Health to finally admit that her fear mongering is a desperate attempt to deflect from her own failures.

Hon. Erin Selby (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, there's one thing that I will warn Manitobans about. I will warn Manitobans to take a look at their record, because as much as they want to deny it and as much as they want to keep saying that the numbers aren't there, when they were in office they cut the medical spaces to training doctors down to 70. They fired 1,000 nurses. They cut funding to rural hospitals and PCHs by \$37 million.

*(14:00)

And they've already said if they come in again, they're going to cut a half a billion dollars from the entire budget and they're going to freeze health-care capital like they did before.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, there are many more NDP health failures, and either they've mismanaged

the issues, dropped the ball or this Minister of Health is in way over her head and can't understand the issues.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's the only province in Canada without a dedicated stroke unit, which would save lives. We are the only province in Canada without a digital mammography machine for earlier detection of breast cancer. Rural moms in Manitoba are forced to drive hundreds of miles to deliver their babies. There are workers not showing up for home-care visits, and there is a critical shortage of PCH beds in Manitoba.

Yet all we hear from this Minister of Health is excuses and fear mongering. So I'd like to ask her to admit that she is so desperate to deflect from her own failures that she stands in here and fear mongers and doesn't do her job.

Why is she so desperate? Why can't she work on improving her own problems?

Ms. Selby: Mr. Speaker, I will stand in this House any day on the record of this side of the House.

It's on this side of the House that we brought in more than 560 doctors in Manitoba, a net gain since 1999 when we saw record numbers leaving under her leader when he was at the Cabinet table.

Mr. Speaker, it's on this side of our House. It's on the work that we've done with people in the front lines of our health-care system to make sure that we have a record number of nurses working in Manitoba today.

It's this side of the House that we have made a commitment to cancer patients so that the cancer patient journey will be from two months or less from suspicion of cancer 'til treatment begins.

Mr. Speaker, we have more work to do, but I will stand on this side of the House with a dedicated group of colleagues and tell people in Manitoba we're up to it.

Flood Protection Government Record

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Well, Mr. Speaker, more NDP promises. They just serve to highlight NDP failures, and there are many of those.

We know that the increase in fuel tax was one promise that was going to infrastructure and to protect Manitobans from flooding, didn't happen. Increase in vehicle registration fees, another one going to infrastructure, didn't happen.

Broadening of the PST, all going to infrastructure and protecting Manitobans from flooding, didn't happen; \$1.9 billion underspent in the infrastructure budget.

Now we look at the PST increase and see the government estimates don't have any of it going to protect Manitobans from flooding. We have three municipalities declaring states of emergency, and this government waited and did nothing since the 2011 flood to help protect Manitobans from flooding in the southwest.

How can Manitobans believe anything promised by this government?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): You know, Mr. Speaker, I'm so glad to be able to talk about infrastructure because there's two realities. There's the reality of 2014, and when the member opposite at the end of this session gets a chance to perhaps drive home or goes to any region of the province, he's going to see something he didn't see a lot of when the members opposite were in government. It's called highway construction.

I want to tell you why because the member got up—and I'll put on the record why there was virtually no highway construction in the time that the members opposite were in government. When the Leader of the Opposition was in Cabinet, Mr. Speaker, they spent \$152 million on all transportation expenditures when he was in the Cabinet.

Today, Mr. Speaker, this year, as part of our five-year plan, in one year alone, we're spending \$707 million.

Mr. Helwer: Mr. Speaker, this government has learned nothing and done nothing to protect Manitobans from flooding since the 2011 flood.

Shellmouth flooding, four out of five years. Dikes built at Brandon have not protected parks, soccer fields flooding yet again. One-in-100, one-in-300, one-in-700-year protection promised by this Premier (Mr. Selinger), not delivered. The Portage Diversion operating 10 out of 12 years, and this year again putting ranchers, property owners and First Nations around Lake Manitoba at risk yet again.

Mr. Speaker, what will it take for this government to actually follow through on a promise on flooding? What will it take for this government to learn from past mistakes?

Mr. Ashton: Well, again, in the year 2014, the people in the capital region, people who are in the city of Winnipeg have one-in-700-year flood protection for the actions of this government. The people in his own community in Brandon protected to one in 300 years, Mr. Speaker, because bottom line is we are putting in the infrastructure to do that.

And we have an emergency outlet at Lake St. Martin, and yesterday I got a—I talked to a federal minister responsible for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. We asked for their approval. He has indicated we're going to get expedited approval.

We're going to be acting, Mr. Speaker, and, again, who built that? The NDP. The Conservatives talk about flood mitigation. We build it.

Manitoba Public Insurance Future Increases

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Well, as soon as this session is over, the Attorney General (Mr. Swan) will be running to the PUB, begging them to increase the cost of Manitoba's insurance.

He's going to beg them to increase the cost because he needs to pay for those luxury vehicles for the executives. He needs to pay for those trips to Switzerland. He needs to pay for those \$180-an-hour contracts that the NDP government approved. He needs to pay for those half-million-dollar retirement settlements.

But, Mr. Speaker, Manitobans are saying, enough. They feel they pay enough already: more in PST, more in hydro, more in fees. They're saying, enough is enough.

Why doesn't this Attorney General, the minister, all of these members get their hands out of Manitobans' pockets? They're paying enough already.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): I remember once upon a time when the member for Steinbach actually asked questions in this House about public safety, but he doesn't anymore, so we'll talk about Manitoba Public Insurance.

And I can promise the member for Steinbach that today Manitobans enjoy the cheapest auto insurance in the entire country, and I can promise the member for Steinbach when we come back the next question period Manitobans will still enjoy the

cheapest auto insurance in the entire country because Manitoba Public Insurance works for all Manitobans.

Government Performance Record Impact on Manitobans

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Every time that we ask a question about the NDP, it's about public safety because Manitobans need to be safe from this government.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans are trusting people. You know, we wanted to believe the Premier when he said that Crocus was strong, but then it fell apart. We wanted to believe the Premier when he said they're on their way back to balance, but then it didn't happen. We wanted to believe the Premier when he said he wasn't going to raise the PST, but then, of course, he did. We even wanted to believe him when he said that flat was the new up, but that was so ridiculous nobody believed him.

The fact of the matter is that we have a top-notch province but a bottom-of-the-barrel government. Manitobans, they don't trust the Attorney General (Mr. Swan). They don't trust the Health Minister. They don't trust the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, they don't trust all of them and all of them deserve to go. Why don't they admit that?

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): Well, the World Cup starts this afternoon, and the vuvuzelas are already out across the way.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Steinbach is quite aware that over the past decade Manitoba Public Insurance rates to Manitobans have gone down by 14.9 per cent. An independent examination by Deloitte has shown that Manitobans enjoy the lowest average auto insurance premiums in the entire country. Saskatchewan Government Insurance has done their own analysis of auto insurance rates, and Saskatchewan Government Insurance has concluded that Manitobans enjoy the lowest average auto insurance costs in the country.

What they should be afraid of, Mr. Speaker, is the Leader of the Opposition and a Progressive Conservative Party that would privatize MPI, raise rates and send rebates and send money out of the province.

Health-Care Services Government Record

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): We have no shortage of examples of the chaotic mismanagement that the NDP have inflicted on our province. Just last night, I learned of a farmer who was physically crippled by the NDP's inaction to address delays in knee surgery.

Manitobans are concerned that their health care is deteriorating under the Premier and his ministers. While Liberals have focused on providing real solutions, all Manitobans are getting is a blame-and-finger-pointing tennis match between the Tories and the NDP.

* (14:10)

When will the Premier stop playing games, blame games, and start implementing real solutions to the problems his government has had a hand in causing in the first place?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): The facts are clear, and I know the member doesn't want to address that, but the wait-list for hip and knee is down 35 per cent.

Life-saving procedures have been made more available to Manitobans more rapidly, Mr. Speaker. The journey from diagnosis in cancer care to treatment is one of the shortest in the country.

All of these things have been done within our budget. The member opposite has voted against them every single time, Mr. Speaker.

When the member opposite was in the federal Cabinet, transfer cuts to health care, education and services to families were 39 per cent. That was his solution: cut the resources available to look after the basic needs of people. He has no leg to stand on when he says he's defending health care when he was one of the principal architects of cutting it when he was in the federal government.

Outstanding Litigation Performance Record

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): The Premier is the one who doesn't have any legs to stand on when it comes to the delivery of quality health care.

In this NDP government, there's been a failure in political accountability. Indeed, many Manitobans, like those still suffering the catastrophic effects of the 2011 flood three years later, are so frustrated with this government that they have taken the last resort: taking this government to court.

Indeed, the government has had to concede its loss in Assiniboia Downs, but there are still many other outstanding court actions.

Why is this government doing so badly that there are almost as many lawsuits against the government as the government has excuses?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): In the 2011 flood, we built the emergency channel in three months, a record amount of time, Mr. Speaker. We positioned equipment there this spring in case there was a need for it. We've consulted the communities that are in that area, and they have worked with us to ensure we have an application in front of the federal government to open the emergency channel again.

All of these measures took resources, Mr. Speaker. They took money in the budget, and when we put that money in the budget, the member opposite says he cares about these people, but then he votes for the Tories against the money in the budget every single time. That is the definition of hypocrisy.

Government Accountability Performance Record

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): If the government did such a good job, why are there so many people having lawsuits, taking this government to court?

Mr. Speaker, in the NDP government, there's a lack of accountability. They told Manitobans they wouldn't raise the PST, tall tale indeed, given the 1 per cent increase last July 1st. They promised universities a three-year budget plan for post-secondary education, then cancelled it in legislation introduced this session. Contrary to the Premier's claims, the reality is we have seen our manufacturing sector stall and fall behind Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP have more stories and excuses than a centipede has legs.

Why does the NDP not believe that Manitobans deserve accountability from their government?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): I appreciate the member raising the manufacturing question again, Mr. Speaker, because, once again, he has misled the public.

In Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, we employ twice as many people in manufacturing as in Saskatchewan: 63,700 people in Manitoba, 28,400 in Saskatchewan. He was trying to say that the manufacturing sector

was stronger in Saskatchewan than it is in Manitoba. We employ two people in Manitoba in manufacturing for every one person employed in Saskatchewan.

Will he stand up and apologize to the people of Manitoba for misleading them on the facts about manufacturing?

Provincial Parks Free Family Fishing Weekend

Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon): There is no trying, only doing. That's a quote from Yoda. I have to say I am proud that this government is doing things for Manitoba, not just talking. I'm proud that we're moving in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, in the great constituency of Flin Flon, fishing is what we do. It's what we love and it's our passion. A bad day fishing is still one of the best days.

Mr. Speaker, fishing and spending time in the great outdoors is essential, not only to the North but also all of Manitoba. I was pleased to see that Manitoba Conservation has planned to help Manitoba enjoy our parks this weekend.

Can the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship please update the House on the opportunity to encourage families to spend time together fishing and visiting our provincial parks? Thank you.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship): First, Mr. Speaker, I have an announcement for the House. There's been a recent leak in this Chamber, actually, from the lips of the Leader of the Opposition. It's actually the campaign slogan for the Conservatives in the next election, and I guess I'm going to have to let it out of the bag. It's stop hydro, let's do gas—stop hydro, let's do gas—and they're going to have a little tag—there'll be a tag line that's going to say, CO₂ are us.

And—but, Mr. Speaker, that's consistent with the fact that we just haven't seemed to hear many questions or much from the opposition when it comes to the environment over the course of the last session.

But, yes, I think we should all encourage our constituents to get out to our parks, get out fishing, go catch a walleye or a pickerel.

**CFS Case Concern
Update (Matias de Antonio)**

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, on March 27th, little Matias de Antonio passed away in the care of CFS. He was being transported by a CFS worker from a CFS office to meet the foster family.

The minister met with the family the day they came to the Legislature looking for answers as to what happened to the little boy, and she promised them answers as soon as possible. We know her department has had considerable information, including the coroner's report, since early May.

Today I ask the minister to come clean with the family and tell them the information they so desperately need: What happened to their little boy while he was in the care of CFS, and why was he taken in the first place?

Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister of Family Services): I've had the opportunity to meet with the family on two occasions. They have expressed their need, their desire and their want for answers, and I, too, as all Manitobans, want answers.

And that's why we have followed the protocol and the standards for investigation, and I can assure this House that any information that we had pertaining to this investigation was shared with the family. There has been regular contact, regular information that's been provided.

