

**Fourth 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**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
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<i>Vacant</i>	Southdale	—

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, October 22, 2015**

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**Mr. Speaker:** O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Good morning, everyone. Please be seated.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods):** I just wondered if you'd canvass the House to see if there's leave to discuss Bill 208 this morning.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to proceed directly to Bill 208? [*Agreed*]

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—  
PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 208—The Regulatory Accountability  
and Transparency Act**

**Mr. Speaker:** Under private members' business, debate on second readings, public bills, we'll proceed to call Bill 208, The Regulatory Accountability and Transparency Act, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Education, who has five minutes remaining.

**Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning):** I want to begin this morning just by saying that this is a difficult day for people on our side of the House. We are saying goodbye, as I think you would know, to a very good friend this morning, Bonnie Schmidt, who was a legendary New Democrat in many, many ways. And I just wanted to say, and I know my other colleagues will do so, so not so much on behalf of my colleagues, but just to say that we loved Bonnie. We respected her. She was a great political activist and, I have to say, a great political warrior, and I know that we're all going to miss her very, very much.

*Ms. Jennifer Howard, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

As with respect to Bill 208, and I just want to pick up where I left off a few months ago—I say that partly tongue in cheek—just to remind our friends across the way that when they put this kind of bill on the table, they leave the impression that somehow red tape and proper public regulation are the same thing, and, of course, they're not.

We have regulations in our public policy primarily to protect the public, and we do that on a whole range of issues, on public safety issues, whether it's foods or whether it's for employees. These things are essentially and fundamentally important to building safe and healthy communities across the public, but it's the Tory way, of course, to confuse those two things just because they want to—they have such an agenda to deregulate and to privatize and to allow this mythical free market to go on about its own business regardless of the consequences. And, frankly, on this side of the House, we're never going to be prepared for that. We feel very strongly in protecting public services, of course, most importantly—but most importantly in that is protecting the public. That's almost certainly what a good government does. And the Conservative way to deregulate, to privatize, to leave things in the hands of the market only serves to create not a healthier public, not a safer public but, in fact, an unhealthier public and an unsafe public.

And then we do so—we have regulations in place, of course, because we want to protect good employees from getting undercut by shady competitors who put people at risk. And this is another thing that we do is we stand, day in and day out, with Manitobans, Madam Deputy Speaker. We do that because we want to ensure that when people go to work, they're working in a safe environment. And there are, frankly, too many examples of people working in unsafe conditions over time, and so we want to be sure that we're always standing with working people and making sure that we're doing all that we can, providing all the regulatory measures that are in place to ensure that when people go to work in sometimes very dangerous circumstances, that there's very safe practisers are in place to protect

them so that they can go home to their families at night.

Another—of course, we put regulations in place because we want to protect the environment. There—in my own lifetime, in my former academic life was on the history of environmental politics in Canada, and it was one example after another of egregious environmental activities because there was no regulatory mechanisms in place to ensure for a healthy environment. So we do these things, Madam Deputy Speaker, because our interest is—always is to stand with Manitobans, to ensure that we're protecting the public. When workers go to work, we want to be sure that we're protecting them. And, of course, we want to be sure for the future of the planet that we're protecting our environment.

So what we've done is we've tried to take a service-based approach to these things, right, and I certainly at my time at the City, we, really, frankly, invented the whole notion of service-based budgeting. And in that way, you get full participation from people working in those services, the people who consume those services, as well as the policy-makers. And you begin to understand the kinds of things you can do to make life easier for Manitobans because, of course, we all want that. There's a lot of stress in our life, but to make things easier.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, as my time grows short with just five minutes to speak on it, I wouldn't support this bill put in this manner because at the end of the day, we want to stand with Manitobans, make sure their environment is protected, their workplaces are protected and their families are protected. Thank you so much.

**Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul):** Today is indeed an appropriate day to be debating a bill on small business, seeing as it's Small Business Week in Canada. And for those of us who've been involved in small business, we know that there are a lot of things that impede what we're trying to do. They impede small business from growing. In fact, there's a great statistic out of the United States and it says that more individuals in the United States are employed by small-business owners than all multinational corporations combined.

And small business is the backbone of a good economy. It's important to have small business, whether it's a small garage on the corner of your street or a specialty store of some kind, or a restaurant, and we see all kinds of specialty stores

that get into really neat things. We've seen the influx of big box stores, which I don't know if the speaker previous would rather have big box stores. That's certainly the way that he was heading with his comments.

I, for one, would like to see way more small business. I think that's where you grow a real economy. They're the ones who are active in the communities. They're the ones who donate to local community clubs. They're the ones that support local teams.

I know when my son was going to be going out east for the national soccer tournament—his team made it out of Manitoba—and we went not to the big corporations. We didn't go to the government. We didn't go to any of those organizations. We went to small businesses, and they're the ones that gave—and gave readily and gave with an open hand and with a, you know, smile on their face, saying, absolutely, we'd like to support young people going to the soccer tournament and we're more than happy to do it.

\*(10:10)

And that is what we want to encourage. We want to encourage small business that is here in Manitoba. In fact, I would point out to this Chamber that all the biggest employers that are Manitoba-based all started as small businesses.

In fact, Palliser Furniture, as it's known now—it used to be called DeFehr Furniture—they came over from Russia. They were—their factories were all taken away from them by the communists in Russia. And they used to still have—they might still have the little house in North Kildonan where they started—and they would take the living room of the house and make ironing boards. And they started from scratch and from that they built a company that employs a lot of individuals in this city. So I would suggest that it is from small businesses that even big businesses come from, and to suggest otherwise is troubling.

In fact, we have a new Prime Minister in Canada who suggested, of all things, that small business is where rich people hide their money. And I'm sure if there was a comment he would like to take back, I would hope that would be one of his comments. I think that was untoward.

I think small business is where individuals go because they believe there's a niche. They believe that there's something that's being under-represented. I know in a lot of the inner-city communities, that's where small businesses pop up, whether a grocery

store or a place where individuals can get together, maybe to work out or whatever the case may be. And these small businesses should be supported.

So I would like to thank the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) for having brought this forward, and we congratulate her for having done this. In fact, I believe this—a similar resolution has come before this House in 2008. It was reintroduced in 2009. And by the sounds of the speaker before me, who clearly seems to think that big box stores are a far better alternative to small business, I take it that this resolution will not pass, and that is unfortunate because the amount of red tape faced by business is overwhelming.

And I'd like to point out to this House, when I was in—I had a small business at The Forks. I had a year-round Christmas store. When I got into business, I used to pay Workers Compensation Board \$1,200 a year, which for me, was excessive. It was hard to pay, and considering I never had any claims, and I still always felt it was important to have workers' compensation coverage, but it was an onerous amount of money to pay every year.

Well, under the Conservative government of Gary Filmon, they brought in—it depended on the industry, depended on how many claims. And I didn't understand why I, with my little, little store, should be paying that much, and that was almost the same as a construction company where there were far more claims, where there were far more hazards. And, over time, my bill was reduced down to \$200.

I still paid, I was still covered, but it was dependent on how I ran my business and how careful I ran it and to make sure that I was not putting anybody in harm's way. For instance, if you're going to go on the ladder, you make sure somebody's holding the ladder, so on, so forth, so that what I paid was dependent on how I ran my business, and I thought that was a great system.

Those are the kinds of things we can do for business. I would like to thank them for the—all the individuals that they employ, for what they're doing for our economy, for the fact that they're prepared to get up early in the morning. There are a whole bunch of young adults—two young men and a young woman have opened up a great place in the centre of the city called Bronuts. It's brothers and they make their own doughnuts. If nobody's—if you haven't had the chance to be there, they hand—and they make their own doughnuts. They make a fantastic latte, and those are the kinds of businesses we should be supporting.

They go into an area that has not been covered well over the years and they've taken the risk and they're doing fantastic at it. But I know the one brother gets up, I believe, and is in at 2:30 in the morning to start baking doughnuts, and that's what small business is all about, and they're doing a great job.

I would encourage all small business, whether it's the Parlour or Little Sisters or all those other great shops that are coming up. There's another great paper and pen store in that area whose name escapes me right now, and my daughter says they've got some of the best product that you could get. I was in there the other day and, you know, there's all these neat and great ideas, and we want to encourage them.

And this, actually, this resolution would be one of those things that would say that from the Legislature, we recognize what you're doing, we appreciate what you're doing and we'd like you to continue it. I would recommend to this Chamber that we do the right thing and pass this bill.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert):** I would like to put a few words on the record about this bill, which we've heard from them before about this. But it's interesting because the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) has talked about small businesses, well, support for small businesses and cutting for the red tape for small businesses. Well, we cut the small-business tax down to zero to support small businesses. And then, on the other hand, they always say it's just terrible here for small businesses, but then the member for St. Paul just talked about how this new firm is making cronuts and they're thriving here.

And then last year we had the member for Morden and Winkler stand up in this House, saying how the business community in his area is booming and they can't get enough workers, Madam Speaker. He said that the industrial park in his area was just incredibly busy and all these new businesses are popping up.

In fact, Madam Speaker, I'm going to read from an article that was in PROFITguide.com, and it says Canada's best places for business, of the top 50, we're ranked No. 3 out of all of Canada and the United States. It says that location, location, location, where you place your business has a big impact. And out of the 50 of the country's largest municipalities, you will find that Manitoba ranks No. 3. We have the lowest business costs in western Canada, and lower

than every United States jurisdiction that they examined in this article, out of 50, Madam Speaker.

So, for them, they talk one thing but they don't really actually listen to the facts or figures. But that doesn't surprise me based on where they come from. They don't listen to science and facts and figures. I mean, their—thankfully, their cronies in Ottawa are gone and that, you know, the cuts to the environment are gone, which they would say are small. You know, that's the red tape they would cut, right? All of the oceans and fisheries and streams that used to be protected underneath their federal counterparts were not protected. Well, now maybe we'll see some protection being brought back in to protect the environment.

