

**Second Session – Forty-First Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SELINGER, Greg	St. Boniface	NDP
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Point Douglas	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, May 19, 2017

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**Madam 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.

Please be seated.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**Madam Speaker:** Introduction of bills?

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs

##### Seventh Report

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Chairperson):** Madam Speaker, I wish to present the Seventh Report of the Standing on Legislative Affairs.

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Legislative—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

*Your Standing Committee on LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS presents the following as its Seventh Report.*

#### Meetings

*Your Committee met on May 18, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.*

#### Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act/Loi sur le protecteur des enfants et des jeunes*
- **Bill (No. 11)** – *The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act (Staff Qualifications and Training)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la garde*

*d'enfants (compétences et formation du personnel)*

#### Committee Membership

- *Hon. Mrs. COX*
- *Hon. Mr. EICHLER*
- *Hon. Mr. FIELDING*
- *Ms. FONTAINE*
- *Mr. HELWER*
- *Mr. JOHNSON*
- *Ms. KLASSEN*
- *Ms. LATHLIN*
- *Hon. Mr. MICKLEFIELD*
- *Mr. MARCELINO (Tyndall Park)*
- *Mr. PIWNIUK*

*Your Committee elected Mr. PIWNIUK as the Chairperson.*

*Your Committee elected Mr. HELWER as the Vice-Chairperson.*

#### Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act/Loi sur le protecteur des enfants et des jeunes*:*

*Bert Crocker, Southern Authority (Southern First Nations Network of Care)*

*Daphne Penrose, Children's Advocate*

#### Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act/Loi sur le protecteur des enfants et des jeunes*

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.*

- **Bill (No. 11)** – *The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act (Staff Qualifications and Training)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la garde d'enfants (compétences et formation du personnel)*

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.*

**Mr. Piwniuk:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer), that the report of this committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

### Standing Committee on Private Bills

#### Third Report

**Mr. Jeff Wharton (Chairperson):** Madam Speaker, I wish to present the Third Report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills.

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Private Bills—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

*Your Standing Committee on PRIVATE BILLS presents the following as its Third Report.*

#### Meetings

*Your Committee met on May 18, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 254 of the Legislative Building.*

#### Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 215) – The Civil Service Amendment Act (Employment Preference for Reservists with Active Service)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la fonction publique (embauche préférentielle des réservistes ayant été en activité de service)**

#### Committee Membership

- Mr. CURRY
- Mr. KINEW
- Ms. KLASSEN
- Mr. LAGASSÉ
- Mr. MICHALESKI
- Hon. Mr. PEDERSEN
- Mr. REYES
- Mr. SELINGER
- Mr. SWAN
- Mr. WHARTON
- Mr. WOWCHUK

*Your Committee elected Mr. WHARTON as the Chairperson.*

*Your Committee elected Mr. MICHALESKI as the Vice-Chairperson.*

#### Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following five presentations on Bill (No. 215) – The Civil Service Amendment Act (Employment Preference for Reservists with Active Service)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la fonction publique (embauche préférentielle des réservistes ayant été en activité de service):*

*Matthew Lumsden, Private Citizen*

*Cameron Buchanan, Private Citizen*

*Kelvin Shepherd, The Canadian Forces Liaison Council*

*Sebastian Snidal, Private Citizen*

*Jonathan Avey, Private Citizen*

#### Bill Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 215) – The Civil Service Amendment Act (Employment Preference for Reservists with Active Service)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la fonction publique (embauche préférentielle des réservistes ayant été en activité de service)**

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.*

**Mr. Wharton:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member from Emerson, that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Madam Speaker:** Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### St. Norbert Farmers' Market

**Mr. Jon Reyes (St. Norbert):** Just like the honourable First Minister, as well as many of my colleagues, I have a sweet tooth. One of my favourite desserts is vinarterta. And, contrary to popular belief, the best vinarterta is not in Iceland, and with all due respect to my colleague of Icelandic heritage, my good friend from Brandon East, I can say with confidence that Kyle's Icelandic vinarterta, a St. Norbert Farmers' Market favourite, is my personal choice.

Tomorrow, Saturday, May 20th is the opening day of the Farmers' Market outdoor season in my constituency of St. Norbert. This marks the 29th year of this weekly community event, which brings together vendors and producers from all over the province of Manitoba.

The Market supports not just the economy of the immediate area, but also the economies of as many 30 additional Manitoba towns and communities.

In 1988, there were just eight vendors who gathered at this location to sell their wares. Today, the market has a pool of more than 200 local Manitoba vendors.

The Market is a weekly experience that brings many people to this community. On an average, a weekend brings nearly 13,000 people to the neighbourhood.

Thanks to a handful of part-time employees, a board of seven active vendor members and many volunteers, this non-profit co-operative continues to be a thriving Saturday morning tradition at the south end of Winnipeg.

At this time, I recognize representatives of the St. Norbert Farmers' Market who are here today with us: Ms. Kristie Beynon, online marketing manager; and Mr. Tim Veldhuis, son of long-time market member and board treasurer, Mr. Phil Veldhuis.

On behalf of my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly, I congratulate you tomorrow's opening day of what would hopefully be your most successful season.

I look forward to seeing you all there tomorrow in St. Norbert.

Thank you.

### **National Police Week**

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Madam Speaker, this week is National Police Week, dedicated to recognizing the hard work that police officers do for us every day. I'm proud to recognize and honour Manitoba's police officers and the service they provide to our communities.

National Police Week began in 1970 for the purpose of building strong and lasting relationships between police and the communities they serve. This relationship is important to our NDP caucus, and we continue to support Manitoba's police forces, large and small.

Police work is difficult and it can be dangerous. Our courageous officers put their lives on the line in order to help others, save lives and create safer communities for us to live in. Our officers also volunteer in and support the communities they serve, and we celebrate this commitment.

The words building relationships may be on the sides of Winnipeg Police Service vehicles, but the actions of police across Manitoba reflect this goal as they work to reduce crime and victimization. In the effective and efficient services they provide, and in their community engagement efforts, our officers continuously work towards a culture of safety for all.

We hold our police officers to a high standard, and those who serve and protect us tell us they wouldn't have it any other way.

We want the faces of our police officers to reflect the faces of our communities, and the RCMP "D" Division, Winnipeg Police Service, Brandon Police Service, Dakota Ojibway Police Service and our other municipal police forces are committed to that goal.

I hope all members will recognize National Police Week and the difficult and dangerous work carried out by members of their own local law enforcement agencies.

This long weekend and every weekend, officers are away from their families keeping our neighbourhoods, our roads and our highways safe. I want to thank our police officers for their dedication and commitment to our province.

We know that Manitoba is a better and safer place because of their service, and we are truly proud of the work they do.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### **Philippine Basketball Association**

**Mr. Nic Curry (Kildonan):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of the many great community organizations in Kildonan, the Philippine Basketball Association.