We will continue to work with this family to look for the answers and to, most importantly, help support them through this very difficult time.

Mr. Wishart: Well, Mr. Speaker, the only information the family seems to be getting is from media leaks.

I can only conclude from what we have heard the minister is not acting in the best interests of the family. It appears the minister is attempting to delay answers until the chief medical officer recommends an inquest; that means it will be some time, probably as long as a year, until the family gets the answers that they need.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed in the actions of this minister and this government. Can they not put politics aside and tell the family the truth?

Ms. Irvin-Ross: Mr. Speaker, this is a horrific incident that has happened to this family and to this infant. We have worked diligently through our

processes to look for the answers, to support the family through their journey of grief and give them the information we have.

I can assure this House that information that we had, we shared with them. We are here today, as we have been in the past, to provide them with support.

We continue to work to improve the system. As it is, we know that we have more work to do. We are committed to that, and that's why we have continued to hire more social workers in the front lines, continue to implement standards and policies and continue every day to work with the authorities and the agencies in the community that are doing the difficult job of protecting Manitoba's children.

* (14:20)

**New Report Cards
Amendment Request**

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of everyone in this House, I would like to thank all education staff across the province for another great year in the Manitoba schools.

Mr. Speaker, teachers are hard at work on their report cards. The minister brought in new report cards, didn't consult with any teachers, obviously, because the Manitoba Teachers' Society released a report at their AGM just a month ago saying that these report cards' weaknesses outnumber the strengths four to one.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister listen to thousands of teachers in this province, consult with them and bring in amendments in time for the new school year?

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): I want to echo the member's statement in thanking all educators and educational administrators, teachers, for the work that they do, day in, day out, to make sure that our kids have the best quality education that they possibly can.

And, in fact, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what this government has been doing and will continue to do. We invest in schools to the rate of economic growth every year, yet the member votes against it. We've made class sizes smaller so there's one-more one-on-one time between a teacher and a student. He voted against it. When we have smaller class sizes, that means we hire more teachers, in fact, well over 250 to date. And yet when he had the chance, he voted against it.

Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is this government governs for all the people of Manitoba all the time. He governs—or, in fact, speaks for a relative few. We'll continue to speak for all the people of Manitoba all the time.

Management Practices Government Record

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I think the only class this minister ended up passing in school was broken promises 101.

He raised the PST by 14 per cent after he said he wouldn't, broken promise. He promised a 10 per cent increase over two years in university funding and gave them 2 and a half per cent, broken promise. He promised a new Student Aid program and proceeded to waste 15 and a half million dollars and counting, probably closer to 20, broken promise. He promised report cards that were going to be easier for teachers and parents to communicate, broken promise. He failed to consult with universities and students on Bill 63, broken promise. That's an A+ in broken promises.

When will this minister stop going to the university of NDP and go to a real school?

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): I have to say that throughout the session I've enjoyed answering the tortuous—that means long, meandering and winding—questions of the member opposite.

Mr. Speaker, this government funds universities and colleges by 12 and a half per cent over the last three years, far and away among the best records in the—in Canada. We have among the lowest tuition rates in Canada, far and away among the best records in Canada. We've lowered interest rates on student loans. We've increased grants and bursaries.

Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is I know the member is a teacher, I know he cares about education, but when the Leader of the Opposition is proposing to cut a half a billion dollars from the budget, I would suggest to him that he has more questions for his leader than he has for me.

Manitoba Hydro Future Rate Increases

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, every member on that side of the House went door to door in the last election and said they wouldn't raise taxes.

What else did they do? They also said Bipole III would not cost taxpayers of Manitoba 1 cent. They were right. It cost them millions of dollars.

They can't do anything right, 10.75 per cent hydro rate increase since 2012. We know, through the PUB, rates are going to double, if not triple, under this government.

Will they all go door to door this summer and make it right, tell them they won't have any more rate increases and apologize for misleading Manitobans?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro): Mr. Speaker, I've tabled twice already into the Legislature, and the Minister of Hydro tabled twice, the cross-Canada-and-US comparisons of hydro prices. I've shown the member a list from a mining company that's coming to Manitoba that says they're coming to Manitoba because we have the lowest electrical prices in the world except for that country called Kuwait.

Mr. Speaker, every province—Alberta is trying to expand its oil. Saskatchewan's expanding coal and importing hydro from what province? What province is Saskatchewan importing from? Manitoba. Where's the US importing from because they're growing in their—and they want to have green energy—where are they—where they've importing from? Manitoba.

Is Manitoba a trading province? Yes. Where do we get our wealth? Trading—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The minister's time has elapsed.

Agriculture Industry Government Record

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): This government has failed rural Manitoba in so many ways during their reign of terror.

Ten thousand farmers have left the business. Seven million dollars of ranchers' and taxpayers' money disappeared in the MCEC without a trace. Clawback of the farmland education rebate to the point where education taxes are now higher than they ever have been, unnecessary rules on farm gate sales, Maple Leaf Foods shut down one day a month because of their misguided policies, PST increases, fuel increases, the list goes on. I'm going to run out of time before I can ever get through the list.

So why is this minister and this government so intent on sucking the blood out of rural Manitoba?

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development): Quite ironic to listen to someone—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Just bear with us for another half minute, please.

Mr. Kostyshyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, obviously, the supposedly experienced agriculture person on the other side has got all the solutions. But, obviously, not to mislead the general public, at least I think he thinks he does.

But I suppose what we should be discussing, when they were in power, they reduced \$38 million out of the agriculture budget back in the '90s. Based on what we're facing today in the agriculture scenario, we brought in excess moisture. Where were they when the farmers asked for excess moisture? They refused to do it.

But I think more importantly, the MLA from Midland has quoted as saying in the Carman leader paper, the Tories will put less focus on such important issues as health care, roads, social issues, agriculture, rural depopulation and First Nations—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister's time has elapsed.

Order, please. The time for oral questions has expired. That was a lively exchange.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: Now it's time for members' statements.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Mr. Speaker, today, members of the Legislative Assembly are wearing purple ribbons in support of world elder abuse day taking place around the world this Sunday, June 15th.

Too many seniors face abuse or neglect in their daily lives. It's an issue that knows no socio-economic boundaries. World elder abuse day gives us an opportunity to come together across generations and around the world to better understand elder abuse and how it can be prevented.

Our province is known as a leader in recognizing World Elder Abuse Awareness Day with over 100 communities across Manitoba holding events this year to raise awareness about the pain and fear

many of our seniors face and to work towards solutions.

Social isolation, physical and emotional abuse, loss of dignity and neglect are just some of the problems often hidden that older Manitobans can face. They're our parents, grandparents, friends and neighbours. They deserve to be treated with respect and live in safe environments free from all forms of abuse.

Since 2002, our government has expanded its Elder Abuse Strategy to help Manitoba's seniors lead safe, healthy lives. Our provincial elder abuse consultant works with communities and organizations throughout the province to ensure supports are available for seniors and their families. We've also created a seniors abuse support line, providing 24-hour information and support, and the Safe Suite Program provides free temporary housing to those in need of a safe place to stay due to abuse or neglect.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba seniors helped build our province, and they continue to contribute to its vibrancy. Recognizing World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and raising awareness are important ways we can all help work towards a province free from elder abuse. Thank you.

* (14:30)

Never Gonna Tax You Up

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): We're no strangers to deficit. / You know the past, and so do I. / A real commitment's what I'm thinking of, / and you haven't got it from that NDP guy.

I just wanna tell you, Manitoba, / wanna make you understand. / Never gonna tax you up, / never gonna weigh you down. / Never gonna close ERs and desert you. / Never gonna make you cry, / and never gonna run you dry. / Never gonna waste your cash and time and hurt you.

They've governed far too long. / They've raised your taxes and bled you dry. / But they're blind to see it. / Inside, we both know what's been going on. / They've took your money and they're going to spend it.

And if you ask me what I'm thinking, / don't tell me you're too blind to see

We're never gonna tax you up, / we're never gonna 'lun' you dry. / We're never gonna close ERs and desert you. / We're never gonna make you cry, /

and we're never gonna run you dry. / Never gonna waste your cash and time, and hurt you

No, we're never gonna tax you up, / and we're never gonna weigh you down. / We're never gonna close ERs and desert you. / Never gonna make you cry, / and never gonna run you dry. / Never gonna waste your cash and time, and hurt you.

They spin you a lie, / and Fake the truth to win your vote. / A real commitment's what I'm thinking of, / and you haven't got it from that NDP guy. / I just wanted tell you Manitoba, / I wanna make you understand.

We're never gonna tax you up, / and we're never gonna weigh you down. / We're never gonna close ERs and desert you. / And we're never gonna make you cry, / never gonna run you dry. / Never gonna waste your cash and time, and hurt you.

D-Day Delegation

Ms. Deanne Crothers (St. James): Well, Mr. Speaker, last week I was honoured to join the Premier (Mr. Selinger) and nearly 90 other Manitobans on a delegation to France to mark the 70th anniversary of D-Day.

D-Day is a significant part of our Canadian heritage and identity. It was the greatest seaborne invasion in history and an important turning point in the Second World War. The Manitoba delegation provided an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifice, selflessness and valour of our men and women who fought against oppression and also to witness the reverberation of those selfless acts.

While attending ceremonies in the beautiful French countryside, it was difficult to fathom the horrible events that took place there 70 years ago. From time to time, you would see the scars of gunfire on historic buildings or on the many stone walls that line their winding roads. But walking in the footsteps of veterans at Juno Beach, resting your gaze along the shoreline or touring preserved fortification, the acts of the past felt remarkably close. It was easy to be overwhelmed with emotion, dismayed by the horrors of these stories of war and the tragedy of lives lost, but also humbling by the incredible courage displayed by the Canadian Forces.

Among the Manitobans who joined us were five veterans who fought at Juno Beach. I feel incredibly privileged to have had the opportunity to hear their first-hand accounts of that historic day and now have

a much deeper understanding of what D-Day demanded of our soldiers.

Together we attended a number of events to commemorate our fallen soldiers. The anniversary of D-Day began with ceremonies at Graye-sur-Mer with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles and at Saint-Aubin-sur-Mer with the Fort Garry Horse, followed by a visit to Canada House at Bernieres-sur-Mer. We then joined a Canadian ceremony at Juno Beach. It was moving to see so many people, not just from Canada, but from other countries as well, joining us to pay their respects. It was a stark reminder of how many lives were touched by the events of D-Day.

I saw first-hand the gratitude that people in every town and village in Normandy have for our veterans. And, Mr. Speaker, their appreciation today stands as a testament to what our veterans accomplished 70 years ago on D-Day.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Morris—sorry, I didn't see you standing there.

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): I'm getting blocked, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Centennial Anniversary of the RM of Cartier

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the Assembly to commemorate the 100th anniversary celebration taking place this weekend in the RM of Cartier.

The municipality has been busy organizing a grand centennial celebration which will see hundreds and thousands of—and if not thousands of guests from the area and neighbouring communities to gather to celebrate this historic occasion.

The RM is part of the central regions named after Sir George Cartier, who was born in 1814. Cartier served as Joint Prime Minister of Canada with Sir John A. Macdonald, and was a leader in bringing Quebec into Confederation.

The RM is located 20 kilometres west of Winnipeg off the Trans-Canada Highway and situated on rich prairie farmland. The scenic and rolling Assiniboine River forms the northern boundary of the municipality. Elie is the municipality's largest community, and other towns include St. Eustache, Dacotah, Springstein and the area north

and south of Highway No. 1 along Lido Plage Road and within Golden Oak Cove.

Most events are being held this weekend, starting on Friday and ending on Saturday the 14th, Mr. Speaker, with the grand unveiling of a new centennial clock, followed by the opening ceremonies and parade.

Throughout the weekend, the RM of Cartier invites guests to participate in a variety of activities and events including a family baseball tournament, an artisan market, children's carnival, historical and cultural exhibits, a bud, stud–spud and steak dinner, fundraisers for Young at Heart and a fire truck pull with proceeds going to CancerCare.

I invite all members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing the RM of Cartier's centennial anniversary and in recognizing the importance it may have for many members of that community.

To the RM, I extend my congratulations on reaching this historic milestone. I extend my congratulations and best wishes to the organizing committee, volunteers and municipal leaders that have shown the vision and dedication to the community they serve. They have paid tribute to those that came before them, and together they've built a lasting legacy for future generations.