We heard the member talk about workers' compensation and how, you know, he had the rating system. Well, you know what? The rates have consistently gone down. We've worked with businesses, with the workers' compensation rating system, and the rates go down. We actually have a program through the Workers Compensation Board, that if businesses are struggling with a little—with more injuries, higher rates of injuries, they actually go out and they audit the business and they help them, work with them, to bring their rating down because nobody wants to see anybody get hurt at work.

The members opposite call that red tape. That's not red tape. Every worker deserves to go home healthy and safe and the same condition they were in when they showed up for work. That is not red tape, and to cut that kind of stuff would make sure that our worker compensation rates go up, injuries go up, health-care system costs go up, and people go home hurt. And who wants that? Not our side of the House. Seems that the other side of the House does because it's all about cutting red tape to them, but the red tape that they want to cut are things like Workers Compensation Board, environmental laws. These are the things that we need to keep in place in Manitoba.

And, you know, we look at what's going on in Manitoba. Manitoba had the highest increase of productivity out of any province. So, obviously, the regulations and rules that are in place here are not impeding business. The facts and figures don't support the opposition's motion, and they don't support their argument because the facts and figures clearly show that Manitoba is booming and it's a great place to do business. Our small businesses are thriving. So, for them to bring forward this bill,

without any facts or figures behind it, it doesn't make any sense. So, of course, the member opposite said we're not going to support this bill. Well, why would we? It doesn't make sense. This bill is not about cutting red tape. It's about cutting regulations that would hurt industries and hurt people because as we've seen, Manitoba is doing very well. So why would we want to change that, Madam Speaker?

The only people who don't like the fact that Manitoba is doing well are the members opposite. They consistently complain about Manitoba and no, don't put the facts on the record about how good we're actually doing. Second lowest unemployment rate in the country, we're just a couple—0.6 per cent below Saskatchewan for being the first, Madam Speaker, so if we're—if we are that difficult of a province to do business in, do you think that that would be different? Obviously, it's not, but the facts and figures that they've put on—or tried to put on the record are not supported by anything, Madam Speaker. They do not understand that our economy has more than doubled in the last 14 years underneath us and that our percentage of debt to GDP is actually less than it was underneath them because the economy has grown so substantially. They don't seem to put those facts and figures; they just cherry-pick what they want to have on the record.

\* (10:20)

But, Madam Speaker, we have the second lowest unemployment rate, the strongest economy, the strongest job growth as we see from every single financial institution that the Finance Minister put on record yesterday. TD, Royal Bank, Scotiabank, all of those people—and the Conference Board, of course—all of them are saying that we are poised for the best growth, and we've had the best growth. And, actually, out of the last 10 years, we've only had—slipped to second in that category once. In the last 10 years, we went to second. Out of 10 years, we went to second. Otherwise we've been No. 1 in the country for growth and for the economy.

So the members opposite claim that somehow that we have regulations that are hampering business is completely false. Even in their own admissions, they talk about how businesses are thriving in their own communities and in others across this province. Small businesses are very valued to us. We realize that small business creates more jobs in the province than any other business, and that's why we support them. And their reckless plan to cut a half a billion

dollars from the budget would do nothing to help small business. In fact, the small businesses would be hurt because those construction workers that are building the roads and bridges wouldn't be working so they wouldn't be earning the salaries that they earn, which are very good salaries, and then they wouldn't be spending that money in those small businesses' stores.

And that's what people need to realize about their plan is that their plan would cause those same small businesses that they claim to be protecting with some red tape cut that is actually a safety cut or a support cut for those small businesses, that the small business would be hurt by their plan. Their plan, with their cuts, would do nothing for small business. Small businesses would go bankrupt underneath their plan because they wouldn't have consumers buying the product because they wouldn't be working. There is a spinoff that goes from everything that—every construction worker that goes down and it spins off down through the economy, Madam Speaker. They spend money in big stores, small stores, and then those people working in those stores spend money in the small stores in the community and then so on and so on. And the members opposite just don't seem to get that fact and they keep on the one track, which is to cut, cut, cut. All they want to do is slash and burn the economy of Manitoba. They're the only ones that are not happy about the fact that we're actually doing very well.

In 2015, October 8th, TD projected that Manitoba's going to be the top-performing economy over the next three years, with real GDP turnouts surpassing everybody else in Canada. Well, that doesn't signify that this—that there's a lot of red tape here. It signifies to me that we've done a nice balance of supporting businesses with zero small business—especially with the zero small-business tax, and through our systems and supports with WCB and others, to help those small businesses thrive. We've done a good job managing the economy so people are able to spend money in those businesses, and those businesses thrive. So I don't understand why the members opposite don't seem to see this. Their one focus is on cuts, and maybe that's why because they put it through the lens of everything has to be cut.

Well, that's not how you grow the economy, Madam Speaker, and Canadians the other day voted for a plan that was first put out by our government, which is to spend on infrastructure and to build this great province and this great country. So they

actually took a page from us. There was a great article in the paper saying that Trudeau takes a page from Doer when it comes to managing the economy.

And you know what? The members opposite should be very worried about their plan for cuts, cuts, cuts because Canadians and Manitobans and especially Winnipeggers overwhelmingly voted for a plan that's built on infrastructure, exactly what our plan is built on. Our plan is built on building; our plan is not built on reckless cuts like theirs is. Our plan sees the economy continually getting better. We have gone—we were in the top—the bottom three for unemployment. We're now in the bottom two.

And you know what, Madam Speaker? We're going to surpass Saskatchewan, I'm sure, and we were—we're going to become No. 1 in the unemployment in this country and that's due to the supports that this government has put in place—the zero small-business tax that helps businesses thrive. And then we increase the threshold for—from \$425,000 to \$450,000, which allow those businesses to have a little more room to invest into hiring more employees and expanding their businesses in Manitoba.

So Manitoba's a very friendly place to do business and all of our systems that we have in support, from workers' compensation to small business—zero small-business tax to increasing the threshold help grow small business and help grow our economy. And it's been proved over and over by our strong economy, strongest in the country, by our No.1 job growth, and by the fact that we're second lowest in unemployment rate. And the only people in this House that do not like that, Madam Speaker, is the opposition, and their reckless cuts will make sure that we go the other way and unemployment would increase.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** I want to just correct the record so the members opposite really understand what Bill 208 really is all about.

Bill 208 is a regulatory accountability transparency act, and it requires the government to develop formal procedures to make the process for enacting regulations more transparent. This also requires government departments to develop regulatory reform, plans to eliminate unnecessary regulations and encourage restraint in making new regulations. Both the government procedures and departmental plans must be made public.

It goes on. Public reporting on a number of regulatory requirements would improve transparency. Number 2: reducing unnecessary regulations would allow the province to focus on administering regulations that protect Manitobans and serve an important purpose. It would also business owners with more time to focus on their core business activities; (3) business environment of Manitoba must be improved to promote and establish an expansion of businesses in Manitoba to attract businesses to the province. Businesses must know that Manitoba is open for business.

Now, I have a constituent that has a business that she started as a single parent and she's built a very successful business. She's to the point now where she's up in age and she wants to dispose of this business, and she mentored a young woman to take it over, also a single parent of two children, and she said, are you serious? I would never, ever consider taking over your business in today's government's interference in business.

And I want to give you an example. And when you talked about workers' comp earlier, here's what's happened. Yes, we want safe workers and we want safe places to work, but here's what's happened. When they hire a contractor, they hire a contractor—and I hope the Minister of Labour is listening here—when they hire a contractor, they are responsible to ensure that that contractor has workers' compensation. If they do not have workers' compensation, they are held responsible. We do not know from day to day whether they made their payment to Workers Compensation as a sub-contractor, and this is something that needs to be looked at. This is what this bill is all about: transparency, accountability.

Also, I want to put on the record, this same individual that offered her business to this young lady—and, by the way, this young lady is very smart and has lots of talent and, unfortunately, probably what will happen is this business will just be shut down because of the red tape. They are also responsible. Business owners are responsible for collecting deadbeat dads, deadbeat moms for child payments. They have more red tape than you can ever look at. Now, they become a collection agency. They become a collection agency for the government. They do the hard work, the everyday business for this government and the workers that work for them—[interjection]—whether or not—yes, it does. I know it don't make sense, I agree with you. It does not make sense. It does not make sense.

This is about cleaning up bad legislation, and this government needs to pay attention and make sure a lot of these happen. Also, the same business owner, also, we had a conversation about workplace health and safety. Now, one of them come out and said, you can't do any more cleaning with Mr. Clean. Well, because there's not a WHMIS sheet on it. Mr. Clean does not have a WHMIS sheet, and they were taken to task by this government, saying here we go. And this is a exercise place that wants to keep their place clean and shiny, and the government comes out with their inspectors and said, you cannot use Mr. Clean no more. Poor Mr. Clean, he's out the door.

I tell you, folks, you've got to pay attention to the little stuff, and small business is the backbone of this country. Business week, what a grand opportunity for this government to be able to switch their position on this. The men and women that create business in this province should be saluted. They used to be able to say, look, I'll really want to make a difference, and we do try to make a difference. But what we do with all this red tape is certainly not acceptable.

\* (10:30)

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia):** I'm pleased to put a few words on the record and I think I am uniquely qualified to do that because I established a number of businesses under the Conservative regime. I've established more under the NDP regime.

And the interesting part is I know that the members opposite might not have had opportunity to look at what's happening in different provinces. I'm pleased that throughout the last year and a half, two years, I've had some opportunities outside this province. And instead of going outside the province, I've chosen to locate two new corporations within Manitoba because the regulations, the tax rate, et cetera, are much lower within Manitoba than in other jurisdictions.

So an example is in BC, where I will be moving part-time—probably through January and February, I will be in BC—I will be back into Manitoba to manage my businesses. Why am I managing my businesses here? (a) The tax rate is zero per cent here and is actually lower, even above the half-\$450,000 threshold is lower here than in BC and lower in most provinces.