Founded in October 2001, the Philippine Basketball Association was focused on assisting youth in the community. Today, people of all ages come together in a community where participants build confidence, develop teamwork, healthy lifestyles and true love of a Canadian sport, basketball.

During an era where much of our social interactions take place over social media, the Philippine Basketball Association takes the initiative and encourages people to develop meaningful experiences and relationships through sport.

Although many games are played at Garden City Collegiate, participants come from across the city of Winnipeg to play.

Many local North End businesses help sustain the Philippine Basketball Association by sponsoring teams with innovative team colours and designs.

On March 30th, I had the pleasure of attending the Philippine Basketball Association finals at Garden City Collegiate. This wonderful venue was a hive of activity as family and friends filled out the stands to cheer on their favourite teams. The skill and dedication of each participant was impressive as each team gave their all and left everything on the court.

I had the distinct honour to present the award for first place of the PBA Winnipeg masters division final to Munoz Silk Screen. Go ballers.

I offer my sincere congratulations not only to the champions, but to all those who competed as yet another PBA season came to a close.

\* (10:10)

Basketball is an important part of Canadian culture, and PBA Winnipeg enriches the sport for all those who can participate. Organizations like PBA Winnipeg are a cornerstone of our community in Kildonan and brings hundreds of people together for the love of sport.

In particular, I thank all the volunteers whose tireless efforts sustains the Philippine Basketball Association, especially Commissioner Manny Aranez, Chairman Muriel Masangkay, Treasurer Randy Viray, Secretary Lynda Bains and Photographer Riz Mapue, for their incredible work.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### **Importance of Water Stewardship**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to talk about the importance of water, of clean running water to our environment and to us, as human beings, and to our planet.

We have a important role as stewards of the water in our province. Our lakes, our rivers, our groundwater, our marshes, bogs—these are all tremendously important natural infrastructure, which is vital for all of us.

We're all very aware of what has happened with Lake Winnipeg and the concerns of algal blooms and

nutrient pollution and of zebra mussels and the need to pay a lot of attention in this area and to make sure, after many delays, that the situation is properly addressed.

Most of us are aware of the long-running saga of Lake Winnipegosis, where the pickerel and walleye populations plummeted in 1960, and have never adequately returned. We need that long-run and much better stewardship than we've had for the last 57 years.

On Kississing Lake, how many are aware of the pollution that has occurred there because of the orphaned mine tailing ponds it shared and the area that has been effective, which is sizable, and the need to make sure that there, and other places in Manitoba, we clean up these orphaned mine sites.

And of Killarney Lake, where algal blooms are affecting tourism and making it difficult for people to swim.

We still have many pristine northern lakes where you can still drink the water straight from the lake, but, certainly, we need to assure that we have a very strong stewardship of our freshwaters, that our waters stay healthy and are with us, in good shape, for years and years to come.

Thank you. Merci.

### **Eye See...Eye Learn**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Good morning, Madam Speaker. I rise today to recognize Manitoba's optometrists, and, in particular, the Eye See...Eye Learn program that promotes early vision testing for children.

We know that it is important for children to have their eyes examined early. Children who cannot see the chalkboard, focus on a picture or follow words in a book may struggle to achieve their full learning potential.

Vision problems can also impact children's hand-eye co-ordination, hurting their ability to participate in physical activities and even impact their social development.

Children may not always speak up if they have vision problems, as they might assume that other children see the same way. It may not be possible for parents to tell if their children are having vision problems.

However, we know that children can develop vision problems relatively early, and if not caught

promptly they can get worse over time. Fortunately, tests can begin at a very young age. Children can be given a vision test even if they haven't yet learned their alphabet, and they respond very well to treatment.

This is why programs like the Eye See...Eye Learn program is so valuable. This program brings optometrists and school divisions together to promote eye tests for children. These tests will make a proactive difference for the health and education of our young people.

And I would like to commend, as well as my colleagues on this side of the House, Manitoba's optometrists for their hard work each and every day.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Lac du Bonnet.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Madam Speaker, I ask leave of the House to have the names of some of the optometrists and the executive director for the Manitoba optometrists association, their names entered into Hansard.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the member have leave to include those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

*Laureen Goodridge, executive director, Manitoba Association of Optometrists; Dr. Dillon; Dr. Ryall; Dr. Nelson; Dr. Small*

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Transparency and Accountability Government Performance Record

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition):** The government promised openness and transparency, but we are now getting anything but.

The Premier promised to listen to workers, now won't even say if he will proclaim his own legislation. The Premier promised to protect patients, then closes emergency rooms and urgent-care centres. The Premier promised disclosure, then hides his—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Ms. Marcelino:** —then hides his reports about the future of Manitoba.

Why has the Premier broken his pledge to Manitobans?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Sincerely thank the member for that question, Madam Speaker, and I want to say that, clearly, the previous administration had all the information they needed to take the necessary actions that would've helped us, as a province, helped the people of this province. They had the information they needed from the Peachey report and from other solid research that was done for them that could've been used to shorten wait times. They could've had shorter wait times. They could've said yes to shorter wait times. Instead, they said no.

They said no, Madam Speaker, because they didn't have the courage to act on the information that they had. And we do. And we look forward to doing that.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable leader—the honourable interim Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Marcelino:** The Premier pledged openness, but then—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Ms. Marcelino:** —but then he declines attending his own Estimates—several, several. The Premier pledged openness, then runs ads against the election laws. The Premier pledged openness, then hides his phones and emails, the record from which we can access freedom of information.

Why is the Premier running and hiding after promising openness?

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, as for the running, Madam Speaker, I do enjoy, as do a number of the other members of the House, I do enjoy a good run now and again, and I plan on getting a few more in, as this session has caused a little bit too much sitting as opposed to exercise.

As far as the hiding, I wasn't—being six-three in grade 7, Madam Speaker, I learned a long time ago that, don't even try, no point.

So, Madam Speaker, what I do know is that the previous administration had the information they needed to make improvements for Manitoba. They had the information they needed, for example, to suppress the growth in hydro rates. Instead, they said no to lower hydro rates; they said yes to higher hydro

rates. We think this was a mistake, but we've inherited the responsibility of dealing with it.

We have the information. Unlike the previous administration, though, we also have the courage to act on it, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable interim Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

**Ms. Marcelino:** The Premier promised affordability for Manitobans, but then he freezes the minimum wage and only gave three nickels' increase for October. The Premier proposed—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Marcelino:** —affordability, then he proposes massive rate hikes for Hydro and MPI. The Premier promised affordability, then clawed back millions from students and seniors.

Why is the Premier breaking his pledge to affordability for Manitobans?

\* (10:20)

**Mr. Pallister:** Again, I thank the member sincerely for this line of questioning, Madam Speaker, because it allows me to remind all members of the previous government's pledges to not raise taxes. I remember, very clearly, in the election preceding the one last spring that they made the promise that they wouldn't raise the PST, specifically that. They walked the streets of Winnipeg. They walked, they knocked and they looked people right in the eyes and they said, we promise if you vote for us, we will not raise your taxes.