Thank you.

Sargent Park Flames Basketball

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Basketball is always a big deal in Winnipeg's West End. This year was no exception as the Sargent Park Flames senior girls' team won the championship at this year's Junior High Invitational Tournament.

This tournament is organized every year by Basketball Manitoba and features the top junior high teams from across the province.

The Flames had to win three games in three nights, beginning with two matches on their home court. After defeating the Selkirk Suns, the Flames met tougher competition against the Henry G. Izatt Wolves. Despite the Flames being up by 14 points at the half, the Wolves came back and tied the game in regulation. The Flames found their resolve and won by the score of 44 to 42 in overtime, propelling them to the championship game.

The Flames went to Tec-Voc to face the Sisler Spartans in the finals. The Spartans had narrowly

defeated the Flames in the city championships just a few weeks before. The Flames started slowly, down by 14 points at halftime. In the second half, they limited the Spartans to only five baskets while slowly working their way back into the game. With only seconds left on the clock and the game tied at 45, the Flames were able to corral a Spartan rebound and send one of their teammates up the court for a buzzer-beating layup. Final score: Sargent Park 47, Sisler 45.

I want to congratulate the Sargent Park Flames senior girls for their accomplishment. As well, I'd like to thank the other participants, Basketball Manitoba referees and officials, coaches, parents and all others who make this wonderful event possible.

Most team members are now leaving Sargent Park School and moving on to high school. But they know, Mr. Speaker, once a Flame, always a Flame.

I would ask for leave to include the names of the team in today's Hansard.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to include the team names referenced in the member's statement in today's Hansard of the proceedings? *[Agreed]*

Catea Mcleod, Patricia Rodriguez, Jessica Tran, Mae Concepcion, Jasmine Fauni, Cassie De Chavez, Jessica Da Silva, Elisha Abaga, Errah Sinsay, Bianca Lingal, Camille Pasco, Jessica Hartog, Kiara Foster, Kamillah Namit, Alexa Acosta, and Ralph Backe (coach).

GRIEVANCES

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Portage la Prairie, on a grievance.

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): I rise today to grieve on behalf of Matias de Antonio. The little boy who passed away in the care of CFS on March 27th of this year has no voice of his own to ask the questions necessary and whose family has been left without critical information.

I initially received a call from the family on April 4th and met with them on April 7th at their request. The Herriera family consists of two boys, two girls and their mother who was greatly looking forward to becoming a grandmother for the first time. The youngest daughter, Maria, was married to Jefferson de Antonio, who was attending school back in Colombia and has—and Maria had returned to Colombia to be with her husband but had returned to

Canada to give birth to their first child, having decided that Canada was the safest place to have the baby.

Family was very excited expecting this child and well prepared for his arrival. The baby was born on March 27th, and while still in the hospital Maria was approached by CFS workers who questioned her ability to care for this child. At this time, Maria had just given birth by C-section and was on medication and exhausted. CFS decided to take baby Matias into care without giving the family a reason in writing, despite guidelines that state that this should be done.

Communication with Maria is an issue because English–her English was a little rusty having been in Colombia for the previous six months. Despite this–but despite having translation services available to CFS, they were never called. CFS takes the baby and places it with a foster family. The Herriera family immediately begins to work with CFS to get Matias back despite having really no idea why he was taken in the first place. They agree to supervised visits with–at CFS offices with Maria and baby Matias, and during one of these visits, a second, Spanish-speaking CFS worker is in attendance. After reviewing the situation, she expresses surprise that Matias was taken in the first place and agrees to help them get Matias back into their care. However, while the baby is being transported back from one of these supervised visits to the foster family, he passes away.

* (14:40)

Too many questions remain unanswered. Why was Matias taken in the first place? Was it just poor communication? Why were written reasons never given to the family despite protocols saying that they should be? Why did it take so long for the process of returning Matias to occur? What happened during transportation, a 38-minute trip that should've taken less than 20? Why has so little information been given to the family 'merries'–members, despite promises, leaving the family second-guessing what could've happened?

I am sure now that the outcome will be an inquest into the death of Matias de Antonio. Too many questions have not been answered; however, maybe that was the intention all along, because it certainly has not served the family well.

We all join the family in grieving the loss of little Matias, and members opposite can be assured that we on this side will continue to push for a complete examination of what occurred.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any further grievances?

Then we'll–prior to moving to orders of the day, as we will be adjourning today, I encourage all honourable members to remove the contents of their desk in the Chamber. I also encourage members to recycle as much material as possible and, of course, I'm sure we all know that we have blue bins here in the Chamber that are designated for recycling of the Hansards only. Any other material you would like to recycle might be placed in the larger recycling containers in the message room just across the hall, and I thank honourable members for their co-operation.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

(Continued)

Mr. Speaker: Now, orders of the day, government business.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Government House Leader): I wonder if you could please call for debate on concurrence and third reading of Bill 51, the Legislative Assembly act, and concurrence and third readings of Bill 54, The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board Decisions and Hearings), and Bill 65, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act.

Mr. Speaker: We'll call bills in the following order starting with debate and concurrence–on concurrence and third readings, starting with Bill 51, The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, followed by concurrence and third readings of bills 54 and 65.

DEBATE ON CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 51–The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: So we'll start calling debate on concurrence and third reading of Bill 51, The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for Steinbach.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker–

Mr. Speaker: Twenty-seven minutes remaining.

Mr. Goertzen: A rousing applause from my colleague from Lac du Bonnet.

I think when I left off comments on this bill, I was remarking about how if the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) wanted to go door to door

with me and wanted to talk about what impact people felt more strongly, the 20 cent increase on their stamps or the 1 per cent increase on the PST, I'd be happy to do that with him, Mr. Speaker. And I know he's running for a few offices these days, and I'd be happy to go door to door with him, and we can have that discussion with people. I know that Lawrence Toet, the Member of Parliament who defeated him, would be happy, I'm sure, to have that discussion about how the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) brought in the PST increase and hurt all of the constituents within that riding. But, of course, that's not actually the subject of this bill that was—that came off of the speech from the member for Elmwood, who puts comments on this bill in that same regard.

But this bill is actually a result of the commissioner's report on how mailing privileges are handled here in the Legislature. The member for River Heights brought forward the suggestion, I think, a little bit more than a year ago. I think it was a good suggestion that he brought forward in terms of distribution of mail. There are always things we can do to refine how that happens to make things not just more efficient, but more cost effective, and that's important these days because it is expensive to send direct mail. And I think those discussions can continue.

So we support this bill and we support the principle of the independent commissioner, we always have. We believe that it's the right process that we have here in Manitoba to have an independent commissioner determine our salaries and our benefits, that it shouldn't be left to MLAs to make that decision. Some decisions I've agreed with and some that I haven't, but—I haven't agreed with, but I always appreciate the process, it's the right process, and we look forward to having this bill passed as a result of it being the suggestion of the independent commissioner, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on—the honourable member for River Heights.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. I just want to thank—

Mr. Speaker: I've just been reminded that I believe the honourable member for River Heights has spoken. Sorry for interrupting, but I believe the honourable member for River Heights may have already spoken to this bill.

An Honourable Member: On House business.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Steinbach, on House business.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): I seek leave of the House for the member for River Heights to be able to speak a second time on this bill on third reading.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave for the honourable member for River Heights to speak a second time to this bill? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank all the members of this Chamber for moving on this bill. I think it's a positive step forward and it's been a collaborative step. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 51, The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 54—The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board Decisions and Hearings)

Mr. Speaker: We'll now move to concurrence and third reading of Bill 54, The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board Decisions and Hearings).

Hon. Erna Braun (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise for third reading to speak again on bill—

Mr. Speaker: Before I recognize the honourable Minister of Labour, I'll recognize the honourable Minister of Mineral Resources.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Government House Leader): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the House for their rapt attention.

I move, seconded by the minister of Aboriginal affairs, that Bill 54, The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board Decisions and Hearings); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail (délais relatifs aux décisions et aux audiences de la Commission du travail), reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources,

be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Ms. Braun: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise for third reading to speak again on Bill 54, The Labour Relations Amendment Act. This bill helps to ensure that decisions and hearings of the Manitoba Labour Board are undertaken in a timely manner and that the rights of parties to hearings or decisions of the board are not negatively affected by unnecessary delays.

The Manitoba Labour Board is making positive steps in bringing new policies to improve efficiencies such as the scheduling of pre-hearing conferences, expanded use of mediation, improvements in use of vice-chairpersons' time, and the establishment of a new executive director whose responsibilities include reviewing and improving board policies and procedures.

To build on these changes and ensure that timeliness of hearings and decisions remain a high priority of the board, Bill 54 will require the board to set out in regulation maximum time frames for the issuance of decisions following the conclusion of a hearing as well as for the scheduling of hearings on applications for certification or decertification of a union, which are particularly time-sensitive.

Recognizing that every case coming to the board is unique and that proceedings before the board can be very complex, the regulations required by this legislation will allow for the chairperson of the board to extend time frames in exceptional circumstances. Having this flexibility will ensure that a person's right to a fair hearing and decision is not hampered by rigid time frames.

This bill will also require the board to review all of its regulations, which include the Manitoba Labour Board rules and procedure within two years and at least every six years thereafter. This will ensure not only that the time frames for decisions and hearings are reviewed regularly, but that all administrative functions of the board are modernized.

I would once again like to thank the many stakeholders whose input helped shape the important provisions contained in this bill. It shows once again the capacity of Manitoba employers and labour to work together to benefit all Manitobans.

Thank you.

* (14:50)

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): This is legislation that we support, Mr. Speaker. We think it's important that there be timely decisions made when it comes to Manitoba Labour Board decisions. We recognize that the Labour Board adjudicates decisions that are made by Employment Standards and gives employers and employees a chance to present evidence at that hearing, and so to the extent that it has a balanced approach in offering both employers and employees the opportunity to have their case heard where there is a dispute, we think that's important.

Of course, we recognize as well that many potential disputes are settled in the workplace and that we have good employers in the province of Manitoba. I've had the opportunity to speak to many employers across the province of Manitoba, and I'm always heartened and encouraged by how much they care for their employees. The vast majority of them, they know that their employees are, in fact, the greatest resource that they have within their business, that if they treat their employees well, that that gets reciprocated and that gets paid back many times over in their companies.

I know, in speaking with businesses in the area that I represent, they always speak very well of the fact that they have excellent employees that are there to get the job done. Often they have to stay a little longer to get the job done, but that's the kind of people that occupy Manitoba and that reside in our great province. And employers, I think, appreciate that and they recognize that. And so many of the disputes that might often become before labour relations are dealt with at a much earlier stage and, of course, that's where you'd want these things to be dealt with and to be settled.

But we also know, and whether that's the case in law or in labour relations, that there are some things that don't get settled before they have to reach another court of appeal or jury or some sort of arbitration, Mr. Speaker, whether it's administrative law.

So this is set up to ensure that both the employers and the employees have the opportunity to have their case heard, but it is important that there are timely decisions because a person's life can very much be put on hold when they are before a dispute over labour relations, and that's no different, of course, than if a person was bringing a case to Manitoba Public Insurance, for example. Often that process takes a very long time and sometimes, of

course, with MPI, you're dealing with injuries, often you're dealing with injuries, and if there's a long delay, Mr. Speaker, that puts a person's life at—on hold.

So there's a real reason and a need to have timely decisions on all of these administrative processes so people can have some clarity in terms of how they need to proceed with their life. They have some clarity in terms of when they can move on with the issue that brought them before whatever administrative process that they had, Mr. Speaker. So whether it's unfair labour practices, applications for certifications, decertifications, those sort of things, where there's purely a labour issue between an individual or it's more of a collective issue, there has to be some sort of time frame, and there has to be a timely resolution so that businesses can get on with their business, that employees can get on, that unions can get on.

So we support timely resolutions. I would suggest to the government there are other things that they could do in terms of timely resolutions in the province of Manitoba. The justice system is one, Mr. Speaker, where it's a very slow process. We know that many people wait a very long time to either have their case heard or to get justice if they're the victim on the other side of something. They wait a long time to get justice. They know there are tremendous delays within the system, and it's been that way for many years despite this government's assurances that they were going to move things along and move things more quickly.