Number 2: This is an interesting part that maybe the members of the Conservative Party should note. When I established my first business, I had to lick a lot of stamps, fill out a lot of paperwork, send it all in. And I want to tell the members opposite that workers' compensation was more work under the Tories than under the NDP because now you can actually fill out the forms online. You can submit them online. You can pay for them online. Hallelujah. No. 2: That's using the Internet and commerce.

Now, I know when I was minister of Industry, we brought in BizPaL, and it was the first time that we were able to conduct transactions, business 'tansactions' between business and government online. The interesting part is the Conservative Industry minister came here, the first jurisdiction in Canada to launch BizPaL, because they thought we were a progressive government that was positive to business, and I am pleased we were able to do that.

And I'm pleased that when I looked at my new business, a new corporation—it's doing some very, very interesting things in advertising and stuff like this—when we located it here, the interesting part is I went to BizPaL, submitted all the forms on BizPaL and, I have to admit, there is some regulations. The regulations are the following: you actually have to register for taxes and to pay some taxes. Now, I do admit, I—in the new business, I'm not paying any taxes because our—into Manitoba because our income is under the \$450,000 threshold, and we do not pay tax in Manitoba. Although we have to register a business number, it's a federal biz number.

We also actually have to register workers' compensation. I'm sorry but as a responsible business owner, if somebody got hurt in my operation, I would want them to be compensated. Now, the members opposite might not know this, but workers' compensation protects the business as much as it protects the owner, because I do not want to be sued. I do not want to have a person hurt, so, actually, I believe in workers' compensation. So when I pay for workers' compensation, I know that I'm buying an insurance plan for me and I'm buying an insurance plan for my workers, and I believe in that.

Number 3: I actually do not mind environmental regulations. Why? Because, to me, if I'm hurting the environment—I'm talking about the future—I think I have to do the responsible thing. So an example was we actually spent more money for servers and for blade servers and when I say more money, a normal

server that uses a lot more electricity costs about 15 to 20 thousand dollars. A high-efficient server requires about \$25,000. I am going to choose to use a more energy-efficient server, blade server, because it's the right thing to do.

If it's the wrong thing to do to pollute the environment, I'm not going to pollute the environment. I'm not going to use a caustic chemical that's been regulated as inappropriate. Now, I know that when I was younger, I was exposed to a lot of chemicals. I looked at the science. I looked at the technology, and I am happy when they took DDT out of the market because it saved people's lives. I believe we have a choice between a little bit smell—a fresher carpet or cancer. I know which choice I'm going to take.

Now, Madam Speaker, the other thing is—and so I believe in environmental regulations. I am totally in disagreement with the members of the opposition in their food policy. I know the federal Conservative Party, which all these members cheer and expose, got rid of a lot of food safety.

And, you know, you look at some of the issues in Alberta. We had that great big plant that had an unbelievable contamination that affected 22 people, killed some people. I'll tell you, if I had a choice to have a regulation, to have someone come in and say, listen, your operation could kill people, or you could follow some regulations and have a good operating business, I would welcome that—and I would welcome that.

And finally, I want to say to people an interesting part that was interesting in my life because it was a high point, when we won an Emmy for the best broadcast design in the world, and we were in New York and we were competing with companies from New York and LA and all these others. And what was interesting about it was we weren't looking at the lowest value of ability. We were the best in the world. And when my spouse went up to get the award for the Emmy, someone said, how could you compete in the world against all these huge companies and win? And the answer is why not. And Manitobans should be proud. They compete annually in multiple events. They compete around the world.

And so it's interesting to note that a Manitoba company I'm involved in has won an Emmy for Major League Baseball, won an Emmy for Super Bowl, has done things like the Hockey Night in

Canada, has done wonderful things. And, you know what? It's because we can.

And I think that small businesses—I agree only with one part. Yes, they are a backbone of our province and we should embrace them. The difference is I've owned businesses under the Conservative government. I've owned businesses under the NDP government, and the NDP government has improved the situation drastically.

Finally, finally, it's interesting to note that when you look at all the third-party measurements of competitiveness, all the three-third-party member-measures of competitiveness, Manitoba comes out on top.

So let's look at red tape. Red tape is involving environmental safety, the—worker's compensation and taxes and zoning. That's what we deal with. To me, that makes sense, and when regulations make sense that's important.

And I'd like to close with one final comment. When I was minister of Industry we went through this whole process. We went through all the regulations. We got rid of some forms so you can—combined a bunch of forms, and we did that. And we had an operation where we had businesses involved, integrated—I'd like to thank the Deputy Minister Hugh Eliasson for doing that, leading that through all the departments. And you know what? We got rid of lots of forms; we put them online. We did all that, and the Conservative Party voted against the money to do that initiative. So let's put all true rack—the comments on the record. I know what our record is. I've been successful in the business.

And by the way, I much prefer responding to my business inquiries online any time I want, versus licking stamps, sending in paper and—by the way, the one thing that I really appreciate is the one business identifier number, which we lead, and it was a fabulous enterprise. I can still remember issues there. You had six different numbers for one business. That simple thing made a huge difference to my life. And I'll tell you, my spouse loves it because it's less confusing.

So thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to say that we need to continue as an NDP government to be positive small business.

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden):** Madam Deputy Speaker, I'd like to put a few words about this Bill 208. Came forward from our—my colleague

from Tuxedo, about small business and the red tape that is faced by small business is overwhelming.

\* (10:40)

One of the reasons why I believe I—like, I ran for MLA for Arthur-Virden was I grew up—I had a small business for over 20 years and I've been proud of it. I got to know a lot of other business owners because of the type of work I did. I was a financial planner. My expertise was for small business to corporate businesses and farmers.

And, I've sit down and had conversations with many of the business owners out there. We've actually—I was on the—I was the president of the economic development board, I was also on—I helped people with their business plans over the years, just as a volunteer to—you know, it was a good. If a business actually thrives in Virden and starts up in Virden it's a—it was a win-win for everybody. And the more successful they became, the more successful the community became.

And, one of the things what I—these last, especially since 2010, the frustrations that I had to endure with talking to small-business owners who are just starting out was the frustrations of the red tape that they had to deal with. Some of them who have actually bought smaller businesses that, you know, if I would have known what I have to go through right now, I don't think I would have bought this business.

We had many business's owners who wanted to establish, and they were so frustrated with the red tape that—especially in the oil patch, there was a lot of new, created businesses in the oil patch. Unfortunately, a lot of them actually went to Saskatchewan to incorporate once they got bigger because they were just so frustrated with the way that the red tape—the delays. The situation with the corporate taxes in Saskatchewan were better because, again, everybody in business starts businesses to grow that business. And, when they get to that situation, they want to pass—they want to continue growing that business. And, a lot of times, they have to incorporate because they have a better tax advantage. They get the large—over the \$400,000 business small—over the past the exempt small business limit. And, so, they incorporate. And with the frustration with the incorporation they went to Saskatchewan. I don't know how much revenue we actually have lost of incorporation in Saskatchewan.

The—I had—when I was running—going around to different communities to—for my nomination, and I remember one of the communities that I stopped in was Melita. And a new hotel was being built in Melita. And one of the things, when we discuss with the different groups and individuals in Melita, business people in Melita, they tell me how the owner of the—of that new hotel, who actually built five hotels in Saskatchewan, was now coming to Manitoba to do—to expand his franchise. And, when he came to Melita he—it took so long for—it was the red tape that he was—complained about, but it was also the delays that the front-end lines, I think, you know, Manitobans are paying more and getting less, especially in front-line services. The NDP wastes have been created a lack of front-line services, and I think that was a reason why this person was so frustrated building in Manitoba. His run-up costs were over \$300,000 more than he would have built in Saskatchewan. He said to many of the local business owners, he said he'll never build another hotel in Manitoba. This was four years ago. To this day, he still hasn't built a hotel in Manitoba. He is still expanding to Saskatchewan.

Listening to other people that I know in Saskatchewan, you know, they've actually—Saskatchewan actually has come up with—a number of years ago Saskatchewan held a regulatory modernization conference. National—international regulatory experts came together to discuss how modernized and streamlined Saskatchewan regulatory system, to make it more transparent, customer focused and outcome based. Enterprise Saskatchewan, the government economic development agency established a regulatory modernization council to provide advice on ways to enhance regulatory services and ensure a competitive regulatory environment.

And I see that, right now, Madam Deputy Speaker, when you look in Saskatchewan—I looked at the census, the last census that came out, and what was really disturbing that, even with the oil industry growing in North Dakota which, the population of North Dakota has really grown, and Saskatchewan has grown.

I looked at the town of Virden, how much it grew in that period of time and, unfortunately, the growth of Virden was only 3.1 per cent. That was—I mean, they have an oil patch. Meanwhile, Moosomin grew by 13 per cent. So, this is reason why so many companies are located in Saskatchewan, is because of the lack of red tape and less—the red tape—and

this is why they have actually incorporated in Saskatchewan.

The population has grown, the business community's growing, more—unfortunately, seeing—what we're seeing in our side of the border, we're seeing a lot of stores closing in our communities. We're seeing small business close down and retail—we're seeing lots of retails closing in Melita where the member of Minto has—used to grew up. You go talk to her residents there. They're actually suffering in that town, even that there was an oil patch. They're hurting.

And, unfortunately, this government has not been able to listen to the businesses. I had an opportunity to talk to my colleagues from the investment industry in the city of Winnipeg and other business owners now that I'm in this role. And the most frustrating they have is that this government has to be changed. And we're doing everything possible to make a better environment to go forward in this province because we do have a province that has a lot of prosperity.

When I was in the investment world, they said that the most underdeveloped area in North America is the Red River Valley. And right now when we see Saskatchewan and North Dakota really growing, yes, they had industry, but they're diversifying their economy.