And, Madam Speaker, they knew at the time, while they were making the promise, a solemn vow, right into the eyes of their friends and neighbours, they knew they were going to raise taxes and they actually went ahead and did it.

They broadened the PST; they included all kinds of things that had never been included before, and then they went further, Madam Speaker, and they said, well, why don't we raise the PST, too. See, they had the opportunity to keep their promise and they broke it, so we're going to have to keep the promise they made for them.

#### **Founding Role of Indigenous Nations Government Support for Resolution**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** Yesterday I was honoured to introduce a private member's resolution for this House to call on the federal government to

recognize indigenous nations as founding nations of Canada, alongside the British and French.

This was an opportunity to celebrate—this is an opportunity to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday in a spirit of reconciliation. This was also to simply acknowledge and recognize that indigenous nations were founding nations of Canada.

I'm glad to hear the Premier say the sentiment of this resolution is good, but now that he's had time to review it, can he tell the House if he will support it so we can celebrate Canada's 150th inclusive of indigenous peoples?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well as many members, I'm sure, share this sentiment with me, I am very, very proud of our history, history of our country, history of our province—not in respect of every single act or every single decision that was made in the past, Madam Speaker. There were many mistakes in the past as there will be in the future. We're human beings, after all.

I respect the intention—general intention of the member's resolution. I will not, at this point, say that I can support it because there may be other aspects to it that we need to research, but I am definitely sharing in the sentiment that she expresses.

But I would also say I am very proud of the fact that I was part of a federal government that apologized for the residential schools debacle. I'm very proud of the fact that we launched, as a federal government, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the tremendous work that many, including our now Senator Murray Sinclair from Manitoba, did in respect of that project. This was vital work, important work, and I look forward to working with the member and any others who wish to move forward on the mutual benefits that can accrue from a more tolerant and understanding relationship.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for The Pas, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Lathlin:** Indigenous law is embedded in this country's legal framework. Indigenous nations were military allies pre-Confederation, served in both world wars; as returning veterans we helped launch the civil rights movements in Canada; we helped repatriate the Constitution, and today indigenous peoples are present through all forms of society in business, sports, science, arts, technology and politics.

Our country—on Canada's 150th birthday, will this Premier support the resolution and call on the Government of Canada to recognize the founding role that indigenous nations played in our great country?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, Madam Speaker, as I've already expressed, I appreciate the sentiment of the member's resolution. I also, though, recognize that there need to be on-the-ground changes and improvements made in First Nations communities and for First Nations people across this country who live off reserve, as well.

Increased investments must be made by the federal government in on reserve primary health care. Increased investments must be also made in educational structures and in educational programming on reserve. Improvements must be made in terms of better availability to clean water, housing.

These are monumental challenges, Madam Speaker. I do not wish to blame this federal government or any other federal government, but I do think that by working together here in Manitoba and standing up for these programs and for the rich support for them, we can go further into the future together and find real progress together than has been possible in the past, when divisive approaches have been taken all too often.

And so I look forward to working with the member and any others who wish to work together on these projects and the achievement of these practical goals.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for The Pas, on a final supplementary.

**Ms. Lathlin:** Canada's 150th is a time to look to our past so that we can be inspired for our future. One of the powerful things about indigenous cultures is that we've always welcomed newcomers and sought to work together with them.

So what better way to look to the future of our country than to recognize the founding role of indigenous cultures, so that we can be even more welcoming and inclusive of all the great peoples who've come here and call Canada home.

Will the Premier support this resolution today so that we can recognize the founding role of indigenous nations in Canada and send a powerful and bright message to our future?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, not only the history of our province, Madam Speaker, is—has been formed, has been written through co-operative efforts among indigenous, non-indigenous people, whether in the—prior to the colonization period, prior to our history and formation as a province in the time of the fur trade, prior to that, and by the work that was done by people such as Chief Peguis, in co-operation with Archdeacon William Cockran, who worked together, who stood together, for the betterment of all, who stood against the entrenched interests of the past, who stood against, actually, the overdependence on a primary industry such as the fur trade and moved forward together to try to advance additional economic development projects such as farming and agriculture.

These are the types of leaders, Madam Speaker, that I am inspired by and I want us all to be inspired by. We can work together more effectively in the future than we can separately, and so I look forward to doing that with the member and with all members.

#### **Whiteshell Fish Hatchery Staff and Production Levels**

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** The inactions of the Pallister government has shown up again and caused some real harm to Manitobans. Multiple media reports have indicated that the entire fishing season is going to be at risk for lakes in our provincial parks in the eastern part of the province because this government failed to provide enough staff to actually make the fishery operate in the Whiteshell area—the fish hatchery.

Does the minister have any kind of an update or explanation for the House, or was it her office that directed staffing shortages to happen at the fish hatchery?

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development):** We do know that angling and fisheries production go hand in hand, Madam Speaker, and that the facts have been grossly misrepresented. Fry production levels are comparable to previous years, and the lakes are stocked normally.

With regard to the stocking of lakes, that is determined by our fisheries biologists, and they make the determination on what lakes are stocked. We know that they are stocked rotationally so that we don't do overstocking in many of the lakes.

So we are ensuring that there is stocking going on that is based on science, Madam Speaker. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member for Wolseley, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** That was an interesting answer from the minister, so let's pursue that a little bit.

I read in Hooked Magazine on fishing and the great outdoors in their issue that came out March 2nd, which I'd point out is prior to the provincial government's budget, they indicate, quote, this means there will be no walleye stocking in the eastern portion of Manitoba this year.

Is the minister saying that this media report and others that followed are false?

**Mrs. Cox:** I'd like to thank the member opposite for that question.

Again, I would like to reiterate that it is based on our fishery biologists, and they make that determination on what lakes are stocked.

\* (10:30)

But with regard to the eastern part of the province, I would like to say that this is not a complete list, but some of the lakes that will be stocked this year are: West Hawk, Whiteshell River, Lyons Lake, Falcon Lake, Kirk Lake, Nora Lake, Eveline Lake, Florence Lake, Marion Lake, Sailing Lake, Granite Lake and Beauchemin Lake. And, as I said, that this is not the complete list, but just a list of some of the lakes that will be stocked.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, order.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Wolseley, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** I would draw the minister's attention again to that same article. I've got to tip my hat to the caption writer under the photo. It's a picture of the Whiteshell hatchery in 1967, when it had some staff. So I think that's a valid point.

Is the Minister prepared to say today that the Whiteshell Fish Hatchery—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order, order.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** If members opposite can contain their enthusiasm for a moment: Is the minister

claiming that the Whiteshell Fish Hatchery is actually working just fine and producing the same number of fish-stocking supplies this year, as it has in previous years, and that all the lakes that it has covered previously will be covered this year?