So anything that ensures that individuals who are caught up in a dispute, or businesses that are caught up in a dispute, or unions that are caught up in a dispute, can move things more quickly to a resolution, I think, is positive, Mr. Speaker, and we hope that this bill will be a small part of ensuring that individuals who are caught up within the labour relations system can actually get a resolution to the matter that they've brought before the board.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on Bill 54?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few comments on this bill.

Our approach in the Liberal Party is that justice delayed is justice denied, that we need to make sure that things are done promptly, and I welcome these measures to try and speed things up.

We have seen under this NDP government a lot of long wait times in health care, still do. We have seen under this NDP government that there's areas of the justice system which have very long wait times, and, you know, I have very frequently people coming to me with concerns related to Child and Family Services and having long wait times for decisions.

So I'm very pleased that in this area the minister is moving and addressing the wait-time issue and hopefully this will result in a considerable speed up, and we also want good decisions, too, and I think—and fair decisions so that people are listened to. But I think that that can be achieved with this speed-up process so I look forward to it.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on Bill 54?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: House ready for the question?

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 54, The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board Decisions and Hearings).

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

Bill 65—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Now, proceed to concurrence and third reading of Bill 65, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour, that Bill 65, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail, reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Hon. Erna Braun (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I'm pleased to rise for third reading on Bill 65.

This bill is an integral piece of Manitoba's five-year plan for workplace, injury and illness prevention. Like other elements of our new prevention plan, this bill is shaped by extensive consultations with employers, labour and other stakeholders, and

I would like to acknowledge the input and support we received from them in establishing the prevention plan and the amendments contained in this bill.

These stakeholders have also been key partners in our success to date in preventing workplace injuries and illnesses as indicated by a 43 per cent reduction in the time-loss injury rate since 2000. No one in this House needs to be reminded of the tremendous benefits that such a decrease represents in terms of reduced human, social and financial costs.

We continue to believe, however, that no level of workplace injury and illness is acceptable, and that is why the provisions of this bill are designed to further enhance our prevention efforts. We also believe that Manitoba employers deserve a level playing field and that all workplace parties should be aware of their legislative rights and obligations.

During the widespread consultations that shaped our new prevention plan, one of the themes that came through clearly was that while legislative compliance is not an issue in the vast majority of circumstances, there are situations where injury reporting and claim filing do not happen as they should. This may be because of lack of awareness about rights and obligations, or because of insufficient returns.

The amendments help address these situations. They clarify what claim suppression and discriminatory action mean and improve the WCB's ability to require information about legislative rights and responsibilities be posted in workplaces and other places, including with respect to reporting injuries and filing claims.

While clarifying rights and responsibilities, raising awareness and providing authorities with the right proactive intervention tools are all crucial to promoting compliance, it is also important that appropriate deterrents are in place. The proposed amendments therefore increase maximum fines and penalties for those convicted of violations of the act. The amendments also expand the violations that warrant an administrative penalty to include failure by an employer to produce documents required to determine compliance.

To help ensure the WCB has the tools and information it needs to properly do its job in promoting compliance with the act, the amendments allow the WCB access to employer records upon

request and to inspect workplaces in connection with concerns about compliance matters.

As a further deterrent and in the interest of providing important public information, these amendments permit the WCB to publicize information regarding administrative penalties issued for violations such as claim suppression and discriminatory action. To safeguard the rights of those who may be assessed and administrate a penalty, a clear appeal process is set out.

* (15:00)

I would remind the House, Mr. Speaker, that such provisions not only help ensure that injured workers can pursue their rights under the act, but also promote a level playing field among employers and ensure that the funding of workers compensation system is based on fairness and integrity.

As with other penalties under The Workers Compensation Act and other acts, the ideal outcome is that they influence behaviour in such a way that they need never be applied, but they are nonetheless in place if required.

To build upon and continue our past success in preventing workplace injuries and illnesses, the bill contains provisions to facilitate a more strategic approach to prevention and to assist the WCB in fulfilling its prevention mandate. A prevention committee will be established as a subcommittee of the WCB board of directors to guide the activities of the newly formed prevention entity SAFE Work Manitoba and to ensure co-ordination with WCB and Workplace Safety and Health.

The voices of key stakeholders will continue to be heard, as the prevention committee will have equal representatives from the employer and labour communities.

To maintain the independence and integrity of the prevention mandate, the amendments require that funding and accounting aspects of prevention activities be maintained separately from those of the WCB's compensation activities.

In closing, I would like to point out that in 'conjunction'—in conjunction with recent amendments we have made to The Workplace Safety and Health Act, the amendments proposed in Bill 65 further implement the vision put forth in Manitoba's new prevention plan. These amendments will help ensure that workers are aware of their rights and obligations under The Workers Compensation Act and are free

to exercise those rights. This is crucial not only for protecting vulnerable workers, but also for ensuring a level playing field for employers and the WCB funding system that is defined by fairness and integrity.

Furthermore, these amendments build upon our past success in injury and illness prevention by putting in place the structures and tools required to pursue strategic and balanced approach to prevention activities, raising awareness of legislative rights and obligation, protecting vulnerable workers, providing employers with a level playing field, ensuring fairness and integrity in WCB funding, improving co-ordination and accountability in prevention initiatives. Mr. Speaker, these are values shared by all members of this House.

I would once again like to thank the many stakeholders whose input helped shape Manitoba's new prevention plan and the important provisions contained in this bill.

Thank you.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, we support this legislation. We think that there are a few things that have some reason for caution, but we obviously hope that the majority of the bill operates the way it should.

We know that the legislation is intended to prohibit any employer from taking discriminatory action against a person who makes a claim to the Workers Compensation Board, and we want to ensure that workers feel free to be able to bring a claim to the Workers Compensation Board. We want to ensure that they know that that is what the board and what the system is there for, to protect them when they have an injury at the workplace, Mr. Speaker, and so that is important.

We also, of course, know that employers have the ability and the right to be able to bring forward their own evidence in terms of whether or not an injury was a result of a workplace injury. And that's important; it maintains that balance.

The bill does bring forward what in law is known as a reverse onus. In fact, it will put on the employer an obligation, a duty to prove that the actions were not related, that they took—the actions in terms of their employment were not related to a claim being made to Workers Compensation. Reverse onuses in law are often very difficult and challenging, Mr. Speaker, so we will watch this provision to see how it works and to ensure that

employers don't have an unreasonable onus placed upon them. I understand that this was approved jointly by employers and employees, so we'll have to see how this bill operate in practice, when it's actually road-tested to see if in fact it maintains a proper 'balance' even so a reverse onus has been placed on the employers.

I do note as well that there is a prevention committee of the board that's established, requiring the board to look at measures to prevent workplace injuries. And certainly all of us, I believe, want to see workplace injuries reduced.

We are fortunate enough in our jobs, Mr. Speaker, to not face the—a lot of injuries in the kind of work that we do. Sometimes there's verbal injuries that happen, but not a lot of physical injuries. But there are many jobs, many occupations in the province of Manitoba where people are—they're dangerous occupations. They're difficult occupations and they take a toll on one's body, whether that's in the construction industry or in the mining industry and many other jobs in the province of Manitoba. And we want to ensure that employees are safe and that they come home at night to their families. And, when they're out there making a living to keep their kids clothed and to keep food on the table and—to ensure that their family has the kind of future that they want them to have, that they can do so in a way that is safe and so they can come home and ensure that they don't have injuries to themselves. So that is, hopefully, what this bill will help to do in that it will move things along to a place where we have very, very few workplace injuries.

The government has talked a lot about workplace injuries over the last 10 years, but we haven't always seen the results, and that's been disappointing. We haven't always seen the kind of results that we would hope for, Mr. Speaker, the kinds of—numerically, the kinds of results that we would be hoping for despite all of the talk from the NDP about workplace safety. And it is good to raise awareness and it's good to talk about these issues, but, actually, you need actions to ensure the things that we do.

So we'll see if this bill ultimately does that. We'll be watching it closely, but we'll also be looking at means and measures to protect workers, and to ensure that when Manitobans go to work each and every day that they come home safely to their families, that they're not injured, that they don't have long-term injuries that stay with them for the rest of

their lives because we want them to be able to be with their families and their grandkids as they grow older and not have to deal with injuries that they had on the job at someplace previously.

So there are some good measures in this bill and there's also things that we'll want to watch closely as it moves forward. But on the whole, it's a bill that's worth supporting and worth monitoring in the future.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I, too, join others in this Legislature in support of this legislation. I believe that it is important that people who are working understand that if they're injured, they should be coming forward and letting people know.

But I also think that in addition to what's in this bill, that in Manitoba we have to focus a greater effort on decreasing the number of injuries in the workplace and the time lost to injury. We are, you know, in essence, an outlier across Canada in our time-loss-to-injury rates are significantly higher than other provinces and they haven't been coming down in Manitoba the last several years.

So I think we really need to focus on this, and reducing injury is very important and understanding why we still have the issues that we have is also important. But let us move ahead with this legislation and let us continue to work at the same time on decreasing the number of injuries and the time loss to injury here in our province.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on Bill 65?

Seeing none, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 65, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

* * *

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could resolve the House into Committee of Supply.

Mr. Speaker: We'll now resolve into the Committee of Supply.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, will you please take the Chair.

* (15:10)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Concurrence Motion

Mr. Chairperson (Tom Nevakshonoff): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

The committee has before it for consideration, the motion concurring in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2015. On June 10th, 2014, the Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) tabled the following list of ministers who may be called for concurrent questioning in the debate on this motion: Health; Jobs and the Economy; Family Services.

The floor is now open for questions.

Seeing none, is the House ready—is the committee ready for the concurrence motion, which is moved by the honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Swan), that the Committee of Supply concur in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2015, which have been adopted at this session, whether by a section of the Committee of Supply or by the full committee?

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Chairperson: I hear a no. *[interjection]*

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Chairperson: Again, I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of adopting the motion, please signify so by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed, by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. Chairperson: The motion is passed on division.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: That concludes the business of the committee.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted a motion regarding concurrence in Supply.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Radisson (Mr. Jha), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of receiving the report will please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to receiving the report, please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division—to be recorded as on division.

Concurrence Motion

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister for Labour and Immigration (Ms. Braun), that this House concur in the report of the Committee of Supply, respecting concurrence in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure, for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, will please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Goertzen: On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division. It will be recorded as on division.

* * *

Mr. Swan: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour—for Labour and Immigration, that there be granted out of the Consolidated Fund for capital purposes, the sum of \$2,192,247,000 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Swan: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister for Labour and Immigration, that there be granted to Her Majesty for the public service of the Province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015, out of the Consolidated Fund, the sum of \$12,089,526,000, as set out in part A, Operating Expenditure, and \$741,579,000, as set out in part B, Capital Investment, of the Estimates.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 75—The Appropriation Act, 2014

Hon. Andrew Swan (Acting Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister for Labour and Immigration, that Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014; Loi de 2014 portant

affectation de crédits, be now read a first time and be ordered for a second reading immediately.

Motion agreed to.

* (15:20)

SECOND READINGS

Bill 75—The Appropriation Act, 2014

Hon. Andrew Swan (Acting Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Labour and Immigration, that Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014; Loi de 2014 portant affectation de crédits, be now read a second time and be referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Any debate?

Mr. Swan: Mr. Speaker, this bill is intended to provide expenditure authority for the amounts shown in the Manitoba Estimates of Expenditure for 2014-2015. When Bill 75 reaches the committee stage, I can provide members with a section-by-section explanation. Thank you.

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): It's my pleasure just to stand and put some brief comments on the record with respect to this this afternoon. Mr. Speaker, as you know, my colleagues and I have continued to stand in this Chamber in debate over the course of the last number of weeks and months and express time and time again concerns about this government's expenditures in core government areas. We have continued to call attention to the troubling record of this government when it comes to the difference between budgets and actual expenditures. And we have continued to underline for Manitobans the fact that this is a government with a series of broken records when it comes to being able to financially manage in this province.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I would take this opportunity to remind the members of this Chamber that when it comes to this NDP government's management of the economy record, we need to be reminded that they have overspent their core budget by a cumulative \$3.4 billion since coming to power in the year 2000. In fact, as the comments were made earlier this afternoon in question period, this NDP government has been unable or unwilling to control its spending and they have overspent by billions of dollars in 13 out of 14 budgets they have tabled. We know that the Auditor General has called attention to the spending practices of this

government, and even earlier this afternoon, again, we had members of this caucus who were highlighting the failures of this government even in the eyes of the Auditor General, the independent auditor who looks at all these things, and she used words like troubling and not meeting the test.