And even mining, we were seeing in mining situations, you know, we've chasing the small 'explorators'-exploration companies out of this province. And the—Saskatchewan is actually embracing that opportunity and that's why they're growing, even with the low oil prices.

We have the opportunity here, Madam Deputy Speaker, to grow if we get—and I'm—this is why I'm in favour of reducing the transparency of red—getting rid of red tape.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon):** I'd like to put a few words on the record here.

First off, I want to congratulate all the small-business owners we have in the room here. It's kind of nice to see. We have a lot a common from business stores to financial advice to myself.

My wife and I, we ran a business making baby carriers. And actually, we were one of the first businesses in Manitoba, even before SIR, Sidney I. Robinson, to have a 1-800 number. And a lot of

people, we advertised in national magazines around North America, would say where the heck is Flin Flon? And we'd have to explain.

So it was really neat that small businesses under the NDP government were given opportunities to act on a much bigger stage. Unfortunately, there's a lot of competition out there. And I have to say, my wife, after 25 years of making baby carriers, retired. And it was a tough go. And believe me, for small businesses it is a tough go and we have to work to help small businesses.

I know with us with the NAFTA free trade agreement, there wasn't the free trade agreement that we actually thought there was. We'd buy cotton or whatever in United States for—we always made our carriers out of 100 per cent cotton—and we'd bring it back to Canada. And we actually cut and made the carrier right in Flin Flon. We had up to eight or 10 workers sewing the carriers. Again, it came down to cost. We couldn't keep our costs down. And through NAFTA, because we bought, say, D-rings that weren't made in Canada or made in the United States, that we would get penalized, and NAFTA was a big disappointment.

And now we're talking about an even bigger agreement that the Conservatives, the federal Conservatives, are trying to get through, and that's the TPP, the Trans-Pacific Partnership. And I wonder how this is going to affect small businesses not only in Manitoba, but in the rest of Canada. We've seen manufacturing leave, from automobiles to all kinds of manufacturing in Canada. We've seen farmers—the small farmer has sold out to big corporations. And this is a concern to me because we—this country was built on the backs of small farmers, and we're seeing that the competition is becoming so great. We see that the federal government has sold the Wheat Board to a huge corporation and not protecting our small businesses, the small farmers.

And I know, I look at my friends on the right here, and nothing's being said about that. They're saying, well, you know, that there's red tape and there's regulations. Well, getting rid of the red tape of the Canada Wheat Board and giving it to some international corporation who does not care—does not care—about our small little farmers, that concerns me greatly. It concerns me greatly because they don't seem to be able to differentiate between red tape and regulations.

\* (10:50)

I also have a background in mining. I have a background in mining and we have a fairly large corporation. It used to be just a Canadian corporation but it is an international corporation where Flin Flon and Snow Lake used to be the heart of HudBay. It's just a small part they have also expanded into Peru and into the United States, and what you have to be concerned about is our labour laws and the protection for workers, and we have to really be concerned about the environment.

We've got international companies coming into our province, okay, coming into our province, and with a flip of a switch they can leave—they can leave—and we as a government have to make sure that our government is looking after the people that work for these corporations. We have to make sure—*[interjection]* Mr. Speaker, I can't talk because of the marshmallow head here, please, let's—I cannot—but anyways, we have to realize that corporations have to be responsible—responsible—for the environment. They have to be responsible for the labour and the infrastructure that was built up because of the companies here.

Flin Flon is over 100 years old. The infrastructure was built basically by—I guess you could say not HudBay that the company is now, but an earlier company that was owned by Whitney from New York and he built most of the infrastructure. Well, the infrastructure is now a hundred years old. We need it replaced, and we're looking to the taxpayers, all Manitoban. We should be looking to the corporations that we built it for. We built the town of Flin Flon for the mine. We built it for the mine, and what we have to realize is that now with the population going down, we have to look at ways to help with our infrastructure, and we have to look at partnerships, I think, with the companies to work together to make sure that the communities in the north that were built on resources can continue.

There will always be mines in the north but we got to realize at one time the companies like Sherritt Gordon, HudBay, like Inco, were Canadian companies. They had a stake in it. Those companies are gone. The Conservative government has allowed Inco to be bought by Vale. It has allowed Sherritt Gordon to escape and go to Cuba. It has allowed companies, like international companies, to not be responsible for the environmental damage. If you go up to Lynn Lake, Mr. Speaker, and see the damage that Sherritt Gordon that has done and it's cost us something like 50, 60 million dollars. Then what we have to realize that there has to be a responsibility.

When the Conservative government allowed Inco to be bought by Vale—and right now things are tentative of course, because with the price of minerals being down, these companies are looking for other opportunities. We're doing great. We're doing great in the Flin Flon-Snow Lake area. We've opened up two mines in the last few years, and we're also exploring for other opportunities in and around the areas. But we shouldn't, and we cannot allow resources not to be, say, manufactured in our own country to be sending raw materials to China or to Europe to be changed into a material that can be used in the manufacturing of cars or whatever.

I—like I say, I know small business is a challenge. On both sides of the House we've heard from speakers that have been involved in small businesses, and we've got to make sure that things can—the red tape can be less and less, and we as a government have done that. We have to realize that we have no small-business tax anymore. We did that. We did that to help small businesses.

The Opposition Leader tried to block new rules to protect safety of highway workers and first responders. That is shame, thank you. The Opposition Leader voted against rules to protect consumers from hidden fees from buying a vehicle.

I know my friend here in the rear, he put in place regulations so that that would stop. The Opposition Leader voted against new rules to ensure warranty protection from families buying new homes. I saw one situation where a person bought a new home, and not even within a year the foundation was cracking and whatever. And nowhere to be found was the builder and things.

We want regulations to protect the people of Manitoba. They don't want regulation. Every one of them voted against the regulations we put in place. They're saying let's not have regulations; let's have a free economy where we can have entrepreneurs without any responsibility come into our country, like Inco—I mean, like Vale, like international companies coming in here without having regulations.

I'm saying it's important that we stand up for the people in Manitoba, and I'm proud to be part of a government, a government that looks at the people. We are the party of we; you are the party of me. And we have to realize that by standing up for the people, we're doing the right thing. *[interjection]*

And you may laugh, you may laugh, sir, but I'll tell you, you got to realize and if you get into small business like farming you want regulations, you want protections. You don't want the great big international Wheat Board telling you where and when you can sell your wheat. Thank you, Ms.—Madam Speaker. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

### House Business

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** The honourable Opposition House Leader, on House business. *[interjection]*

Order, please. Order, please.

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

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** On House business.

**Mr. Goertzen:** In accordance with the rule 31(9), I'd like to announce that the private member's resolution that'll be considered next Thursday is the resolution on Provincial Government Stifling Winnipeg Economy, sponsored by the honourable member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson).

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** It has been announced that the private member's resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on Provincial Government Stifling Winnipeg Economy, sponsored by the honourable member for Tuxedo.

\* \* \*

**Hon. Melanie Wight (Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities):** So pleased to get a chance to speak to this.

Manitoba's one of the most affordable places to live, to work, to raise a family in the entire country. We have the lowest hydro rates. We have guaranteed in law that we are going to continue to have that. That helps small business. In every area this is one of the best places in the entire country to start a new business.

And it saddens me, Madam Speaker, when—I know in this House there's a lot of rhetoric, and so they can say whatever they want and that's fine, and we all understand why they do that. So it's not based on facts, they just throw out whatever they want. But it saddens me when they're actually going to their constituents, as a member opposite mentioned in his speech earlier, and not helping that person understand what an opportunity they have to start a new business here in Manitoba, now. And to me you

have now become harmful to your constituents, the opposite of what you should be doing in this job.

So if you want to sit in here and say these things, that's one thing. But when you have a constituent that's wondering whether or not they should start a business in Manitoba and you aren't telling them the truth about what an incredible province this is to start a new business in, that is a disgrace, in my opinion. And it is just harmful to your people and we are not the only people saying this.

People all over are talking about Manitoba being the most attractive place to do business. A study, for example, in March 2012 by international KPMG showed Manitoba to have the lowest overall business costs in the North American midwest. Overall business costs between 13 and 21 per cent lower than the US average. You are not doing your constituents any favours by telling them the same rhetoric you tell in this House.

If—I'm not sure if people just aren't knowledgeable enough, Madam Speaker, about what the facts are, and they're being honestly misleading people, or they're intentionally doing that to their constituents. I just—I'm sorry. But you need to be telling the truth to the actual constituents so that they are taking every advantage of the great chances and opportunities that they have today in our province.

We have the largest—

\* (11:00)

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order, please.

When this matter is next before the House, the honourable member for Burrows (Ms. Wight) will have seven minutes remaining.

## RESOLUTIONS

### **Res. 15—Prioritizing the Health and Safety of Manitoba Stroke Victims**

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** The hour being 11 a.m., we're moving to private members' resolutions, and the resolution for this morning is in the name of the honourable member for Charleswood, Prioritizing the Health and Safety of Manitoba Stroke Victims.

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** I move, seconded by the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler),

WHEREAS stroke is the leading cause of adult disability in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS circulatory diseases are the most common cause of death in Manitoba, with stroke

being the third leading cause of death in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS at least 1,475 Manitobans had a stroke in 2011-2012, representing a rate of 2.5 strokes for every thousand residents, and in two hundred and thirteen there were 608 Manitobans who died from a stroke; and

WHEREAS a stroke always constitutes a medical emergency and hospitals in other parts of Canada have dedicated stroke units with specialized staff and services for the treatment and management of stroke patients to improve care and outcomes for people with stroke; and

WHEREAS the Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke Care recommends stroke patients should be treated on a specialized stroke rehabilitation unit that is geographically defined; and

WHEREAS dedicated stroke unit care reduces the chances of death and disability for all people regardless of the severity of the stroke by up to 30 per cent; and

WHEREAS every other Canadian province has realized the value dedicated stroke units create for patients and have all established these unique medical units, placing Manitobans at a disadvantage for receiving stroke care due to being the only province without a stroke unit; and

WHEREAS despite knowing these facts the provincial government last year refused to support a resolution to establish a dedicated stroke unit in the province, putting the health and safety of thousands of Manitobans who have had a stroke at risk.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to immediately establish a specialized, interdisciplinary dedicated stroke unit within a tertiary care hospital.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Is there agreement of the House to consider the resolution as printed? *[Agreed]*

It's been moved by the honourable member for Charleswood, seconded by the member for Lakeside, that

WHEREAS stroke is the leading cause of—dispense?