**Mrs. Cox:** And, again, thanks to the member opposite.

As I indicated many times—or twice, actually, during this question period—that lakes are stocked based on biologists and what they have determined from the scientific knowledge that they've obtained from every lake. We will continue that practice, Madam Speaker, and, as I said, that the fry production is consistent with previous years. I believe it was the previous government who did merge the fisheries and wildlife branch and did eliminate that one position that was referred to in the media.

### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to proceeding with oral questions, we have some students that have joined us in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today 60 English as an additional language students from Heartland International English School under the direction of Ms. Carol Hutchison, and this school is located in the constituency of the honourable interim Leader of the Official Opposition (Ms. Marcelino).

On behalf of all honourable members here, we welcome you to the Manitoba Legislature.

### Northern Manitoba's Economy Mining Consultation with Unions

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** The Conservative government is sitting back and doing absolutely nothing while mining in the North collapses. To quote Les Ellsworth, president of the steelworkers, Local 6166: they've not called us, they've not met us. We have an MLA who has not set foot in here to have a discussion.

Will this government include the union in all future mining consultations?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade):** And, yes, we—our government does believe in consulting with Manitobans. I know the previous government did not, they took their direction from union leaders. We believe in

consultations with all Manitobans, and certainly we're going through a robust consultation stage right now.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Flin Flon, on a supplementary question.

### **Need for Mining Development**

**Mr. Lindsey:** I didn't hear a yes in there.

The minister has said that he'll unveil his northern strategy in the fall. But northern Manitobans want answers today.

So, this government seems to be only interested in developing tourism opportunities in the North, and certainly economic diversification, including tourism, is important, but it can't replace the kind of jobs that mining brings.

Will the minister please commit to strategic investments, not handouts, to encourage mining development in the North?

**Mr. Cullen:** And certainly we are committed to the tourism industry. We have a very successful 96/4 plan in place, which is actually paying dividends for Manitobans. We firmly believe in resource development, responsible resource development, in Manitoba.

We're not sure about the NDP. We know some members of the NDP have signed on to the Leap Manifesto, which talks about actually no extraction and no resource development, and maybe that's the question for the member from Fort Rouge, in fact, who signed on to this Leap Manifesto document.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

The honourable member for Flin Flon, on a final supplementary.

### **First Nations Consultations**

**Mr. Lindsey:** As we know, nothing can happen in the North without First Nations people, regardless of the issue.

The Premier's (Mr. Pallister) asking for all hands on deck, and he must include First Nations.

When will this government's framework for consultation with First Nations be in place so that First Nations people can actually participate in the future of the North?

**Mr. Cullen:** I know the member raised the issue of The Pas and certainly the Tolko situation that we came into when we formed government; we were able to work with the community there. The proponent that came, Canadian Kraft Paper, who actually we met with just yesterday, and also the First Nations community came to the table as well, as well as the unions.

And we're excited that we've—I think we've got 11 out of 12 First Nations signed on to an agreement. They're working with Canadian Kraft Paper. And we're happy to be part of helping facilitate that development and engaging First Nations communities.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

### **Women's Health-Care Services Administrative Responsibility Inquiry**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** According to the Minister of Health, he's abrogated his responsibility for Manitoba's women's health to the Minister for Status of Women.

Can the Premier table his revised mandate letter to the Minister of Status of Women indicating she is administratively and departmentally responsible for Manitoba women's health now, or, alternatively, can the Minister of Health table his letter of transference of women's health to the Minister of Status of Women?

Manitoba women deserve to know which minister is responsible for their overall health.  
*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** As I indicated to the member in Estimates during the 15 and a half hours of Estimates that we've had so far, and we're looking forward to more, that we have many members of our caucus who provide advice when it comes to many issues when it comes to health, and I'm proud that the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Ms. Squires) is involved when it comes to reproductive health. I think that is important. It's important to have her view, along with the view of other women in our caucus and all of our caucus, because, after all, it's 2017, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for St. Johns, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Fontaine:** Women's health is 50 per cent of the health-care system and is actually more than just reproductive health. It includes funding and supports for breast, ovarian and cervical cancers. Women health is the funding and distribution of IUDs, birth control, condoms; it is the delivery of hysterectomies; it is the delivery of medications for STIs and vaginal bacterial 'infections.'

So will the minister fulfill her new responsibilities by pulling back her government's regressive cuts to women's health here in Manitoba?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, Madam Speaker, women, of course, make up half of the world. They also make up a key part of the discussion in our caucus. They also are a part of ensuring that we have a unified discussion within our caucus.

We take input from all of our members of our caucus. This will come as a surprise to the members opposite who didn't speak to each other—didn't matter which gender they were, they didn't speak to each other for the last number of years. We believe all of our members have an important role in our caucus. As Health Minister, I value their opinion. I want to hear their input.

I don't know why the member opposite doesn't think that women should have input into women's health issues. It's 2017; she should join us in the modern world, Madam Speaker.

\*(10:40)

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for St. Johns, on a final supplementary.

**Ms. Fontaine:** Madam Speaker, if I found myself unexpectedly pregnant and chose, as is my right to do, to have an abortion, under whose department does that now fall?

Or, alternatively, if I chose to continue on with my pregnancy and wanted to give birth with a midwife at the birthing centre, under whose department does that now fall?

Under whose administrative and departmental direction does the expansion on abortion or birthing services now fall under?

So, as you can see, Madam Speaker, women's health is—involves complex and varied services across the province, and those agencies supporting women need to know which department do they now go to talk to for funding and services for women's health.

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, let's talk about clarity and transparency. Madam Speaker, 17 years of the previous administration, and how many years did they release mandates? How many years did they put out mandate letters? How many years did they describe and try to categorize the responsibilities, priorities and key activities of their various ministerial components? Zero years in every case.

So, the member asks who's in charge. That is exactly the question that her colleagues were asking themselves over the last number of years. They staged a rebellion, Madam Speaker, because they weren't—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:**—sure who was in charge at all. And while they were staging that dysfunctional display, Madam Speaker, women's health issues weren't being addressed effectively. Taxes were going up and it was impacting negatively on women throughout our province. Wait times were growing and senior women in our province were wondering why they had to wait in pain for care they deserved to receive sooner.

Madam Speaker, all these issues were unaddressed by the previous administration. As they worsened no one knew who was in charge. Now we know we have a team in charge. It's a nice change.

### **Sturgeon Fish Numbers Population Protection**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I rise to talk about, as we come up to the May long weekend, the sustainability of one of our fisheries, that of the lake sturgeon.

I previously asked the Minister of Sustainable Development about her plans to ensure healthy lake sturgeon populations. I understand last May long weekend there was heavy targetting of fishing of sturgeon in an area of Winnipeg River where it is currently, I'm told, illegal under current law to target sturgeon.

Can the minister tell us what she is doing to manage the sturgeon populations responsibly?