Mr. Speaker, if we just examine areas of expenditure that this government is responsible for. The Education critic if—here, the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), has continued to raise concerns about student aid software that the government spent more than \$15 million on, and yet this software remains parked on the shelf. It hasn't been used. The government day after day when given the opportunity to clear up this misunderstanding, has nothing to say. They obfuscate; they obscure; they go off madly in all directions, but they provide no coherent answer as to how so much money could have been spent and there be no benefit accruing to the students who need to use that program.

In the same way, the critic for Agriculture, the member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen), continues to get up day by day and ask this Minister of Agriculture, what has become of over \$7 million in MCEC that is unaccounted for? And day after day, when given that opportunity to say what became of those things, there is no answer put on the record.

Mr. Speaker, I think when we're looking at these documents that will give the spending authority to this government to continue, this is the appropriate time for us to highlight that it is not just that this government has been unwilling or unable to get their spending in order, it is that it is—they have been—they've been unable to do so.

The fact that they have been unable to do so is obscene when you factor in that this government has enjoyed a time of record federal transfers. I remind the House that this NDP government has never seen a drop in federal support. As a matter of fact, at this point in time, I believe that federal transfer payments, both the general transfer and the specific transfers for health and social transfer and others, now account for one third of every dollar of revenue accruing to this government. But, beyond that, this government has enjoyed a time of record-low interest rates, interest rates that were—are one third of what they were when they took power.

They continue to enjoy record revenues from corporate income taxes and personal income taxes. As a matter of fact, those revenues in terms of just personal tax are up a billion dollars alone, and that's

not even taking into account all the additional taxes and fees that they have assigned. Manitobans won't forget that their fuel costs are up because of taxes. They won't forget that there's new taxes on haircuts and home insurance policies. They won't forget that it costs more to register a vehicle with the taxes that the government continues to crank on there and they won't forget that even if they go down to a local liquor store and buy a bottle of wine or a 12-pack of beer, there's going to be additional taxes there.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that between 2012 and 2014 this government has continued to grab more and more revenue out of the pockets of Manitobans. When I consider just the tax and fee revenue additional accruing to this government from 2012-13, those things include: coal burning emissions; tobacco; Child Abuse Registry checks; innovation, energy and mines, new taxes; gas and oil burning permits fees are up; trades licensing; dividend tax credit reductions; PST on insurance and personal items, as I mentioned; tobacco that year alone, the additional \$10 million flowing to government just from fee and tax increases; property registry; like I said, the vehicle registration fee; and birth, marriage and death certificates as well, even there, \$200,000 up in revenue.

And, Mr. Speaker, we saw the same thing in the next fiscal year. We saw the same in '12, in '13-14 where this government said, you know, with all of this, with all of the opportunity we've been given, with all of the fees and—that are already adding to the Treasury, no, we're going to need more, and they went back to consumers. They went back to hard-working Manitoba families and then Adult Abuse Registry check, again, fees were up. Vehicle impound fees were up. Cottage fees, of course, are up. So many fees are up for Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, we know it is a colossal failure of this government. They broke their word to Manitobans when they raised the PST and they said they wouldn't. We know that there's a colossal failure unfolding right now. It is the backdrop to the discussion we are having today, and that is that this is the year that that government promised to be in the surplus. Finally, after all this time, we would be in surplus. Even with the \$500 million additional that is accruing to government, they can't even get into surplus. They're not even close, and this year again, a gigantic, an extraordinary, a super-sized deficit is what they will actually table and what they will actually put on the backs of hard-working

Manitobans, a deficit that is \$400 million again, and a deficit that shows no sign of getting smaller.

* (15:30)

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons and the concerns that members on this side of the House continue to raise and because of the enormous opportunities that this government has had standing on the enormous amount of revenue that they now enjoy, we must take every opportunity, and I welcome this opportunity today, to stand and again underscore what the real situation is here, what the true context is here and what the size is of the failure of this NDP government to create conditions in which Manitobans can get ahead, to table a budget and move—and put forward the machinery, of course, that would allow Manitobans to thrive and to prosper here as we want them to do.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate?

House is ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan), seconded by the honourable Minister of Labour, that Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014, is it to be read a second time and be referred to a Committee of the Whole.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? [*Agreed*]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 76—The Loan Act, 2014

Hon. Andrew Swan (Acting Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister for Labour and Immigration, that Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014; Loi d'emprunt de 2014, be now read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In the opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division. It shall be recorded as on division.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 76—The Loan Act, 2014

Hon. Andrew Swan (Acting Minister of Finance): I move, that Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014—*[interjection]*—I'm seconded by the Minister for Labour and Immigration, that Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014; Loi d'emprunt de 2014, be now read a second time and be referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Any debate?

Mr. Swan: This bill's *[inaudible]* to provide all new incremental borrowing authority required for the current fiscal year. It also provides for the advance and guarantee authority which is required for non-budgetary capital programs for the fiscal year which began on April 1, 2014.

The Loan Act includes both the incremental and existing authority requirements for each of the non-budgetary capital expenditure programs, including amounts required to cover existing commitments for expenditures to be made in subsequent fiscal years.

The amount of borrowing authority being requested is the amount required to fund the estimated non-budgetary capital programs and government's capital investment during the fiscal year. This borrowing authority will be used and, if necessary, supplemented in each annual loan act to reflect the incremental authority required in subsequent fiscal years.

When the bill reaches the committee stage, my colleagues and I will endeavour to provide any necessary explanations for the information of members.

Thank you.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): We continue to have grave concerns about this government's borrowing on the backs of future generations. We know that every time the government borrows more money it ultimately has to be paid back; it's deferred taxes. Eventually, we know that the government will have to raise taxes to pay for that debt, and that's not a hypothetical. That's not something in the abstract. We've seen that exact reality. For many years, my colleagues and previous colleagues on this side of the House have said that as the government continues to increase the debt of the Province of Manitoba, that eventually taxes would have to be increased.

Members of the government have always denied that and said that's not true, that as the economy grows that they'd be able to fund the increased debt through the increase of the growth of the economy. Well, we've seen, over the last two years that that has not been the case with the expansion of the PST to things such as home insurance, with the increased gas taxes, with the increase of fees. We've seen increases to hydro rates. We're going to see increases to Manitoba Public Insurance rates, and, of course, we saw the increase of the provincial sales tax, which is the single largest tax grab by this government, and there's been a long line of tax grabs, but that alone accounts for some \$300 million.

So this is not a hypothetical discussion. This is not a discussion that happens outside of the realm of reality for those in the House or Manitobans, because they're living it. They're living in the increased taxes of a government that continues to borrow more and more and more, and since this government has come into office it's increased the debt by twofold. The debt is doubled under this government. Despite their claim that they have balanced the budget, the real number of the debt you can't run from; you can't hide from that. They can say whatever they want in terms of balancing the budget, but Manitobans know that if you have to borrow more and more every year in your individual home, that you're not balancing your budget. If you continue to add to your debt that ultimately has to be paid for, that you're not balancing your budget, and that is the case here. The real number that tells the true story is the debt number. Once again, this bill will increase the debt of the province of Manitoba as a result of this government's inability to manage its spending and to find internal savings.

Mr. Speaker, so we have great concerns not just regarding this borrowing today, but all the

cumulative borrowing, because, at some point—and my colleague from Morden-Winkler, I think, will expound upon this, perhaps, in committee or at third reading—but, ultimately, if interest rates rise and they can go nowhere but up, that this will have a tremendous impact on the Treasury of the Province of Manitoba and, ultimately, on the pocketbook of individual Manitobans, and that is a great concern to us, one we've continued to raise, one which, unfortunately, we've seen come true in terms of the increased taxes.

So we will not be supporting the increase of the debt, Mr. Speaker.

* (15:40)

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate?

It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan), seconded by the honourable Minister of Labour, that Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014, be now read a second time and be referred to a Committee of the Whole.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: It shall be recorded as on division.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The House will now resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014, and Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014, for concurrence and third reading.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, will you please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Mr. Chairperson (Tom Nevakshonoff): Order. The Committee of the Whole will come to order to consider the following bills: Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014, and Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014.

In accordance with rule 76(3), as the 100 hours allotted for the consideration of Supply have expired, there will be no debate on these bills in this committee.

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Chairperson, I'm seeking leave of this committee to allow the member for Morden-Winkler (Mr. Friesen) to ask a couple of succinct questions on the bill.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, the honourable member does not have a point of order, but it's a request for leave, so I put that request to the House.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: Is there leave to put a few questions? [*Agreed*]

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): I'd just like to inquire on Bill 76. I'm looking at section 2. They're increasing government's borrowing authority, and it indicates there that the authority of the government to borrow for purposes other than to refinance debt has increased by \$2.9 billion.

Could the minister just indicate what that amount was a year before? What did it change from?

Hon. Andrew Swan (Acting Minister of Finance): Just to clarify the member's question. It's about the total in section 2 of the act, is the member asking what the amount was in Loan Act, 2013?

Mr. Friesen: That is correct.

* (15:50)

Mr. Swan: I'm advised that last year's section 2 borrowing—section 2 borrowing authorizes that the borrowing upon the credit of the government for the purpose of funding capital programs of the

government, various Crown corporations and agencies and funding of allocations to the provincial sinking fund. The amount last year was 3 billion, 780 million dollars.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I thank the minister for supplying that answer.

I just have a question pertaining to section 6(1), under additional authority for loans and guarantees. And the minister will see there that the total of the loans and guarantees that the government provides in a fiscal year must not exceed \$200 million.

And my question is similar to the last one, and that is, in The Loan Act for 2013, what would that amount have been indicated as?

Mr. Swan: Yes, I can advise the member that that amount is unchanged from last year's loan act.

Mr. Chairperson: No further questions?

We'll continue with—during the consideration of these bills, the enacting clauses and the titles are postponed until all other clauses have been considered in their proper order. Is there—if there is agreement from the committee, I will call clauses in blocks that conform to pages. Is that agreed?
[Agreed]

Bill 75—The Appropriation Act, 2014

Mr. Chairperson: The first bill for our consideration is Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014.

Clause 1—pass; clauses 2 through 5—pass; clauses 6 and 7—pass; schedule—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass.

Shall the bill be reported?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Chairperson: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of reporting the bill, please signify so by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed, by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division.

Mr. Chairperson: The bill shall be reported on division.

Bill 76—The Loan Act, 2014

Mr. Chairperson: The last bill for our consideration is Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014.

Clauses 1 and 2—pass; clauses 3 through 5—pass; clauses 6 and 7—pass; schedule—pass; enacting clause—pass, title—pass.

Shall the bill be reported.

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Chairperson: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of reporting the bill, please signify so by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed, by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. Chairperson: It is agreed the bill shall be reported on division.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: That concludes the business before us.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered the following bills: Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014; and Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014, and reports the same without amendment on division.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS*(Continued)***Bill 76—The Loan Act, 2014****Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader):**

I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Braun), that Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014; Loi d'emprunt de 2014, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): I will use this opportunity, with your permission, to put some comments on the record with respect to Bill 76, The Loan Act.

Let us be clear that the bill authorizes the government to borrow an additional \$3 billion again this year, and some of that debt will be paid in the course of receiving revenue from income tax, from corporate income tax and personal income tax. Some of that debt will be addressed by the PST and the PST hike, enormous amount of revenue that now flows to this government from fee increases.

* (16:00)

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in the last debate, the size—the enormous size of the increase to government revenues is almost now \$500 million a year, but we understand as well that part of the authorization of this bill will see that debt is—that this debt is added to the cumulative debt of the province of Manitoba that now stands at \$32 billion. I remind the members of this government that only a few short years ago that debt in Manitoba was \$22 billion. As a matter of fact, just in the last number of years that the current First Minister has been in his position, \$10 billion of debt has been added to our province's overall debt load.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's the connection here, is that a government that fails to actually arrive at surplus at the end of a fiscal year, there is an accounting that must take place. And it is the height of insincerity that this government gets up and makes claims like they are balancing budgets. It's as if a household is saying, well, we are—we're in the black every month. And they might be paying their mortgage bill, but every month they're using their personal line of credit and every month they're adding to their debt that's carried in their personal line of credit. And we would, of course, understand. We would smile and say, well, you know, no household income can be reconciled unless you're

comparing the total revenues against the total losses and arriving at a statement and indicating whether it is either in the black or in the red. Well, this government, it does exactly that. They claim to be running balanced budgets even at the time when it is clear to everyone else that they are not, that they continue add to the debt.