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Dispense.

Sorry, I have to ask again. Is there leave for the resolution to be considered as printed? *[Agreed]*

*WHEREAS stroke is the leading cause of adult disability in Manitoba; and*

*WHEREAS circulatory diseases are the most common cause of death in Manitoba, with stroke being the third leading cause of death in Manitoba; and*

*WHEREAS at least 1,475 Manitobans had a stroke in 2011/2012, representing a rate of 2.5 strokes for every thousand residents, and in 2013 there were 608 Manitobans who died from a stroke; and*

*WHEREAS a stroke always constitutes a medical emergency and hospitals in other parts of Canada have dedicated units with specialist staff and services for the treatment and management of stroke patients to improve care and outcomes for people with stroke; and*

*WHEREAS the Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke Care recommends stroke patients should be treated on a specialized stroke rehabilitation unit that is geographically defined; and*

*WHEREAS dedicated stroke unit care reduces the chances of death and disability for all people regardless of the severity of the stroke by up to 30%; and*

*WHEREAS every other Canadian province has realized the value dedicated stroke units create for patients and have all established these unique medical units, placing Manitobans at a disadvantage for receiving stroke care due to being the only province without a stroke unit; and*

*WHEREAS despite knowing these facts the Provincial Government last year refused to support a Resolution to establish a dedicated stroke unit in the province, putting the health and safety of thousands of Manitobans who have had a stroke at risk.*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Provincial Government to immediately establish a specialized, interdisciplinary dedicated stroke unit within a tertiary care hospital.*

**Mrs. Driedger:** Madam Deputy Chair, this is the third time I have risen in this House to put forward this private member's resolution, and this government has refused to support the establishment

of a dedicated stroke unit every time we have stood up and asked for it.

I am very concerned about that because we are the only province in Canada that does not have a dedicated stroke unit, and that matters for a lot of reasons, Madam Deputy Speaker, because if we had a dedicated stroke unit, we would have better outcomes for patients. We would have less disability; we would have less death; and Manitoba patients would benefit.

I do not understand why this NDP government has refused to do that and why Manitoba is the last province in Canada and doesn't have a dedicated stroke unit. All the evidence points towards the fact that this is absolutely valuable and necessary and there are so many good reasons to have it.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to indicate that the Manitoba Heart and Stroke Foundation is very, very active in promoting the fact that Manitoba needs a dedicated stroke unit, and I would like to acknowledge today the presence in the gallery of a number of members from the Manitoba Heart and Stroke Foundation who are here today to support this resolution and urge government to do the right thing and support this.

I don't understand why we have to be the only province in Canada that is not accepting the value of having a dedicated stroke unit. I understand that the WRHA is wanting one. It appears that it is this NDP government that is the roadblock to improving better care for stroke patients in Manitoba. To me, that makes this government negligent in addressing the issue of stroke care in Manitoba.

Manitoba has—and the numbers are quite high, Madam Deputy Speaker. We have a large stroke volume here. We have approximately 1,700 a year; 1,000 of those that are in the WRHA. And yet, this government does not seem to want to address this. We have the—one of the highest rates of death due to stroke of any province in Canada.

Imagine, Madam Deputy Speaker, the lives that could be saved and the disability that we could prevent if we had such a unit, but not only all of that, even just looking at the finances of having such a unit. We could actually be saving money in this province because there is research that actually indicates because of length of stay that would be shortened because of less services that are needed afterwards if a person isn't as disabled. You can actually save money. So while you put forward a

certain amount of money for the dedicated stroke unit upfront, it certainly shows that over time there can be a significant savings from this.

But not just the savings, Madam Deputy Speaker—I was a neurosciences nurse for many years, and that was my speciality in nursing. And I looked after a lot of stroke patients. And I spent a lot of time with them and with their families. And stroke is a very, very severe disability for a lot of patients, and it robs people of a quality of life. And for that reason alone—and we are looking at 1,700 a year that have a stroke in Manitoba, and those numbers are going up. They're going up by hundreds. And Manitoba and the Prairies are projected to see more stroke patients in the coming years.

But one of the reasons we're going to see more stroke patients too is because of the demographic. We've got the baby boomer bubble that is coming. With aging demographics, we are going to see an increased number of strokes in Manitoba. And it has also been pointed out to me that what we are seeing nowadays too is that younger people are having stroke as well. It's not just the older people.

The reasons are all there for a dedicated, co-ordinated stroke-care system because what we have right now in Manitoba is inconsistent and it needs improvement. I don't think it sits very well with many people in Manitoba, and I would think patients, in particular, that they don't have the same care, because of geography, as every other province in Canada.

Why do we have to be dead last again in Manitoba in not having a dedicated stroke unit? We have lost a neurologist to another province because we don't have a stroke program here that is co-ordinated and provides these types of services. The program itself certainly may be questioned when it comes to accreditation if we do not move more aggressively towards establishing a stroke unit.

The government has the ability to make this happen. Obviously, if the WRHA wants to do it, the holdback is this NDP government. And I do not understand why they are not prepared to move forward with this.

They're going to say, well, we've implemented Telestroke. Well, that's good. But having two Telestroke units in northern Manitoba and one coming up in Dauphin, while it's good, does not replace having a dedicated stroke unit at a tertiary-care hospital here. And I know they're going

to try to deflect from this by, you know, talking about the Telestroke program. But it's too—it's not quite the same thing. The Telestroke program is good; I'm glad they're moving ahead with it. It's time we caught up with other provinces. But what we do need is this dedicated stroke unit.

\* (11:10)

Right now, stroke care is scattered across regions' hospitals and even across boards within hospitals. As I said, we're losing stroke expertise in our province with one neurologist moving to another province. And we should all be very concerned about that, because once you lose people, and once you have a poor reputation across Canada for not having the standard we need for delivery of stroke care, we're not going to be able to encourage doctors that want to come here. When that happens, you have the collapse of a stroke program.

And I do not understand why we have had to come forward year after year with a resolution and always be turned down by this government. The evidence is so strong that this type of unit holds the strongest evidence for reduced mortality. If we could save some lives, why are we not doing it? If we could decrease disability, why are we not doing it? If we could save money, why are we not doing it?

I do not understand why this NDP government has just dug in their heels on this issue and not moved forward on it. I find that troubling and I find it, you know, strange that, for those reasons, they haven't done this.

This idea was put forward a number of years ago. It's not new. There has been work done by the WRHA in looking at this for a number of years. There are a lot of people working very hard for it. Why do we allow Manitoba to become the only province in Canada without this unit?

There's so many compelling reasons that we should have it. I do not understand why this government has dug in their heels on this issue and absolutely refused to do it. It's well past its due date. I don't think we should be happy, again, to be dead last in anything in health care. I think they need to step up their game and try a little harder to do what's right for patients and what's right for families, because that's what this should all be about.

So, if we're looking at, you know, 600 people dying—over 600 people dying a year, 1,700 patients a year having a stroke, we could do a lot better for them and their families.

I would really urge the government today, and I hope they will do it, is support this private member's resolution. Don't let this be about politics. I think make this about what's right for patients. Support this resolution today, and let's move forward to do the right thing for stroke patients in Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Hon. Deanne Crothers (Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors):** I'd like to start by thanking the member opposite for bringing this resolution forward, and before I begin to speak to the resolution itself, I'd—I would like to recognize and thank the members of the Heart and Stroke Foundation who are here today for their good work in this province, and we're certainly appreciative of all that they do.

We know Manitoba families and individuals who are dealing with this health issue want to know that they should—that should they or their loved one ever suffer a stroke that they're going to have the best care that they can get, regardless of where they are in the province.

We know the moments after a stroke are critical, and that those moments make a huge difference in a stroke victim's quality of life. And I do have to put on the record the great door-to-needle time that we have here in Winnipeg when it comes to rapid access to using the life-saving drug tPA. We're recognized by the Canadian Stroke Network as having the best door-to-needle time in the country. HSC had a time of 15 minutes compared to a national average of 74 minutes, and the recommended time is 60 minutes, so that has to be noted.

Now, I want to speak from my own department on this. We know that the focus on prevention and healthy living is impacting—it's decreasing the number of Manitobans who suffer strokes. We have 2.7 people per 1,000 in 2010-2011 suffering from a stroke compared to 3.5 people per 1,000 in the year 2000. So, we are making a difference with a preventative approach and we know there's more work to do.

But I'd like to take this opportunity to talk about some of the work we've been doing with Manitobans to help them lead healthier lives. My department is a joy to lead, I have to say. I get to work on preventative measures every day and to talk with people who are interested in promoting things that provide healthier options for people, and encourage

people to make healthy choices about their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

So in my department we're working to encourage Manitobans to make healthy lifestyle choices that prevent strokes from happening, and we want to make sure that we're able to treat strokes quickly and effectively when they do happen and provide high-quality rehabilitation for patients who suffer a stroke. We know that living a healthy lifestyle can help reduce that risk and to speed up recovery after suffering from one.

In 2003, when my department was born in Manitoba, it—we created this department to focus on healthy living, health promotion and disease prevention. And we're working hard every day to increase physical activity, to encourage healthy eating, to reduce barriers to quit smoking, promote mental wellness, as well as reduce preventable injuries and the risk of chronic disease. We partnered with community organizations and other stakeholders such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation here on preventing—and we've looked at things such as smoking prevention, physical activity initiative and healthy eating. And I want to talk about those three things specifically.