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development):** And thanks to the member opposite. I mean, as we have a concern with regard to all fish and fish populations in Manitoba, our conservation officers are responsible for ensuring that sturgeon and all fish are not overfished and targeted, and we

will, you know, ensure that conservation officers continue to do that, Madam Speaker. It's very important that anglers have the opportunity to enjoy fishing, and future generations as well, and there are rules and regulations and we will ensure those are followed.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for River Heights, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, I am aware that the minister has received letters and emails going back to December, and in most cases has not even responded to these letters about this situation.

We are coming up to the May long weekend. There was apparently, last year, fisheries targeting lake sturgeon illegally.

Will the minister act this May long weekend, or will she sit on the sidelines?

**Mrs. Cox:** And as I said, you know, ensuring that we have a healthy fish population is very important to this side of the House and our government. We will ensure that conservation officers continue to do the important work that they do, to monitor wildlife and fishing and angling within the province of Manitoba, and that is why, you know, we are looking towards eco-certification, that was something that was mentioned in my mandate letter, and ensuring that we have a healthy fish population well into the future.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for River Heights, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Well, as I spoke in my member statement and it is widely known, there are major problems with fish populations in a number of our lakes, including our great lakes, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Lake Winnipegosis.

The minister has talked about eco-certification in the campaign, but in 13 long months, nothing has happened—absolutely zero.

When is the minister finally—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Gerrard:** —going to get going and act to make sure eco-certification actually happens? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mrs. Cox:** We have had good, fulsome discussions with many commercial 'mishermen'—fishermen, sorry—and anglers, as well, and talked to them with

regard to eco-certification, and we've had much support from them.

You know, this is not something that we can do, you know, immediately. We have to have consultations, discussions, and work together with the fishermen to ensure that we have a process going forward.

We have one lake that is certified. The members opposite had 17 years to get all of—lakes certified or start on other lakes to be certified. We will ensure that we move forward on that plan, Madam Speaker.

### **Zebra Mussel Infestation Prevention Initiatives**

**Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye):** My family and I enjoy our time at various lakes in Manitoba beginning at this time of year, as do many other Manitobans. In my constituency of La Verendrye, there are many lakes to enjoy boating and fishing.

With people putting their boats and docks in the water soon, it is time to check for any zebra mussels and take the preliminary measures to ensure that this invasive species doesn't take over our lakes.

Can the Minister of Sustainable Development please update the House on how best to prepare for this invasive species?

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development):** I'd like to thank the member for this very important question.

As we approach this first long weekend, and it is start of the camping season, I know that this is very important, and I want to ensure that Manitobans are aware of what we're doing and have them participate in the—stop the spread of zebra mussels.

The NDP government knew that there were zebra mussels in Manitoba in 2009 and failed to act responsibly to stop the spread. Our government has launched a new, aggressive campaign that is more accessible to the public than any other AIS initiative before.

We're providing better signage and, on top of that, more signage, Madam Speaker. We're working together with stakeholders and all Manitobans to Spot the Stripes and Stop the Spread.

As we head into this May long weekend, I—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

### Premier's Corporate Holdings Declaration of Shares

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** This week in Estimates, in the course of refusing to answer questions about his email and communications, the Premier put a truly remarkable statement on the record. In defence of his failure to disclose one of his Manitoba corporations in 2015 and his Costa Rican corporations before that, the Premier claimed he's not required to declare ownership of shares of a corporation, even if he owns most of the shares or all of the shares, if the value of each share is worth less than \$500.

Has the Premier now reflected on that statement, and will he now acknowledge that he's just plain wrong?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, the member for false assertions continues, Madam Speaker, and claims to be a lawyer, but I understand why he's not now in private practice. It's his ability to read the actual rules of the ethics commissioner, the guidelines, his willingness to put himself ahead of that person.

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner's expertise is well understood. His is not. And so I take the advice of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, not the advice of the member for Minto, in respect of this or any other issue pertaining to ethics, accountability—organizing rebellions, maybe, I would get advice from him. But on these things, no, Madam Speaker.

I have been continuously forthright, gone over and above the requirements for disclosure, will continue to do so, Madam Speaker, believe very strongly that this is an important thing for me to do and will continue to do it.

The member falsely asserted that my corporation—I'm glad to hear him admit that it's a Manitoba corporation; earlier in the week he claimed that it was a Costa Rican corporation.

\*(10:50)

He seems confused, Madam Speaker, and he continues to put that confusion on display for his colleagues and all members of the House to see.

**Madam Speaker:** Just a reminder to the member and all members here, when referring to other members in the House, they are to be referred to by their constituency names.

The honourable member for Minto, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Swan:** There is this thing called Hansard, and the Premier, the self-proclaimed champion of openness and transparency, said on Tuesday that he doesn't have to declare shares of a family-owned corporation, no matter how much it owns and what it does, as long as each share is worth under \$500.

The Premier tells us he doesn't have to declare the shares of a private corporation or even shares of a corporation publicly traded on the TSX, no matter how many shares he owns and what the value of his holding is, as long as each individual share is worth under \$500.

Does the Premier actually believe this, or did he just make that up on the spot because, in his own words, he was feeling petulant? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, Madam Speaker, actually, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner gives advice to all members, and I choose to reflect on the advice and then act according to what I believe is the right thing to do. Going above what the Conflict of Interest Commissioner has told me I have to disclose has become my habit.

So, Madam Speaker, I have disclosed ownership in a Costa Rican property, which the Conflict of Interest Commissioner says has zero relevance to whether there would be a conflict of interest here in this place.

And, Madam Speaker, as I am open, the member opposite chooses to use that openness and try to use it against me and others who would choose to be more open than is required of them.

By the same token, Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —I was not required to disclose the presence of a holding company in that I had organized such for my family's affairs, but I did so, over and above the requirements of the ethics commissioner. And in doing that, in going beyond and above the requirements that all members here are asked to abide by, the member chooses to try to use that against me here in this place.

Madam Speaker, there is nothing consistent about the member's position other than a consistent desire to get his name in the paper.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member for Minto, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Swan:** What a remarkable world view from this Premier. Only three of the 250 company shares traded on the S&P/TSX Composite Index are valued at \$500 or more. The shares of a corporation can be split as many times as shareholders agree, which could keep each share's value, of a company worth several million dollars, at under \$500.

The Premier's interpretation, which is at odds with the act, the conflict of interest form, common sense and any reasonable definition of openness and transparency, would allow this Premier to avoid disclosing the ownership interests of himself and his family members in any corporation, large or small.

I worry that his Cabinet and his caucus may follow that lead.

Will the Premier correct himself today and admit his statements are wrong?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —the member has a bit of a problem, and it's been put on display for some years—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —now. It's been put on display for some years now. He misrepresents the facts repeatedly, attempts to put them on record here and in committee. He does this with a clear attempt to malign others.

But I don't take it personally, Madam Speaker. I watched it put on display just a couple of years ago when he attacked his own colleague from St. Boniface, within his own party. Having for a brief time entered into a previous leadership race, having found that there was inadequate support for his contesting of that leadership, having dropped away from the leadership and withdrawn from it, he appears, in petulance, to have been unable to accept the verdict of the members of his own party.