As I mentioned, that debt now stands at \$32 billion. That is why the Auditor General for Manitoba gave a whole chapter of consideration in her annual report to the issue of this government's debt and deficit. And, Mr. Speaker, it's a—it's very provocative reading to hear the Auditor General make statements about the unsustainability of this government's approach to the finances of this province.

Mr. Speaker, it's as if they are in a bubble. The problem is that Manitobans cannot live in a bubble that protects them from the implications of this government's policies on fiscal management. I would remind the members of this government—and The Loan Act for 2014 is the perfect opportunity to do that in Bill 76—that the debt-servicing costs of this government have increased \$36 million this year alone—just the cost to service the debt. I remind the members of this government that last year debt-servicing costs were up again, around \$36 million.

We have asked the question time and time again, what would be the effect of a 1 per cent rise in prime lending rates? And given the opportunity to respond, the minister has always obfuscated, the minister has always gone off in all directions, but the minister has not actually put on the record what would be the implication.

Mr. Speaker, when interest rates are flat, not rising—rising, of course our debt-servicing costs are rising, because the government continues to add to the overall debt. So just imagine, then, what would happen if that interest rate did go up. We now allocate each year \$872 million to service the debt, and we even have the Manitoba Hydro president, Scott Thomson, speculating in the media in Manitoba exactly on what would be the implications of rising interest rates. In the coffee shop, people are always talking about it. Only this government does not want to talk about the implications of rising interest rates, because that's not a conversation they want to have. They want to continue to stick their head in the sand and pretend that there will not come a day of reckoning, that there will not ever be a need

for them to actually pay attention to the bottom line. It's not a luxury that Manitoban families have.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to just put that information on the record and just to remind these members that in Bill 76, when we read in section 2 that the government's about to borrow \$3 billion this year, it just helps to highlight and underscore the unsustainable management practices of this government when it comes to Manitoba's debt and deficit.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler), that debate now be adjourned.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Steinbach, seconded by the honourable member for Lakeside, that debate be adjourned.

Is that agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour, please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Nays have it.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No further debate?

It has been moved by the honourable member of Justice—for Justice, seconded by the honourable Minister for Labour, that Bill 76, The Loan Act, 2014, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Is that agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (16:30)

Order, please.

Division

A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Allan, Allum, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Crothers, Dewar, Gaudreau, Irvin-Ross, Jha, Kostyshyn, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Pettersen, Robinson, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.

Nays

Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Martin, Mitchelson, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Schuler, Stefanson, Wishart.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 32, Nays 18.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Bill 75—The Appropriation Act, 2014

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister for Jobs and the Economy, that Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014; Loi de 2014 portant affectation de crédits, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Any debate?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few words. Through this year and this session, we have continued to see the provincial NDP government weave and wave like a big bluestem, but far less gracefully than our prairie grass, as they continue meandering about, failing to provide the leadership which we feel is really needed for our province.

In many ways, the NDP have worked in bits and pieces, but rather than finding real solutions to problems, last year we saw the NDP government implement the PST increase which the Premier (Mr. Selinger) had previously called ridiculous.

This year the NDP government began by renegeing on its budgetary commitments made in last year's budget to family services authorities and giving them a last-minute, 16 per cent cutback in funding for the last quarter of the year. The result was a decrease in the ability of the authorities and agencies to liver the—to deliver the family support and prevention that the Phoenix Sinclair inquiry said was so desperately needed; one more example of poor financial planning, that changes are made during the year instead of set at the beginning.

And speaking of the Phoenix Sinclair inquiry, though we now know have recommendations, they're sitting in limbo as the government decides what to do next. If Child and Family Services was really as important to this NDP as they try to say it is, they'd have moved quickly to implement the changes recommended.

One of those changes was, for example, to move to more integrated service delivery model, as is happening at the Family and Community Wellness Centre at the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation. The NDP should have moving—been moving in this direction without needing the Phoenix Sinclair inquiry.

Why weren't they, and why are they not now? And while they hesitate, time ticks by and keeps on ticking and ticking for Manitoba children and their families.

Speaking of inquiries, Mr. Speaker, we've had the continuation of the inquiry into why Brian Sinclair died after waiting 34 years in the Health Sciences Centre emergency room. We had many presenters outlining problems and solutions, but the

government continues to be slow to act, even though the problems in our emergency room have persisted for all of the more than 14 years of this NDP government.

As we've heard repeatedly in this session, the government is now using public money to pay the fines resulting from its own poor performance instead of improving the functioning of emergency rooms. I think the public would understand better if the money were to come from Cabinet ministers' salaries, and perhaps we'd get better results than we've seen so far.

One of the vaunted innovations of the government has been the mental health crisis centre, touted to be the place for patients with brain health issues to go to instead of the Health Sciences Centre emergency room. Well, Mr. Speaker, last night, a Manitoban with a brain health issue went to the Health Sciences Centre emergency room; he was referred to the crisis centre. The crisis centre was no help, and he had to go back to the Health Sciences Centre emergency room in order to get the help he needed.

Having someone shuffled to three places in order to get the help he should have got in the first place is a horrible extension of the NDP government's weaving and waving ways into our health-care system. We've moved from one stop to three stops so that Manitobans have to weave and wave to obtain the health care they need.

And though the Premier attempted to suggest an improvement in surgical wait times today, there's a farmer in the hospital right now unable to work because his long wait for knee surgery has resulted in even further injury. This Manitoban suffering in severe pain is not assuaged by such declarations.

At the beginning of March, we were given a budget that made it immediately apparent that the NDP government had once again not met its budgeted spending commitments but had overspent for the 14th time in a row.

More than this, the NDP renegeed on its solemn commitment to universities, that it increase funding for their operating budgets by 5 per cent a year for three years. This was a test of the NDP's commitments. Once again, they came up short.

Indeed, did—not only did they not fulfill their commitment of 2011, but instead, they brought in legislation to wipe the commitment off the books.

The lengths that the NDP will go to to avoid meeting their commitments is astounding.

We know that—about the illegal PST without the referendum. Do I need also to mention that they legislated themselves out of the ministerial salary cut that should have occurred because they can't balance a budget?

To make sure to stay consistent, the Premier today attempted to suggest that having two times as many employees in manufacturing compared to Saskatchewan, while Saskatchewan has surpassed Manitoba in manufacturing sales, is an economic success. In reality, what's happening in Saskatchewan is that they are moving to a near era—new era of manufacturing with a higher productive workforce. And, if we're going to increase jobs in our economy in the days ahead, we need to move to a higher productive workforce.

There are many other issues, of course, which still need attention: climate change, housing. We're still waiting for those increases in shelter rates. Drug Treatment Court is still sitting in limbo. Early childhood education; we've had a bit of progress, but we haven't had the solution we should have had.

And our PISA scores are still low and falling. And, in fact, there was a recent study which shows that we are among the most inequitable of provinces, that our students in poorer and lower income areas are doing worse compared with other provinces.

We have many issues in health care: a failure to act on the diabetes epidemic, the continuing number of children born with FASD, the fact that there is no stroke centre and no adequate stroke plan.

* (16:40)

In the economy, we've had problems with lack of tendering. We've had decreasing employment numbers. We've had problems with where we save money. We could've saved a lot of money by preventing diabetes.

Last fall, we saw that the Broadbent Institute rated Manitoba the worst in Canada on social well-being, but we didn't see this adequately addressed in this budget or this session. There are still far too many children in care and still the cases are taking too long to be resolved in the courts.

In agriculture, we see the problem with the Manitoba cattle 'encancement' council and the

missing funds, the lack of attention to regional economic development, the lack of attention to the three rural municipalities in southwestern Manitoba, the lawsuits related to unsolved issues around the upper Assiniboine River, the slow progress in moving forward on the lower Assiniboine River.

We support the government in restorative justice and co-operative education initiatives, but believe that these should've been done many years earlier.

The Surface Water Management plan, again, should've come earlier. Eight years ago I was talking about the need for a no-net-loss-of-wetlands policy. The peatlands plan, if the government had moved earlier in their mandate to do this, we wouldn't have had some of the problems that we have now. They could have moved more quickly.

Liberals have consistently provided forward-thinking ideas throughout this. We produced major reports on the flood, on the Child and Family Services and the diabetes, water management. We are still faced—and the government still talks a lot about infrastructure, but they don't mention that a lot of the problems of today had their seeds in the last 15 years when more attention could have been paid.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Liberals will continue to fight the uphill battle with this government to rebuild our province. We will continue to fight for accountability and transparency and much better government for the people of Manitoba and for a better Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, this legislative session we have provided a program for steady growth in the economy and good jobs for young people, something the members opposite never did while they were in office. When they were in office, they cut jobs for young people, they made the economy stall, they didn't build any hydro, they left Manitoba in the lurch. But the last 15 years have been years of prosperity for Manitoba, even during the greatest recession that we've had since the Great Depression, and that's because we've got a good plan for the future of Manitoba. And that plan focuses on growing our economy and creating good jobs. It focuses on giving opportunities to young people to get an education, a formal education, a high school education, an education in the trades if they wish to do so. It invests in better roads, flood protection and clean water. It keeps life affordable for Manitobans

and it restores the budget to balance over a reasonable period of time without putting core services at risk such as health care. That's a plan in the best interests of Manitobans, a plan the members opposite oppose.

Mr. Speaker, we've seen the global economy having a very fragile recovery. It is recovering, but it's been slower than expected. We've seen Europe struggling to come back on its feet. We've seen America, our major trading partner, still doing an huge amount of quantitative easing to make sure the jobs are created in that place. It's starting to work, but we're a long way from where we were in 2008, 2009.

And, Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to move down this path of steady of growth and good jobs. And one of the ways we're going to do is we're going to make sure we invest in education. We're going to do that, and we're going to invest in skills. We have a plan to increase the number of skilled workers in Manitoba by 75,000—75,000—by the year 2020. But it doesn't start there. It starts with early childhood development.

We have a minister for children and youth, and we are investing about \$400 million in various forms of early childhood development inside the province of Manitoba, widely considered the best program in the country, so widely supported that the McConnell foundation is in the province working with us.

And after early childhood development, Mr. Speaker, we've expanded the number of daycare opportunities in Manitoba, what we now call early childhood learning, by 12,000 spaces. And we will, later on, talk about what else we're going to do.

And then, when we get to elementary schools, the first critical three years from K to 3, if members opposite were laying off teachers during—when they were in office, what are we doing? Smaller class sizes, more attention for young people when they start school, an additional 253 teachers that have been employed in our schools. At a time when every other jurisdiction is cutting back on education, we're investing in young people in the province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

And, as we go along and get to high school, what are we seeing? When members opposite were in office, one in four children never completed high school. We have now taken that to 85 per cent. Mr. Speaker, 85 per cent of young Manitobans are

completing high school. And, as they do that, they get an opportunity to get a trade.

I was at Kildonan-East regional school with the Minister of Labour, and what did we see there? Ten academic programs that allow you to get a high school education. But, if you want, you can get autobody repairs; if you want, you can get Canada's only high school program for heating and ventilation technical training. You can get a program in culinary arts; you can get a program in carpentry; you can get a program in electronics—and a high school academic education, Mr. Speaker.

That's the kind of education we support in Manitoba. And the members opposite, what do they want to do about that? They want to cut it. We want to build it, Mr. Speaker, and we want to build it in Manitoba.

When you go to high school, you could also start to get a university education. We now make it possible, Mr. Speaker, to earn university credits while you're in high school. We now make it possible to earn credits at Red River College. We now make it possible to start an apprentice program and get an early start on that. And that makes all the difference.

When I was in Cranberry Portage with the member from Flin Flon, we're building, in record time, new facilities for people all around the North to come back to high school. People, young people, that had been written off as not being able to finish school, they're now coming back in record numbers. They're going to high school in Cranberry Portage. They're building houses while they go to high school. And, when they complete those houses, we put those houses in community and provide opportunities for families to have decent housing. And the revenue off those houses goes right back into the education program for young people, Mr. Speaker.

So all those opportunities are only possible, Mr. Speaker, if you have the courage to have a budget with the resources in it to invest in young people.