In terms of quitting smoking or encouraging Manitobans to never take it up in the first place, it's an important factor in maintaining overall health and we know it has an impact on stroke as well. We were the first province to bring in our indoor smoking ban in 2004, and this has benefited Manitobans dramatically. We've seen smoking rates decrease for teens from age 15 to 19 drop to 13 per cent from 29 per cent. We recently introduced legislation that will ban candy- and fruit-flavoured tobacco products, and we're now working to ensure that the legislation brought forward on e-cigarettes is implemented. We also have new initiatives and we're expanding current ones that achieve four main goals: preventing youth from starting to smoke, protecting non-smokers to exposure to second-hand smoke, helping smokers quit and denormalizing tobacco products and their use. By focusing on prevention, Manitoba will see further overall declines in smoking rates and reduced health-care costs in the future and, most importantly of all, it will impact their lives positively so they are not facing the negative health implications not only for themselves, but for their family members if they were to continue to smoke.

We banned smoking on playgrounds and beaches in provincial parks in 2014 and we've had a

very successful school-based prevention program called the Review and Rate, in place for 10 years that reaches 15 to 20,000 students each year. They're very excited about this program. They get very engaged in the process of choosing the most poignant commercial possible and then see it aired on television. About 99 per cent of teachers who run the program say it's effective and that they want to continue to run it, and we're continuing to support it.

Last year, 700 Manitobans signed up for the Manitoba Quits quit-and-win contest, which provided a positive 'incentative' to help Manitobans quit smoking. We know it is not an easy thing to do. We also have the Manitoba Smokers' Helpline, which has experienced a twofold increase in call volumes, thanks to the placement of the 1-800 number on the cigarette packaging. Many more Manitobans are accessing this free professional smoking cessation service and they're succeeding at quitting because they're getting advice that's going to help them in their particular situation at the stage of life that they're at.

We also added the smoking cessation drug Champix to the provincial drug formulary in November 2011 to assist smokers with quitting if that's the way they chose to attempt to quit.

And I'm spending a lot of time talking about this because I really believe that focusing on prevention will have a very large impact on the kinds of health ailments that people are facing when they are in a crisis situation. And it's important for us to keep talking about the fact that on this side of the House we are focused on prevention, we care about people, we want to make sure that they have healthy choices. It's not always easy to make healthy choices, especially if you're dealing with more than one issue at a time in your life. And we want to make sure that people are able to tap into what we have available for them to make healthy choices and have the benefit of better health themselves.

Now, one of the pieces I mentioned already was physical activity. And we know that physical activity improves overall fitness. It reduces the chances of stroke and other illnesses and it helps the body recover if it does undergo trauma, and it also benefits mental health, I have to say.

\* (11:20)

We've invested more than \$1.7 million in 738 grants to communities in motion projects since the program was launched in 2005. We now have

165 registered communities and 615 schools in motion across the province.

We know that seniors are at an increased risk of heart attack disease and stroke. So we want to ensure that seniors are living active, healthy lifestyles minimizing their chance of suffering a stroke. We have 100 communities that have registered under the Age-Friendly Manitoba Initiative, supporting seniors in leading active, socially engaged, independent lives that contribute to healthy aging.

The other component that I mentioned and I'm going to talk about right now is healthy eating, and this is something that anyone at any age obviously needs to be focused on. I'm speaking as a parent with two young children. We're talking regularly about what's a healthy choice and what isn't. It's sometimes an uphill battle, but we continue to stress at home how important it is, and I know many Manitoban families—Manitoban—families of any age are conscious of the fact that eating healthy is important.

And since 2010 we've partnered with Peak of the Market and the Manitoba Association of Home Economists on the Farm to School fundraiser, which ensures that fundraising through schools and daycares can be about healthy stuff, not just chocolates and candies. And in 2013 our budget, we invested over \$325,000 on school-nutrition programs including a 25 per cent increase to the fruit and vegetable snack program. And most recently I had the great pleasure of being in Churchill for an AFFIRM announcement. AFFIRM is Affordable Food in Remote Manitoba. This is something that I'm so pleased that we've brought forward from this side of the House, which is promoting affordable, healthy foods for northern communities so that milk and fresh fruit and fresh vegetables become an affordable option.

We want healthy choices to be accessible. We want them to be affordable. We don't want to have anything keeping people from being able to access those kinds of healthy choices for their own families.

So this is—AFFIRM is a new subsidy that's expected to reduce the price of a four-litre container of milk by over \$6 for these communities; that's a significant amount of reduction. When I was there talking to the community members and talking to our partners who were selling these products with the subsidy, everyone was extremely excited about it.

I have so much more to say and I'm out of time here. But I do—I want to thank the member for

bringing this forward. I know that this is something other provinces have had success with and that stroke centres are worth investigating. I believe that that is what we will do. But I do want to mention that prevention is significant in this discussion and we can't forget that either. Thank you.

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** It's my pleasure to rise this morning and speak on the resolution that has been brought by the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger).

I do want to also acknowledge those guests of ours that are in the gallery today from Heart and Stroke, and we welcome you here for these proceedings and this discussion that we are having this morning.

I do want to focus, you know, some of the comments put on the record by the minister for healthy living, and I would say that the minister spent much of her time talking about prevention. We do not quarrel with that. We all understand in this place that people have a responsibility to take on themselves, that responsibility to, you know, to do what they can to live in a healthy way, to undertake to live actively, to make lifestyle decisions.

We understand that, and the system has a responsibility to help educate people and to move them in that right direction. No one is quarrelling about that. But I would say, Madam Deputy Speaker—and I don't understand why the members opposite are heckling—but I would say that when it comes to this issue, what the minister is not talking about is anything beyond prevention. She's talking about a prevention focus, which is all good.

We're talking about what happens when prevention is not enough. And with these guests in our gallery today, certainly we have to acknowledge that in our system, regardless of any efforts undertaken by individuals or a system, any supports put in place, people will experience stroke. They will have that episode and there will be a need in our system for critical intervention.

The member for Charleswood has made it very clear that we are lagging behind every jurisdiction in Canada when it comes to critical intervention for this, and that is where I would direct the members of the government to direct their comments and talk about this resolution. Look at it at its—on its merits. Because we know that stroke is a leading cause of adult disability in Manitoba. We know that there are 608 Manitobans in 2013 alone who died from a

stroke, and we know that we are one—the only jurisdiction left that does not have a dedicated unit for strokes to be able to receive these patients, to have that expertise on the medical staff, to have all of the efficiencies and the expertise that comes from doing something like that, from focusing the training in on that. That is the kind of system that has been built in other jurisdictions. I understand from discussions I had just this morning with the member for Charleswood that just recently, Thunder Bay even established a unit, a centre—an economic and population centre that is much, much smaller than here in Winnipeg and what could serve the province of Manitoba.

I know there are others who want to put comments on the record, so I'm going to focus in on just a few things today, but what I would say, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that we can do more. Certainly, we can do more. Manitoba doesn't have to be last. I understand, as the Finance critic, that when it comes to core government expenditures, health care now accounts for 46 per cent of all government spending. There are a lot of things that we do in health care. I would question the decision making that is being done right now that is saying this is something we will not do. Because that's the discussion that's taking place right now. I would question a government that is saying we are deliberating and we are deciding that this is an area we will not go to.

I want to talk just a moment about system costs because, according to the Canadian Stroke Strategy in 2009, organized 'stroke' care—organized stroke care in Manitoba would result in significant health benefits for its citizens and that would be accompanied by significant cost savings. As a matter of fact, they projected that over 20 years they could save as much as \$343 million in system costs. The savings would accrue while 6,000 Manitobans were spared a stroke and 1,000 deaths due to stroke are prevented.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that should be the focus of every member of that government's comments from here on in. We know this is about real people. This is about the lives of Manitobans. That is a huge point that we need to make, and I can hear one of the members chirping on the other side. I certainly hope that she is chirping in favour of this resolution because she now understands that we're talking about the ability to actually prevent death and to prevent disability if we can put in place this kind of system.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we know that the projections are that as much as 30 per cent could be the decrease of disability and death were Manitoba to implement a system whereby we could have this specialty unit. Right in my own area, Morden-Winkler, I know that we have a busy hospital, Boundary Trails Health Centre. I know that, on a regular basis, my office is contacted by individuals who express concern about access to health-care services. These are specialized services. Our hospital works very, very well, great team of professionals serving a growing area in Manitoba. This is about being able to take that next step and saying for this type of patient, special care is needed, special care must be provided.

I would just end my comments this morning, Madam Deputy Speaker, by also referencing the fact that I'm looking at another study here in front of me right now. This has to do with cost avoidance associated with optimal stroke care in Canada. The author is Ph.D. Hans Krueger. And under the results section, it indicates that comprehensive and optimal stroke care in Canada would decrease the number of annual hospital episodes by 3.3 per cent, the number of acute-care days by 20–over 25 per cent, and the number of residential-care days by 12.8 per cent. So these are compelling statistics in a time when our hospitals are facing longer wait times, ERs are facing ballooning wait times, when our hospitals have ballooning ambulance off-load times. This could have a real and measurable effect not just in systemic cost for the system, which would improve the whole system, but it has an immeasurable effect in the lives of the people whose lives—whose quality of life would be improved by such a service.

\* (11:30)

I thank the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) for bringing the resolution. I welcome the comments from other members in this House.

**Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia):** I'd like to welcome my friends from the heart and stroke association, including the director, Debbie Brown. I have had the privilege of working with you for many years. I think that it's great that you're here to hear our debates. I'd like to say thank you to the member for Charleswood who brought this resolution. I know that her intent was to continue to push to improve the health care of Manitobans and the health-care system.