So I understand why he now has trouble accepting the verdict of the recommendations of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and tries to substitute himself in the place of that officer. He tried to substitute himself in place of his previous

leader. He tries to attack his previous leader, Madam Speaker. I personally don't think it's inconsistent on his part, in this exception, to attack me.

What I do not accept, Madam Speaker, is the veracity of his comments. And I know his own colleagues don't, either. So we're consistent in that.

### **Hydro Rate Increase Financial Forecast**

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** Well, Madam Speaker, it's a great disappointment to the people of Manitoba that my friend from Minto asked the Premier a direct question and he won't answer it. That's a shameful performance by him.

Madam Speaker, it's become clear that the financial position of Hydro is improving. That's what the government's own consultant said. That's what Hydro's financial forecasts have said. Yet the Minister of Crown Services (Mr. Schuler) lights his head on fire and goes around saying Manitoba Hydro is bankrupt.

So what's the real motivation here, Madam Speaker? It turns out that the massive rate hike—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Allum:** —proposed and supported by the government will generate an extra \$500 million just before the next election.

So will the Premier admit today that the real plan here is to distort the truth, to discredit the reputation of Manitoba Hydro and deceive the people of Manitoba?

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, order. I know it's Friday, but—the honourable First Minister.

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Well, speaking of shameful performances, Madam Speaker, I just want to say the position of Manitoba Hydro currently is a dangerous one. That's been acknowledged by all, not only the board and the senior members of Hydro, but by Manitobans, who understand, through common sense if nothing else, that there is a massive debt problem there. It's been acknowledged in the credit rating downgrades that were handed to our Province as a consequence of the mismanagement of the previous government.

So, Madam Speaker, the incredible debt hole dug at Manitoba Hydro by the previous

administration was the result of disregarding the advice of experts and knowledgeable people. We're taking that advice. We are trying to clean up the mess we inherited from the previous administration in respect of Manitoba Hydro.

As they should rise in their place and apologize for the rate increases that are being requested today, because they would recognize in that apology and demonstrate the nobility they have failed to demonstrate thus far, Madam Speaker, digging a \$25-billion debt hole for Manitobans, has demonstrated to all Manitobans that the previous administration thought they owned Manitoba Hydro.

We know who owns it. Manitobans do, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The time for oral questions has expired.

## PETITIONS

### Northern Patient Transfer Program

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Manitobans recognize that every day—I mean—that everyone deserves quality accessible health care.

(2) The people of northern Manitoba face unique challenges when accessing health care, including remote communities and seasonal roads.

(3) The provincial government has already unwisely cancelled northern health investments, including clinics in The Pas and Thompson.

(4) Furthermore, the provincial government has taken a course that will discourage doctors from practising in the North, namely, their decision to cut a grant program designed to bring more doctors to rural Manitoba.

(5) The provincial government also cut investments in roads and highways, which will make it more difficult for northerners to access health care.

(6) The provincial government's approach is now threatening to cut funding for essential programs such as the Northern Patient Transportation Program, which was designed to help some of the most vulnerable people in the province.

(7) The provincial government has recently announced it would cancel their airfare subsidy for

patient escorts who fly to Winnipeg for medical treatment, which will be devastating for patients with mobility issues, dementia or who are elderly and need assistance getting to the city.

(8) The challenges that northerners face will only overcome—will only be overcome if the provincial government respects, improves and adequately funds quality programs that were designed to help northerners, such as the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

We petition the Assembly—the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to recognize the absolute necessity of maintaining and improving the Northern Patient Transportation Program by continuing to respect Northern Patient Transfer agreements and funding these services in accordance with the needs of northern Manitobans.

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

Thank you.

\* (11:00)

**Madam Speaker:** In accordance with our rule 133(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to be received by the House.

### Neighbourhoods Alive! Funding

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Since 2001, the Neighbourhoods Alive! program has supported stronger neighbourhoods and communities in Manitoba.

(2) Neighbourhoods Alive! uses a community-led development model that partners with neighbourhood renewal corporations on projects that aim to revitalize communities.

(3) Neighbourhoods Alive! and the neighbourhood renewal corporations it supports have played a vital and important role in revitalizing many neighbourhoods in Manitoba through community-driven solutions, including: employment and training, education and recreation, safety and crime prevention, and housing and physical improvements.

(4) Neighbourhoods Alive! now serves 13 neighbourhood renewal corporations across

Manitoba which have developed expertise in engaging with their local residents and determining the priorities of their communities.

(5) The provincial government's previous investments into Neighbourhoods Alive! have been bolstered by community and corporate donations as well as essential support from community volunteers, small businesses and local agencies.

(6) Late in 2016, the minister responsible for the Neighbourhoods Alive! program said new funding for initiatives was paused, and that the future of the Neighbourhoods Alive! program was being reviewed bringing hundreds of community projects to a standstill.

(7) Neighbourhood renewal corporations and their communities are concerned this funding freeze is the first step in a slow phase-out of the Neighbourhoods Alive! grant program, which would have severe negative impacts on families and communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

That the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to support the Neighbourhoods Alive! program and the communities served by neighbourhood renewal corporations by continuing to provide consistent core funding for existing neighbourhood renewal corporations and enhancing the public funding available for specific initiatives.

This petition, Madam Speaker, is signed by many Manitobans. Thank you.

### **Taxi Industry Regulation**

**Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The taxi industry in Winnipeg provides an important service to all Manitobans.

(2) The taxi industry is regulated to ensure there are both the provision of taxi service and a fair and affordable fare structure.

(3) Regulations have been put in place that has made Winnipeg a leader in protecting the safety of taxi drivers through the installation of shields and cameras.

(4) The regulated taxi system also has significant measures in place to protect passengers, including a stringent complaint system.

(5) The provincial government has moved to bring in legislation through Bill 30 that will transfer jurisdiction to the City of Winnipeg in order to bring in so-called ride-sharing services like Uber.

(6) There were no consultations with the taxi industry prior to introduction of this bill.

(7) The introduction of this bill jeopardizes safety, taxi service, and also puts consumers at risk, as well as the livelihood of hundreds of Manitobans, many of whom have invested their life savings into the industry.

(8) The proposed legislation also puts the regulated framework at risk and could lead to issues such as what has been seen in other jurisdictions, including differential pricing, not providing service to some areas of the city, and significant risks in terms of taxi driver and passenger safety.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plans to deregulate the taxi industry, including withdrawing Bill 30.

Signed by many, many Manitobans.

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The taxi industry in Winnipeg provides an important service to all Manitobans.

(2) The taxi industry is regulated to ensure that there are both the provision of taxi service and a fair and affordable fare structure.

(3) Regulations have been put in place that has made Winnipeg a leader in protecting the safety of taxi drivers through the installation of shields and cameras.