But, to go along with that, we're also investing in infrastructure. And there are three kinds of infrastructure we're investing in.

First and foremost, Mr. Speaker, we're investing in infrastructure for flood protection. We provided flood protection to the people of Manitoba in the Red River Valley and the city of Winnipeg—one-in-700-year flood protection. And, when we had a flood

this spring, nobody noticed it, because the floodway opened up and did its job in protecting the people of Winnipeg.

We're now doing the same thing for the people of Brandon: one-in-300-year protection. We're building the dikes along the Assiniboine valley. We built the emergency channel. Members opposed the emergency channel. They said it was an unnecessary duplicate of expense, Mr. Speaker. That channel served us well in '11 and now we've applied to open it again because there's still communities at risk there.

And in our last quarter—members opposite—we were ahead of schedule in reducing our deficit. We set \$100 million aside to permanently rebuild the communities in the Lake St. Martin area, to make sure they're on higher ground, to make sure they have better roads, better infrastructure, better schools, better health facilities. We're doing it in partnership with the federal government, Mr. Speaker, on a 40-60 basis. We've set the money aside. That shows our commitment to rebuilding those communities in such a way that they will be permanently protected and not go through the experience.

In 1978, that proposal was made under a Conservative government. And what did they do? They said no. They said we're not going to do that, Mr. Speaker. They lost the opportunity to protect those people. We won't squander that opportunity this time. We will protect those people and make sure that they're looked after.

* (16:50)

Mr. Speaker, we're making life better for Manitobans. We're seeing QuickCare clinics open up in St. Vital and Seven Oaks. We're seeing ACCESS centre opened up at the Grace Hospital, a hospital members opposite wanted to shut down. They wanted to shut it down. We're making it larger. We're making it more accessible. We're making it more available to the people of St. James.

We're making life better for Manitobans, as I said earlier, by investing an additional five and a half million dollars in child care in this year's budget. More money for child care right here in Manitoba, more money which allows families to enter the labour market, earn a good living for their families, while knowing their children are safely looked after.

What did the Leader of the Opposition do when he was in the federal government? Cancelled the

programs for daycare. Didn't want to do it—didn't want to do it, Mr. Speaker. Didn't want to do it in Manitoba either. We believe child care is an essential program to help families participate in the economy.

We brought in path-breaking legislation this session, Mr. Speaker. We brought in legislation for apprenticeship training opportunities. When a company gets a public sector contract to build a school, to build a hospital, to build a road, to build a public facility in Manitoba, we are asking them, and they want to do this—they want to do this—we're asking them to make sure they have apprenticeship opportunities. When we said we're stepping up for apprenticeship opportunities for young Manitobans, what did the members opposite do? They voted against it. They voted against apprenticeship opportunities for young people.

When we brought first-of-its-kind legislation to ban synthetic pesticides in zones, on school grounds, on playgrounds, on soccer fields, what did the members opposite do, Mr. Speaker? They voted against it. They want to protect dandelions; we want to protect children.

When we brought in legislation to ban peat mining in provincial parks in a future-designated UNESCO heritage site to protect peat, to have a source of carbon storage in Manitoba, what did the members opposite do? They voted against it, Mr. Speaker. They voted against protecting the environment again.

When we brought in legislation that would create the Churchill Arctic Port Canada Authority to expand opportunities in Churchill, to expand opportunities in the North, what did they do, Mr. Speaker? They voted against it. Every single time we take an initiative to improve the lives of Manitobans, the members opposite, they oppose it. They find a reason against it.

Antibullying legislation—a thousand different reasons to be against it. To protect transgendered people in our Vital Statistics department, they find reasons to vote against it. When it comes to inclusiveness, when it comes to human rights, they always have a reason to vote against it, Mr. Speaker. There's no surprise about that.

And, Mr. Speaker, when the former governor of the Bank of Canada, David Dodge, comes out and says, this is the right time to invest in infrastructure, this is the right time to invest in building your communities while reducing your deficit, which is

what we're doing, the members opposite scoff at that plan. Their approach is austerity. Their approach is \$550 million of cutbacks. And every day they add to that cutback. Every day they add another tax cut that they think is going to make things better in Manitoba.

We have kept Manitoba affordable. We have put in place the seniors tax credit here, the seniors tax credit which builds on top of \$1,100 of property tax credits for seniors. Remember what it was when the Conservatives were in government? Two hundred and fifty dollars. Mr. Speaker, \$1,100, with another \$235 being added this year. And what do they do? They vote against it. So, when it comes to looking after seniors, no way for the opposition.

When it comes to health care, no way for the opposition. When it comes to environmental protection, no way for the opposition. When it comes to child care, no way for the opposition. When it comes to good jobs and infrastructure, no way for the opposition. They're the no-way party of Manitoba. We are the party that's paving the way to the future of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, paving the way to prosperity, paving the way to good jobs for the future of Manitoba, while protecting health care, paving the way for a more prosperous Manitoba for all Manitobans. Whether they live in the North, whether they live in rural Manitoba, whether they live in the city, whether they live in the inner city, whether they live in the North End, we're paving the way to a brighter future of Manitoba, and the members opposite, they just want to go on holidays.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. Order, please. Order, please.

I want to remind our guests with us in the gallery here this afternoon that there is to be no participation in the proceedings of the Chamber, and that includes applause. So, please, I'm asking for your co-operation. No applause.

Now, the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, I believe, was rising.

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): I welcome the opportunity to put a few comments on the record in respect to this bill. I think that it's clear that we don't believe that the government is on the right track. I think that's been made eminently clear over the last number of months.

What the government is doing, what the Premier (Mr. Selinger) just spoke to today in respect of

protections is what concerns us most of all. The piece of legislation before us actually gives the government additional borrowing power, gives it the opportunity to sink our province into deeper debt than it already has. What it does is it enunciates this fact that the debt-service costs this year are \$874 million. The debt-service costs are \$874 million this year, and this bill allows the government to go deeper into debt. And, when I asked the Premier if he's concerned, he says he's not concerned. He's blissfully ignorant of the ramifications of this.

We live in an interest-rate climate, Mr. Speaker, that, though not entirely unique, is indicative of a record-low borrowing rate in modern times. And that is tempting this government to believe that they can borrow more heavily and create more wealth and more jobs in the process. The sad part of this is that they actually believe that they can create more wealth and more jobs in the process of spending other people's money than those same people can do by spending it themselves. And this means that what this government stands for is higher taxes—higher taxes—which impact in a real way on Manitobans.

And we have attempted, through various means, to communicate to the government the hurt they are causing; the hurt they are causing to low-income families in this province; the hurt they are causing to people forced to use our food banks at record levels; the hurt they are causing people, single moms, who are trying to raise families in this province; the hurt they are causing retirees; the hurt they are causing. But they will most—[interjection]—they will most certainly heckle and not listen. And I recognize why the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) is heckling rather than listening. I recognize that this is a government that is too tired to be accountable, that is too arrogant to listen—[interjection]—too arrogant to listen and too afraid to face facts—too afraid to face the facts.

The Premier talks about affordability as if he understood the plight of Manitobans trying to live lives that are sustainable financially when he cannot run a government that is sustainable financially. He speaks about spending money he is borrowing. He attempts and his colleagues attempt to do ribbon cuttings and get credit foisted on themselves for spending money they have borrowed, money they have borrowed from the same children they claim to want to protect, money they have taken from people who aren't even able yet to defend themselves by voting in a ballot box, money they've taken from families, money they have taken from seniors who

have worked hard all their lives to accumulate some security and see that security eroded.

When we advocate for an increase in the social allowance, the housing allowance for Manitobans forced to live on social allowance, the government ignores us and ignores those who have stood strong for this and advocated for it for a long time. It's an incredible injustice to those people less fortunate than government members. And then the government chooses to react, finally, not by offering genuine assistance but by phasing in an increase in the allowance. This is akin to seeing someone drowning 100 feet out in a body of water and throwing them 25 feet of rope and saying: Swim for it. Swim for it. We'll help you.

* (17:00)

The government does press releases claiming it cares about these people, but it refuses to help. Instead, it votes itself a vote tax subsidy, so it doesn't have to fundraise, so it doesn't have to reach out, so it doesn't have to ask for help. It doesn't have to humble itself and actually go and work for support. It gets to actually have its support not by working for it but by demanding it.

This is exactly the case the government chose to make in court last week. It made the case not that what it did was right, for it knew that it would lose that case. It made the case not that what it did was moral because it knew it would lose that case as well. It did not try to make the case in court that it was actually keeping its promises because it knew that this was a government that was breaking its promises.

It chose to make the case that the government had the sovereign right to do what it did because it had the power to do it, that it had the right to raise taxes and take away the rights of Manitobans to vote on the issue because, simply put, Mr. Speaker, 37, 6–35 NDP MLAs have more rights than a million Manitobans do. This is a government that would disrespect Manitobans continuously, and in the future with this template established, it will do so again.

Manitobans will not, however, be fooled again by this Premier (Mr. Selinger) and by his colleagues. They understand. They do understand what we understand, that a desperate government makes things up to suit its purposes, that a desperate government will mislead, that it will lie, that it will use taxpayers' resources in an attempt to strike fear

into the hearts of the people who work in our public services, to strike fear into the hearts of Manitoba's seniors, to strike fear into the hearts of all Manitobans if it can because it is only by using that weapon, misinformation and fear, that this government can hope to hang on to any semblance of power. It is about power. It is not about principle, Mr. Speaker.

Manitobans understand that this government already has raised taxes to the point where we have the highest taxes, among the highest taxes, in most categories across this country. They knew that when they ran in the last election. When they ran in the last election, they promised they would not raise taxes. They made that promise because they knew then, but they have forgotten since, that Manitobans were already at the breaking point, that our income taxes were very high, that our sales tax was already high.

And, when they were making these promises, they knew, many of them knew that they had plans to broaden the PST, even at that point that they had plans to hike fees, even at that point on some of the most essential, fundamental items that Manitobans need to buy to support themselves: fuel, car registration, some beer, maybe a little wine, a haircut. These aren't luxury items.

These are fundamental things that the government decided for the fifth time to include under the umbrella of the PST. This government, which has increased the boundaries of the PST on five separate occasions since it came to power, claims to be standing for Manitoba families, but what it is doing is its eroding the ability of Manitoba families to support themselves.

It would prefer a photo op ahead of a successful Manitoba young person. It would prefer a ribbon cutting ahead of a more secure financial future for a senior in our province. It will spend, Mr. Speaker, because it's a government that believes that spending is a way to be popular, but it does not understand how to spend for better results. If it understood that, it would have achieved those results long before now, and it has not.

When this government pins its hopes for the sale of the PST-raising concept to the people of Manitoba on infrastructure, it makes a fatal mistake because for four consecutive years this is a government which has underspent in only one department, Mr. Speaker, only one department of government. They've overspent in every other category, but in one department they have managed to take money and

spend it somewhere else. And that department—well, you know what it is. It's infrastructure.

For every \$4 this government promised to put into infrastructure since this member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) assumed the position of Premier, was not chosen to be the Premier but assumed the position, for every four—every year for four consecutive years, this Premier (Mr. Selinger) and his colleagues underspent in infrastructure. They promised to spend four and they spent less than three.

And now, now they pin their hopes for re-election on one thing and one thing only. They're going to put money where they never did before. They're now going to put it into infrastructure—really, honestly. But Manitobans are right to doubt it, and they do doubt it. They doubt it for good reason. The reality is, of course, that the government has not spent on infrastructure, though it promised to for four consecutive years.

But what did it do in those four years?

An Honourable Member: Nothing.

Mr. Pallister: Oh, it did a lot. It dug a massive debt hole for the future of Manitoba—the future of Manitoba. Instead of \$18 billion four years ago when this Premier came to power, it's over \$30 billion now, and interest rates aren't going down, Mr. Speaker. I don't think they're going down.

So, when this Premier stands up and talks about protecting our future, he is demonstrating an incredible ignorance of basic, fundamental money management, money management that Manitobans have come to understand as especially important in a province with an NDP government that takes away more money from them with each passing year.

Manitobans are making the difficult decisions. When the Premier and his friends stand up and say, oh, it was a difficult decision and cry crocodile tears to attempt to appear empathetic with the people of Manitoba, it is not—it is not believable.