I do wish to talk about what we have done, the journey we have gone on, and talk about where we believe, as government, we should go and talk about

some of the contrasts between us and the opposition. First, I'd like to publicly say thank you to the heart and stroke association. Many years ago, 2004, when we were talking about being the first jurisdiction in North America—or, sorry, in Canada to bring in the smoking ban, my friend Denis Rocan from the opposition worked together with me with your organization to move that forward. And I know that we had significant opposition, and I'd like to publicly say thank you, we did make a difference, so thank you. The other—and, by the way, if you had have asked me whether it would have been half the rate in 15 per cent of smokers, I would never have believed you, so congratulations for all the people involved in that initiative.

But I do want to say that when I brought in the bill, it was interesting because my dad had died from a heart attack, and he had had a stroke previously. We went to Grace Hospital. The interesting part was is that the Grace Hospital emergency was closed. And then we ended up—under the Conservative government, it was closed. So then we went from the Grace Hospital emergency to the Health Sciences Centre—and I'm pleased to say that now if we had showed up to the Grace Hospital emergency, (a) it's open, (b) there would have been a shot given.

And I know that it would have happened because my sister-in-law who recently suffered a stroke went into one of the hospital services, got the shot—and I don't know the technical name for the shot. But a doctor evaluated, got the shot, and she is still alive. And I'm pleased to see that things are improving. And I'm not going to pretend that everything is perfect, but I know that it's been a journey, and it's been a journey that's moved forward, and I'm glad that Grace Hospital and other hospitals throughout the province has this specialized shot that doctors can evaluate the conditions, find out if it's a clot, get the shot. I call it the clot-buster. I know that's not the technical name. But it does work and it saves people's lives.

I also would like to say thank you to the heart and stroke association because when we started a partnership, they started a chronic disease prevention and an activity, PACM, and all these sorts of organizations that started to talk about discussion about what health care is all about. And I agree with the member from Charleswood that we do have to look at tertiary care systems. But it was nice to know that we were one of the first jurisdictions in North America, if not the world, that focused on prevention. And it was neat because as a brand new

minister of Healthy Living in 2004, I went to my first federal-provincial meeting, and these guys from the heart and stroke association said, you've got to do more on physical activity. So I actually, not knowing what I was doing, to be honest, said we were going to increase the amount of physical activity by 10 per cent in 10 years. My deputy at the time had a little bit of a seizure at that point, I think, but we actually, with groups like the heart and stroke association, increased physical activity by 10 per cent in seven years. And that was huge. We went from one of the worst in the country to one of the best in the country.

As far as diet, I have never seen a group with Larry McIntosh, partners from Peak of the Market, that got kids from selling chocolate bars, where they'd make 50 cents per chocolate bar and get six almonds or whatever in the box, to actually selling and being excited about selling vegetables. One of my most memorable moments was standing with 250 kids, Larry McIntosh had got these carrots about a foot and a half big, gave these kids all the carrots, and the kids were cheering about selling vegetables. Hallelujah. And what's neat about it is now they've sold about a million pounds of vegetables, made about over \$1 million profit and that's starting to talk about changing the behaviour.

And so healthy food does make a difference. The fact that we have a school breakfast program and almost \$5 million to have healthy breakfasts throughout this province is huge. The fact that we actually have cheap milk, and that was fabulous, and that was a lot of effort. The fact that we—we're working on sodium reduction, and I have to tell you one of the biggest disappointments I had was when we went to a federal-provincial meeting and we had a sodium reduction discussion between all provinces and the federal government and manufacturers, and my friend from Seine River mentioned how we went there and we were all excited because everyone had agreed that we were going to decrease the amount of sodium by 5 per cent per year so that in 12 years Canadians would consume the maximum amount of sodium that they should be consuming. And I was really disappointed because about two days before, the federal government pulled out of that initiative, and it was sad because what was happening is if you decrease the amount of sodium in your diet, then you will decrease the amount of heart attacks and strokes.

And so that was one of the disappointments. We never quite got the ball in the net on that one, but

I think what we have to do is figure out—*[interjection]*—pardon?

**An Honourable Member:** They tried to bury the report.

**Mr. Rondeau:** Yes, they tried to bury the report, and the provinces finally worked together and every single province got together and got a report out, and we did start moving on it. I'm hoping with the new federal government maybe we'll move something further.

But what I want to say is that this whole journey has come a long way. It's come a long way because I look at the Grace Hospital when my dad passed and see the journey that we had then, and I see the fact that we have the clot-buster drug and we have better rehab and we have better people who are trained, and we have people who are recognized. We have those wonderful—Heart and Stroke worked with us to make sure we have machines out in multiple, multiple buildings to give people the shock should they have a heart attack, and I think what we need to do is we figure out how to work together. And I don't think it's something that we, alone, as government, can do. I appreciate our partners, not just the Heart and Stroke Foundation, but many others, to change our journey.

But what we do need is a little honesty, and the honesty is you have to make investments in this. You can't vote against the budget, against healthy living, against the investments, and then ask for them, and I do believe that we do need investments in the health-care system. And I do think it needs talent; it needs focus; it needs expansion, and I think we need to continue that.

So I'd like to say thank you to the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) because I believe her heart's in the right place as far as pushing us to get dedicated stroke unit. I'd like to say thank you to the people from Heart and Stroke because I know you will never stop putting our feet to the fire, and I appreciate that. I'd also like to say thank you for your report on healthy living and how many inventions would save—and how interventions and healthy living would save way more than almost anything else, and I still sleep by that report, so thank you.

And I'd also like to say thank you to all members here because I think what happens is we, together, have to pick what we need to do, listen to each other, and continue to move the whole agenda forward. So it's not something that we discount or I discount. I

think we need to continue to move that direction, and I think we need to move together, and, hopefully, with a little bit of poking and with a little bit of resolve, we'll continue to move and enhance the system. But that's what we need to do.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, first let me welcome Debbie Brown and others from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and I'm glad that you're here because this is an important issue for Manitoba. We need to have excellent prevention, diagnosis and treatment for stroke in our province. It's a major cause of disability and death, and we need to address it adequately.

The focus on prevention, which the government has talked about, if it was so good, why have we gone from having 50,000 people with diabetes when they were elected to having more than 100,000 people with diabetes now? The government has kind of lost its focus on one of the important areas where prevention needs to happen and hasn't been happening adequately.

\* (11:40)

What is important is to recognize that even as we do better in preventing stroke—and we had a good talk last night by Grant Pierce who was talking about lowering blood pressure with nutritional approaches, and lowering blood pressure is clearly one of the important things in terms of reducing stroke. So there are some things which are happening in that area which will make a contribution.

But we also need to address the acute care for somebody who has a stroke, because strokes are not going to go away. They are still going to continue to be a major issue even as we work on the preventative side.

And the—first of all, we had the member from Assiniboia talk a lot—a little bit about having a little honesty. Let's start there. The government has talked about having a door-to-needle time of 15 minutes. That may have been one particular occasion, but when you look at what is really important is the average door-to-needle time. We don't come out anywhere near the top in Canada when you average the door-to-needle time here. *[interjection]* No, it is correct.

And the minister—former minister, unfortunately, has had some bad information on this. And it's important to know and to reflect on the fact that over

the last 20 years we've essentially had a revolution in the care of stroke. And that revolution includes the introduction of clot-clot-busting drugs, which can break up the stroke.

But in contrast to the heart, the brain is in some ways a more difficult organ and tissue to deal with and to treat when we're dealing with clot-busting drugs. One, first of all, has to be very careful that you don't have what's called a haemorrhagic stroke, because they can make it worse. And, second, that even when you're successful in opening up the clot which has occurred in an artery going to the brain, that you go through a period afterwards where the brain and the body can be, you know, much less stable, particularly in comparison, for example, to how you treat a heart attack and follow through.

Now, it's of interest, however, that when we're treating heart attacks, that it was recognized many, many years ago that it was important to have a coronary care unit. And they were introduced in Canada across Canada and they've been present here in Manitoba as in other hospitals and other places for many, many years.

And in—at the same time, as one had the introduction of the clot-busting drugs and the demonstration of their effectiveness, one also had many, many studies which showed that stroke units were also necessary to get the full effect and the full benefit of optimum treatment of stroke.

And so the result is that you need both the clot-busting drug and you need a dedicated stroke unit where you have the ability for people to go very quickly from the emergency room to the stroke unit where you have, on the stroke unit, people who are dedicated and very knowledgeable at all levels. It's not just physicians; it's nurses; it's people who are working in the stroke unit at all levels with a sophisticated approach. And that approach has been demonstrated in study after study after study to be very effective in improving outcomes in stroke. And that, sadly, is one of the reasons why our outcomes overall in stroke in Manitoba are not as good as they should be and as not as good as some other provinces. And that's not new knowledge; that's something which has been known and pointed out for some time.

The issue, then, is why we've had a government—when we've had a revolution in stroke care which really started about 20 years ago—why we've had a government in power for 16 years and we still don't have a dedicated stroke unit in our province. We are

the only province in Canada. It's really a dismal failure, and it's a problem for stroke care at a number of levels. It is a problem because we're not providing what is the best stroke care, and which is demonstrated by evidence to be the best stroke care that one can have. And it is a problem because, you know, people who work in neuroscience and neurology and in stroke care in Manitoba, you know, are not happy if you can't provide the best here. And so this is a problem. And if you are—have people who are leaving because they are not happy, or not happy because they're not able to provide the best possible care here, then that's not a good situation as well.

So we need to rectify that for the people who are receiving the care, but also for the key people who are providing the care. And, yes, there is a cost to investing and making sure we have a stroke unit, but there is also, you know, a benefit because there's decreased hospitalization times, quicker recoveries, better outcomes and a lot of things which, actually, can benefit, and other areas, clearly, where there will be reduced costs. So, in some ways, it's a false savings to try and operate without a stroke unit as this government has been doing.