A government can raise taxes. This government did, it does, it continues to, and it will again, given the opportunity. And Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, will not be fooled again.

On the argument that the Premier makes that he is creating jobs, he is fundamentally wrong on two fronts, of course: one, he does not create jobs; the people of this province do, and that's what we

believe. And he should study—today being the Ontario election, the front page of the Globe and Mail last week in which a round of economists harshly criticized the provincial Conservatives for claiming they were doing the same. They actually understand there, as we do here, on this side of the House, that NDP math just doesn't work when it comes to jobs. If it—if the Premier was right in his assertion, having been elected in '99, Mr. Speaker, he equates person-years of employment with jobs, he would actually have had 15 jobs. He hasn't had 15 jobs. Well, if he has, he hasn't done any of them well. The reality is quite different.

Here's a quote from a noted group in Ontario. The former minister of Health, whose out-of-control spending jeopardizes the future of health care in this province, should listen carefully to this. The Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald), who has yet to create a job, should listen carefully to this. He talks about 50,000 when it's probably eight. Here's the reality. This group in Ontario, and you should listen to this, says, this math, it's phony, it's a lie and it represents devastating and inexcusable math calculations.

Some Honourable Members: Who said that?

Mr. Pallister: Who said that? The Ontario NDP; that's who.

Mr. Speaker, as I did earlier, I wish you all the best this summer and everyone in here. I think it's important. I think the one seventeenth of the NDP communications staff that is now listening to this also deserves to have a good summer, and I hope they do their research. I hope they do their research as opposed to just spin, because the reality, of course, is that this is a government that is not ashamed of blaming others. It is unafraid—it is unafraid. But Manitobans are ashamed of this government, and Manitobans are becoming afraid, but it's not of us. It's of this government and any potential future success they might enjoy in gaining power.

The fact is this government can blame everyone and has. One day, it's a bountiful, booming economy; the next day, it's a depression. Mother Nature's at fault. The federal government's at fault. Oh, StatsCan can't count. Statistics Canada is jeopardizing the future of our province. To this tin-cup government, that's the key. More handouts is the key. That's how they'll stay in power, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it's the only way they'll stay in power.

And, frankly, the group that I never expected to see them blame, they finally got down to blaming. *[interjection]* Well, besides each other; they did blame each other. They banished one of their members for telling the truth. They actually managed, in the last two years, Mr. Speaker, to prove the point that they will blame anyone because they blamed Manitobans. They blamed Manitobans for not paying enough tax. They told Manitobans, the most charitable, the most likely to volunteer for a worthy cause, the friendliest, most honest people in the province that live right here in this province, they blame them for not paying enough taxes. And then they saddled them with half a billion dollars a year of additional taxes, took them off the kitchen table, took them away from the small businesses of our province. And they said, we don't trust you to create the jobs, we don't trust you to spend the money you worked so hard for, we don't trust you to spend the money you save. We don't trust you.

Well, Manitobans are going to pay back that insult in a like way because Manitobans don't trust this government anymore.

* (17:10)

And, Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to say a few words because I would say, in the final analysis, Manitobans—I have great confidence in them—will not be fooled again.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on Bill 75?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: House ready for the question?

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 75, The Appropriation Act, 2014, reported from the Committee of the Whole, reported—and be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I believe that concludes the business of the House, and we'll now prepare for the arrival of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

ROYAL ASSENT

Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Ray Gislason): His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

His Honour Philip S. Lee, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the throne, Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour the Lieutenant Governor in the following words:

Mr. Speaker: Your Honour:

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba asks Your Honour to accept the following bills:

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):

Bill 75—The Appropriation Act, 2014; Loi de 2014 portant affectation de crédits

Bill 76—The Loan Act, 2014; Loi d'emprunt de 2014

In Her Majesty's name, the Lieutenant Governor thanks the Legislative Assembly and assents to these bills.

Mr. Speaker: Your Honour:

At this sitting of—the Legislative Assembly has passed certain bills that I ask Your Honour to give assent to.

Clerk Assistant (Mr. Claude Michaud):

Bill 3—The Witness Security Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la sécurité des témoins

Bill 10—The Fires Prevention and Emergency Response Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la prévention des incendies et les interventions d'urgence

Bill 18—The Business Practices Amendment Act (Improved Consumer Protection and Enforcement); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les pratiques commerciales (mesures de protection et d'exécution améliorées à l'intention du consommateur)

Bill 21—The Churchill Arctic Port Canada Act; Loi sur la Société canadienne du Port arctique de Churchill

Bill 23—The Cooperative Housing Strategy Act; Loi sur la stratégie en matière d'habitation coopérative

Bill 31—The Police Services Amendment Act (Community Safety Officers); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services de police (agents de sécurité communautaire)

Bill 32—The Manitoba Institute of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Institut manitobain de l'Association canadienne de gestion des achats

Bill 33—The Apprenticeship Employment Opportunities Act (Public Works Contracts); Loi sur les occasions d'apprentissage en milieu de travail (marchés de travaux publics)

Bill 34—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (High-Cost Credit Products); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur (produits de crédit à coût élevé)

Bill 37—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Connecting Schools to the Internet); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques (branchement à Internet)

Bill 48—The Sioux Valley Dakota Nation Governance Act; Loi sur la gouvernance de la nation dakota de Sioux Valley

Bill 49—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba

Bill 50—The Protection for Temporary Help Workers Act (Worker Recruitment and Protection Act and Employment Standards Code Amended); Loi sur la protection des travailleurs temporaires (modification de la Loi sur le recrutement et la protection des travailleurs et du Code des normes d'emploi)

Bill 51—The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative

Bill 52—The Non-Smokers Health Protection Amendment Act (Prohibitions on Flavoured Tobacco and Other Amendments); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs (interdiction visant le tabac aromatisé et autres modifications)

Bill 53—The Fisheries and Wildlife Amendment Act (Restitution); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche et la Loi sur la conservation de la faune (dédommagement)

Bill 54—The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board Decisions and Hearings); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail (délais relatifs aux décisions et aux audiences de la Commission du travail)

Bill 55—The Environment Amendment Act (Reducing Pesticide Exposure); Loi modifiant la Loi

sur l'environnement (réduction de l'exposition aux pesticides)

Bill 56—The Vital Statistics Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les statistiques de l'état civil

Bill 57—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Countermeasures Against Drug-Impaired Driving); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (conduite avec facultés affaiblies par la drogue)

Bill 58—The Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology Act; Loi sur le Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology

Bill 59—The Adoption Amendment and Vital Statistics Amendment Act (Opening Birth and Adoption Records); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'adoption et la Loi sur les statistiques de l'état civil (accès aux documents de naissance et d'adoption)

Bill 60—The Restorative Justice Act; Loi sur la justice réparatrice

Bill 61—The Peatlands Stewardship and Related Amendments Act; Loi sur la protection des tourbières et modifications connexes

Bill 62—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Contracts for Distance Communication Services); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur (contrats de services de communication à distance)

Bill 63—The Advanced Education Administration Amendment and Council on Post-Secondary Education Repeal Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'administration de l'enseignement postsecondaire et abolissant le Conseil de l'enseignement postsecondaire

* (17:20)

Bill 64—The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le recouvrement des petites créances à la Cour du Banc de la Reine

Bill 65—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail

Bill 66—The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2014; Loi corrective de 2014

Bill 68—The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Critical Incident Reporting); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille (signalement des incidents critiques)

Bill 72—The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les armoiries, les emblèmes et le tartan du Manitoba

Bill 73—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2014; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2014 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité

Bill 74—The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la divulgation de la rémunération dans le secteur public

Bill 203—The Nurse Practitioner Day Act; Loi sur la Journée des infirmières praticiennes

Bill 208—The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act (Support Our Troops Licence Plates); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules (plaques d'immatriculation « Appuyons nos troupes »)

Bill 209—The Lymphedema Awareness Day Act; Loi sur la Journée de sensibilisation au lymphœdème

Bill 214—The Neurofibromatosis Awareness Month Act; Loi sur le Mois de la sensibilisation à la neurofibromatose

Bill 300—The St. Charles Country Club Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation le « St. Charles Country Club »

Clerk: In Her Majesty's name, His Honour assents to these bills.

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

O Canada was sung.

God Save the Queen was sung.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to start first by thanking all honourable members for their work during this session. I think it is very much appreciated by Manitobans for all of the debate that has gone on here, and I appreciate the co-operation of honourable members, especially House leaders, who I've had the opportunity to work with through this session. I very much appreciate your co-operation in helping us through this session.

And I would like to also thank our table officers and our Chamber staff that are here with us for their work through this session as well, and, of course, as most members know, they provide a lot of guidance not only to the Speaker but to members as well, and

I'd like to thank them very publicly on the record for their work during this session.

And, as is our tradition, I'd like to remind honourable members that you're all invited back to the Speaker's office for a reception, and I hope you will be able to join me there.

And, of course, this House is now adjourned and stands—

An Honourable Member: On House business.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan), on House business.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Just a few things I would like to say. First of all, on behalf of the government caucus, Mr. Speaker, thank you for managing this place. I think some of the referees in the World Cup games will have an easier time than you of managing some of the characters in here, and we do thank you for that.

I do thank the Clerk and all of her table officers. They've provided me in my first term as House leader a lot of assistance, that the mistakes that were made were all mine, and I want to thank each of them for helping out. I also want to recognize the Sergeant-at-Arms and all the staff of the Legislature for what they do, and, certainly, Hansard staff. They're cursing me for once again putting vuvuzelas on the record this afternoon, as well as all of the things that we say, and rap once in a while, when we're making speeches. As well, certainly, thanks to all the pages who help out with the work being done here. We wish all of our departing pages all the best.

I do want to acknowledge and thank the Opposition House Leader, There's lots of things we don't agree on because that's our job. Maybe there's some more things we should agree upon, but I want the House to know that when he and I have agreed on things this session, every single time he has followed through on his word, and I certainly appreciate that.

I also want to acknowledge the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) and the member for Riel (Ms. Melnick) who've also been of assistance as we've moved through this session.

There's two staff I want to acknowledge. First is Rob Pankhurst, who works with the opposition caucus, who assists the Opposition House Leader and, as well, Mr. Ben Wickstrom, who assists me. Mr. Wickstrom has either been inspired by me or has been scared off by me, but he'll be starting his law

studies at Robson Hall this fall as that institution begins its second century of legal education in the province of Manitoba. So I do want to wish Mr. Wickstrom all the best in the future.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's really what I wanted to say. I want to wish you, all of our staff and all members of this House a very safe and a very enjoyable summer.

* (17:30)

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): I don't know if I'm granted unlimited time or not on this reply. I want to, on behalf of our leader and our caucus, echo some of the comments.

First, to you, Mr. Speaker, you've distinguished yourself as a fine—one of the finest Speakers that I've seen in the Legislature. I know that you have the unreserved and unanimous support of every member of this House. Also, to our clerks and our table officers and our staff, I think you're the finest table officers, staff and clerks that we have in all of Canada. And we're very, very fortunate to have you here in Manitoba, and you make our jobs a little bit easier, even if we don't always make your jobs all that easy.

To our pages, we've heard about your future. None of them wanted to be MLAs. I don't know what that says after having been here, but they all have very bright futures. And we wish them well. We know that you are truly the future of Manitoba. Also,

to our Hansard staff and all the other staff that make this place run.

Government House Leader (Mr. Swan), I—we—he's right; we don't always agree on things, and a lot of the discussions don't happen in public or in the Chamber, as they shouldn't, but there has to be a level of trust that happens between the government House leaders and also the independent members to make things run here with some semblance of order, even though it doesn't always seem that way. And that trust has been established, and I appreciate the fact that all of us have been able to maintain that trust.

And I want to thank our staff, Rob, who I work most closely with, and, of course, also Ben.

I hope everybody has an enjoyable summer. We didn't have the opportunity to have—well, we enjoyed summer last year, but in a different way than we will this year. But summer is certainly the time to be with family, to be with friends. The good news is is that we wish you all a wonderful summer. The bad news is this ends the sessional agreement, so don't make plans for next year, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I'd like to thank both House leaders for their comments here this afternoon. And, of course, as I've indicated, you're all invited back for a reception, and I wish each and every one of you a pleasant summer and may you all come back safe to this House when we last—when we again meet.

The hour—the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until the call of the Speaker.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 12, 2014

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are also available on the Internet at the following address:

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/index.html>