Too often in the past we've had Health ministers who've said, well, it's complex problem, we can't solve that and we're not up to that. The fact is that one of the jobs of a provincial government is to solve complex problems, and in this case there are some clear answers, clear answers that have been used by other jurisdictions.

And we should be using those clear answers here and not complain that it's just a complex problem that we can't solve. We can solve it, we need the focus, we need the dedication, we need the wisdom, we need to use the evidence and we should be doing that.

I thank the members of the Heart and Stroke Foundation for coming here to recognize that and to support it.

**Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert):** I'd like to welcome Debbie Brown and guests here from the Heart and Stroke Foundation today.

I'd like to just put a couple corrections on the record here for the member opposite. You know, saying that we have the worst and—times is completely incorrect. HSC had a time of 15 minutes compared to the national average of 74 minutes. And the recommended time is 60 minutes. So we're still ahead by four times, Madam Speaker.

And we've worked very closely with our partners to implement a lot of the stuff that the Heart and Stroke Foundation has said that they wanted, Madam Speaker. So, you know, the false information that's put on the record doesn't help anybody, and the member opposite who's introduced the bill herself, in the last election, you know, I'm sure the members of the Heart and Stroke Foundation would find it interesting that they wanted to close the hospital, the Grace, that they wanted—that they actually, underneath them, they had the ER shut down at night. So if you had a stroke in the evening, what would have happened to you?

I mean, let's put some perspective on this. When they're talking about a half a billion dollars' worth of cuts, how would they fund a stroke unit? They come in here all the time and ask for more spending. The member opposite wanted to talk about making it political; well, let's talk about making it political then. She's making this political, Madam Speaker.

We have done great work working with the partners here, and she's now saying that she would—that this is something she would implement. But every time we put forward spending on health care, they vote against it. They have a plan to cut a half a billion dollars from the budget. They have a plan for two-tiered health care. How would that help anybody? We've invested in our hospitals. If you look at the HSC, look at the investments over the last few years. Look at the Grace Hospital, the MRI that's being—that's invested; I think it's up and running. You look at all the ACCESS centres, the doctors. When they were in power, the best year they had attracting doctors was a zero. You attracted zero doctors. That was your best year—your best year. Our worst year, we attract six doctors. That's plus six. You had a zero. So, when we're talking about health care and we're talking about attracting people, it's obviously not your government that would do it, because the facts prove it's wrong.

I just—I hate to be like that in this, but they really need to understand the facts that we're the government that invests in health care. And we know we are looking at this issue. We're looking at stroke units. It's not that we're adamantly opposed to it, but we're investing in—we have award-winning health care that come—home care that comes into your home after you have had a stroke. We've reduced strokes by 25 per cent in Manitoba since being in power because we've taken initiatives like the 'minir' for Assiniboia spoke about. Healthy living, we've moved on a lot of the healthy living and food initiatives.

We've reduced the risk of stroke by 25 per cent in the last decade.

\* (11:50)

So to say that we have done nothing is completely false. And all you have to do is drive by any of the hospitals in the city and see all the construction and the investment that's going into them. When they were in, they built nothing. Our hospitals were crumbling. Our schools had less doctor seats. That was your answer to having the doctors in the province was you cut seats from over 100 to under—to 74, I believe it was. And now we've reinstated that.

So I think it's only fair that when we're talking in this debate that the people who are in the gallery understand both sides of the argument and actually understand the facts. They do great work, and we have partnered with them, and we've implemented a lot of their suggestions, and we're going to continue to work with them because they do great work. But they need to understand the fact that when the member opposite talks about a stroke unit, where is the money? Where would she—where's the investment? Where's the money going to come in when you cut a half a billion dollars from the budget? So she wants to talk a big game.

You know, I mean, I've had people say this to me, and my father, who's actually really non-partisan, said it's always great to be in opposition because you can promise everything to everybody but then you don't have to deliver. Well that's what they would do, Madam Speaker. They're promising everything to everybody. And they wouldn't deliver because they're promising a half a billion dollars' worth of cuts to the system. You cannot possibly have a half a billion dollars' worth of cuts and have a stroke unit being built.

So if the members opposite want to start supporting our budgets and supporting our healthy living plan and supporting all the new doctors and all the training and all the new ERs and all the construction that's gone on in the last 15 years since we've been in government. It's transformational. The province has completely transformed in all of our health-care facilities, and we have more doctors being trained than ever, more doctors practising in the province and more nurses than ever. So if the members opposite want to stand up and vote with us on that stuff, then maybe then we could have a discussion about how they're going to—their vision for the province.

But we've clearly heard from the members opposite that their vision is nothing but cuts, half a billion dollars in cuts. And they'll say, no, it won't come from this, and then they'll say no, it won't come from that. It's got to come from somewhere. And I think that the members of the gallery and the public need to know, and they have a right to know, what their plan is. And they don't ever deliver their plan publicly because they say little bits and snippets here and there. When the member was on CJOB, they said how would you better the health-care system. Oh, he had no idea. He said, I don't know. Because you can't make it better with a half a billion dollars' worth of cuts, Madam Speaker.

So while we support the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and we will work with them, and we will try to make it better all the time, there are restraints, and every time we put something forward that's an investment, they vote against it.

And with that, Madam Speaker, I'm going to sit and I will allow the Health Minister to put a few words on the record.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Just before recognizing the Minister of Health, I just want to encourage honourable members on a couple of things. We've had some discussion here about honesty and truth, and I want to remind honourable members that the assumption in this House is that we are all honourable members. And while we may dispute the facts of a matter, we work with the assumption that everybody in this Chamber is honourable and everybody in this Chamber intends to bring forward honest information.

The second thing I just want to be—for honourable members to remember is in debate it's appropriate to put statements through the Speaker, and we do that so as to not personalize the debate and to try to maintain the air of civility that has been very good this morning.

So I just want to remind all honourable members on those two matters.

**Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Health):** I first of all want to welcome the folks from the Heart and Stroke Foundation for being here today, and I want to thank them for all the work that they do including the partnerships that they have had. The ongoing partnerships that they have had with this government have been remarkable, and the work that they do is, again, remarkable and something that we as Manitobans should all be thankful for.

I appreciate their advocacy. I appreciate the scientific approach that they bring, the evidence-based approach. And I appreciate the fact that they are always willing to work with us. And I appreciate also, too, the relationship that they have built with my predecessors in that area, and I can assure them that I want to continue that relationship and that we will continue working together in partnership because we were very proud to partner with them to install 1,000 AEDs across Manitoba and to implement some of the most aggressive AED legislation in the world. That was a phenomenal thing to do. It was something that, again, makes life so much easier, so much safer for so many Manitobans. And their leadership in that area and their willingness to partner with us was remarkable, and the ability to support different communities with those AEDs. It's nice now to be able to walk into community clubs, see them there, and know how simple they are.

It was actually in a community club not far from my neighbourhood—it was in the Minister of Healthy Living's area—we went in there and we saw how those things work. It's amazing how simple they are. It's something—I know if I can use it, anybody can. And that's going to make the difference between life and death for some folks because that's the whole thing. Those AEDs are meant to be used by anyone, regardless of background, regardless of their familiarity. It's meant to be one of those things that any of us can do. So it was the work of the Heart and Stroke Foundation that literally empowered us to work with Manitobans to be empowered in an emergency situation. So I want to thank them for that leadership and for bringing that to the table so that we could partner with them.

We have, again, implemented so many of their recommendations in the past, and I look forward to doing more in the future because they advised us to develop a regional stroke bypass system so that paramedics can go directly to hospitals equipped with the best tools and staff to treat strokes, which is something that we did in 2011, because we know that the moment—every moment matters when a stroke is occurring.

Access to clot-busting drugs like tPA can be the difference in a stroke patient's quality of life. That's so—that is so crucial. So when it comes to this rapid access to a life-saving drug like this, Winnipeg has been recognized by the Canadian Stroke Network as having the best door-to-needle time in the country. HSC has a time of 15 minutes, compared to a

national average of 74 minutes and a recommended time of 60. And there is also some promising new research being done on other stroke medications that I can assure members of this Chamber, assure Manitobans, and assure the members of the Heart and Stroke Foundation that are here today that we are actively looking into.

It's about partnerships; it's about evidence-based research, and it's about building on a system. And I am so thankful for the energy and effort that they have put in to helping us build that system.

Another thing that they told us was the Heart and Stroke Foundation told us that Telestroke is a best practice in the delivery of effective stroke care, and I have to say, Madam Deputy Speaker, we agree. We extended the Telestroke to Thompson in 2014, fulfilling another key Heart and Stroke recommendation. The Telestroke program allows stroke neurologists and radiologists to consult with physicians in rural and northern hospitals through video conferencing and shared CT images. Stroke specialists can therefore determine if a stroke has occurred, the type of stroke and the treatment options. Again, another way in those crucial moments of making sure that regardless of where you are, especially in a northern and remote community, that you can get the best care because it's available due to 21st-century technology.

They've also comment—the Heart and Stroke Foundation has called on us to support the development of co-ordinated system of stroke care including stroke units. And we know that other provinces have had success with stroke centres, and, again, I can assure them this is something that we are investigating.

I met with the folks from the stroke—Heart and Stroke Foundation earlier this month. We had a wonderful conversation about next steps, where we can go, the pathways that we can have to making sure that we take great care, better care of Manitobans if they are facing a stroke. And I want to continue those conversations so that we can continue to work to get to the place that we all want to be.

We all want to make sure that we are providing the best care for Manitobans, and we want to make sure that in executing that, we do it the right way; we do it to the highest standards possible.

I can also assure members of this Chamber, Manitobans, and, again, the members from the Heart and Stroke Foundation that are here that we are

continuing to work with regional health authorities and regional stroke co-ordinators to develop better ways to ensure patients who suffer a stroke receive the best stroke care—

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have four minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 noon, this House is recessed until 1:30 p.m.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, October 22, 2015**

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