(4) The regulated taxi system also has significant measures in place to protect passengers, including a stringent complaint system.

(5) The provincial government has moved to bring in legislation through Bill 30 that will transfer jurisdiction to the City of Winnipeg in order to bring in so-called ride-sharing services like Uber.

(6) There were no consultations with the taxi industry prior to the introduction of this bill.

(7) The introduction of this bill jeopardizes safety, taxi service and also puts consumers at risk, as well as the livelihood of hundreds of Manitobans, many of whom have invested their life savings in the industry.

(8) The proposed legislation also puts the regulated framework at risk and could lead to issues such as what has been seen in other jurisdictions, including differential pricing, not providing service to some areas of the city and significant risks in terms of taxi driver and passenger safety.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plans to deregulate the taxi industry, including withdrawing Bill 30.

And this petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The taxi industry in Winnipeg provides an important service to all Manitobans.

(2) The taxi industry is regulated to ensure that there are both the provision of taxi service and a fair and affordable fare structure.

(3) Regulations have been put in place that has made Winnipeg a leader in protecting the safety of taxi drivers through the installation of shields and cameras.

(4) The regulated taxi system also has significant measures in place to protect passengers, including a stringent complaint system.

(5) Provincial government has moved to bring in legislation through Bill 30 that will transfer jurisdiction to the City of Winnipeg in order to bring in so-called ride-sharing services like Uber.

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(8) The proposed legislation also puts the regulated framework at risk and could lead to issues such as what has been seen in other jurisdictions, including differential pricing, not providing service to some areas of the city and the significant risk in terms of taxi driver and passenger safety.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plans to deregulate the taxi industry, including withdrawing Bill 30.

And this petition is signed by many Manitobans.

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The taxi industry in Winnipeg provides an important service to all Manitobans.

(2) The taxi industry is regulated to ensure there are both the provision of taxi service and a fair and affordable fare structure.

(3) Regulations have been put in place that has made Winnipeg a leader in protecting the safety of taxi drivers through the installation of shields and cameras.

(4) The regulated taxi system also has significant measures in place to protect passengers, including a stringent complaint system.

(5) The provincial government has moved to bring in legislation through Bill 30 that will transfer jurisdiction to the City of Winnipeg in order to bring in so-called ride-sharing services like Uber.

(6) There were no consultations with the taxi industry prior to the introduction of this bill.

(7) The introduction of this bill jeopardizes safety, taxi service and also puts consumers at risk, as well as the livelihood of hundreds of Manitobans, many of whom have invested their life savings into the industry.

\* (11:10)

The proposed legislation also puts the regulated framework at risk and could lead to issues such as what has been seen in other jurisdictions, including differential pricing, not providing service to some

areas of the city and significant risks in terms of taxi driver and passenger safety.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows: To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plans to deregulate the taxi industry, including withdrawing Bill 30.

This petition was signed by D. Dhaliwal, J. Singh Nagi, S. Sandhu, and many more Manitobans. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

### House Business

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, on House business, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Tuesday, May 23rd, 2017, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 19, The Efficiency Manitoba Act; and Bill 20, The Crown Corporations Governance and Accountability Act.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Tuesday, May 23rd, 2017, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 19, The Efficiency Manitoba Act; and Bill 20, The Crown Corporations Governance and Accountability Act.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Micklefield:** Madam Speaker, this morning we would like to debate the following bills in a following order: Bill 34, the medical assistance in dying, protection for health professionals and others, Bill 2, Bill 3, Bill 14, Bill 13 and Bill 29.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the House will consider the following bills this morning: second reading of Bill 34 and concurrence and third reading of bills 2, 3, 14, 13 and 29.

## SECOND READINGS

### Bill 34—The Medical Assistance in Dying (Protection for Health Professionals and Others) Act

**Madam Speaker:** So, as indicated, we will start with second reading of Bill 34, the medical

assistance in dying, protection for health professions and others.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Good morning, Madam Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Government House Leader, that Bill 34, The Medical Assistance in Dying (Protection for Health Professionals and Others) Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Goertzen:** As members of this House know, in 2015 the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Canadians could access a medical assisted death with the help of a physician. Subsequent to that, Parliament was tasked with coming up with a legislative framework by which the medical assisted death, otherwise known as MAID, could happen in Canada, Madam Speaker.

Following the legislation being passed in Ottawa, provinces were tasked with the job of bringing forward the method by which this procedure would occur. There's been a variety of different means by which provinces have enacted their requirement under the federal legislation to proceed with medical assistance in dying. This, of course, has had a variety of different controversies around it, with Canadians expressing a variety of different views around medical assistance in dying.

This bill is not a part of the reflection of the views that Canadians have—the diverse views that Canadians have. But it is specific about providing protection to medical professionals and others who may not want to participate, for whatever reason, in a medical assisted death, Madam Speaker.

In Manitoba, there has been a team that has been organized, a team of medical professionals who respond and provide a medical assisted death, where the requirements have been met and where there is a request that has been made, Madam Speaker. Other provinces have addressed it in different ways.

However, there is not, in legislation in Manitoba or in a robust way anywhere else, the protection for medical professionals. We know that this is still a relatively new thing both in Canada and around the world. And, when I talk to medical professionals, doctors and others, Madam Speaker, they are concerned not just about the state of the law today, but what the state of the law might be in the future.

Well, we certainly know, when it comes to legislation and when it comes to new things that are happening in our world, that there is not a good predictor about where things can go. That is particularly true when it comes to sensitive issues regarding social conscience and social values, Madam Speaker. There is not always an understanding based on the world reality today of what things might look like 10 years from now.

And so that is why many medical professionals have approached me and others, on our side of the House, and I'm sure others on the other side of the House, as well, looking for specific legislated protection so that they would not be required to act in a medical assisted death, not just doctors, but, certainly, doctors have expressed that concern. Nurses have expressed it, as well, Madam Speaker. And they have asked for legislative means to ensure that that protection exists, not just for today but for the future.

I believe that all members of this House would want to ensure that doctors, nurses, other professionals would be protected from having to participate in a medical assisted death, not knowing what will happen in the future as things go forward, Madam Speaker.

I know we've heard different pieces of legislation that have come forward in this House; some have been introduced by the former Attorney General, the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), that were intended to prevent things from happening in the future. They were anticipatory about trying to ensure the protections were in place before a situation arose, Madam Speaker.

Members will know that provinces are responsibility for the delivery of health care. They are also responsibility—they have responsibility of legislative oversight when it comes to regulatory bodies, and many medical professionals, of course, are self-regulated. And so there are things that we can do to ensure that that protection is put in place.

*Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

I know that in speaking with Doctors Manitoba or the Manitoba Nurses Union, they have expressed support for ensuring that there is protection for their members. And members opposite should know that many medical professionals approached this issue not from one particular reason. Certainly, there are some who will not want to participate in a medical assisted death as a result of their personal health

convictions, perhaps though their faith convictions. But the vast majority actually don't identify that is the reason why they don't want to participate. The vast majority simply say this is not something that they are comfortable with, not something that they wanted to do when they went into a particular medical profession. And they are looking for protection, legislated protection, so that they are not required to participate in the act of a medical assisted death, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I believe that we have a responsibility to provide that protection for these individuals, but we also know that there is a balance. There's a legislated and legal balance; access has to be provided, given the Supreme Court of Canada decision and the federal legislation. Manitoba, in a regulatory way, I think, has done a good job at the early stage of finding that balance. But ensuring that there is legislated protection for individuals to not have to participate in a medical death is certainly valid, certainly important, and, I think, will bring comfort to those medical professionals, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

\* (11:20)

But I anticipate members opposite will have questions about access to the procedure. We have a legal requirement to ensure that there is access to the procedure, not a legal requirement to ensure that access is provided in every facility in Manitoba. We recognize that there are many different medical procedures that are not available in every hospital or every medical facility in the province of Manitoba and so we also want to ensure that those facilities have that protection, and I've spoken about that publicly on a policy perspective, to ensure that facilities, medical facilities, do not have to participate in MAID. However, there has to be a reasonable means to ensure that access can be provided. We believe that in Manitoba, that balance is important. Finding that balance between adhering to the law as has been set out by the Supreme Court of Canada but also ensuring that the individual value rights of medical professions and medical professionals is also protected.

I was pleased to hear the president of the Manitoba Nurses Union speak in favour of this legislation and indicate that it was valuable for her members, to give them the assurance that they would not have to participate, having it in place, knowing that things change over the context of years as new things are brought forward, and so that is important to have that framework set out in law. I've heard

from many doctors who have indicated that this is something that they support and they're willing to speak in favour of that support and I certainly hope the members opposite will also provide the support, knowing it's a reasonable, measured balance and ensuring that individuals have the protection that they need in our medical system and to ensure that we know that they have—they have—the assurance that this Legislature, as a whole, values their right.

And I know members will want to move this to committee quickly, to hear their views and to hear their perspectives, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

### Questions

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** A question—we're going to have question period now. A question period up to 15 minutes will be held.

**An Honourable Member:** Point of order.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Opposition House Leader.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), that debate be adjourned.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It's not possible to adjourn the question period. It's out of order to discontinue the debate on the bill. So we have to go through a question period.

**An Honourable Member:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to challenge your ruling.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** You can't challenge on—if it's not a point of order.

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, rules make it plain; you cannot adjourn debate before the question period has happened. So the request is misplaced. There's no point of order; no rule has been violated.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** There is no—on the same point of order, the member from River Heights.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, just one comment.

Rather than have to go to a recorded vote and waste an hour, maybe it would be possible to seek leave to postpone the question period 'til the next time this comes forward.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On that question from the member from River Heights, we have to deal with the point of order first. This has already been raised as a point of order and then he raised it again. It could be viewed as reflecting on the Chair.

The question period cannot be adjourned, as it is it not a debate.

**Mr. Maloway:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would challenge your ruling, with all due respect.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** You can't challenge on the point of order to the Chair.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Maloway:** I would like to ask for leave to waive the question—to adjourn—leave to waive the question—leave to adjourn the question period.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave from the House to adjourn question period? [*Agreed*]

And so it's carried; it's ordered. [*interjection*]

The Opposition House Leader.

It's been agreed that we're—the suspension of question period on Bill 34.

### CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

#### Bill 2—The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** And we're going to go on to Bill 2, securities amendment, Bill 2.

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, that Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

*Motion presented.*

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Friesen:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's good to hear from the applause that there's so much support for this amendment act that would bring a change to The Securities Act in Manitoba. We were pleased to have the opportunity to hear from presenters at the committee stage who expressed support for the measures that Manitoba is bringing.

As you know, from our previous debate on this bill, the proposed legislation that the government is bringing provides for the automatic reciprocation in

Manitoba of enforcement orders and settlements of other Canadian securities regulators without requiring a hearing.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know that, prior to this time, we have had a situation whereby if there was a penalty, if there was an action, if there was a decision by another regulator, then in Manitoba, what would happen is that we would have to conduct a separate hearing in order to recognize that decision in this jurisdiction. So, currently, it means that if an individual is found to have breached rules, securities laws, in another province, Manitoba has to have that separate hearing at its own cost, with its own resources. It's a time-consuming process, and every year, as we indicated in debate, that can mean 20 or 25 or 30 reciprocal orders that are recognized through a hearing.

This streamlines that process. Think of it as a kind of a red tape reduction exercise because it simply achieves the same result but in a much more efficient way, by working co-operatively with other jurisdictions and recognizing automatically those decisions reached in other jurisdictions, so this would essentially take away the requirement of the hearing. It prevents individuals who've been disciplined in other jurisdictions from trying to set up shop here in Manitoba. So it's an important protection for Manitoba investors, and it also, then, speeds up this process which we know would benefit investors here.

\* (11:30)

We also know it's not the only one of its kind. Legislation like this has been passed in Alberta, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec, and in Ontario and BC that same conversation is progressing. We have said that we would be committed as a government to protecting investors and consumers by strengthening securities legislation. This is exactly one such change.

I would also note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that since the time that we had the initial discussion on this, of course, the Quebec court has now, on May 10th, indicated their decision in lieu of the Quebec challenge of that pan-Canadian securities regulatory authority model, and it's the decision of the court in Quebec that the Constitution does not authorize the implementation of a pan-Canadian securities regulation authority model.

Now, I indicate that only to say that there is a process in place and, of course, there is this dispute

that is currently in place in Canada, and we know that this probably does not resolve the matter. We can anticipate that, because of this decision, there may be a challenge and we could not say with any degree of confidence that the issue or the concern raised is resolved.

Nevertheless, we continue to say, as a government, that regardless of where we are at in that long process talking about this development of a pan-Canadian co-operative regulator model, what will be important is the interface. Right now, that means the interface between the passport provinces and those provinces that are participating with a co-operative regulator approach, and it means that the kind of measure we're bringing even in the context of this bill will continue to be important.

What is also important, we recognize from talking with stakeholder groups here in Manitoba and across the country, of course, is that at whatever point in time a co-operative model should launch and be in force and be active in those jurisdictions, we will need that good interface between passport and co-operative models, so we need to ensure that we have good conversation, good dialogue and good rules agreements.

So we have confidence. We know that those who came to committee expressed that same confidence and we welcome the comments of the opposition parties and look forward to the passage of this measure that would assist industry and protect Manitobans.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** A question period up to 15 minutes will be held—member for River Heights—for Fort Garry-Riverview.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I take it this is not a question period. I had a couple of questions left over from question period, if—I kind of ran out of time there. I'd be happy to roll them out now, but—[interjection]—well, maybe quieter. They were—they were good; they might have been a little loud, but they were good questions.

The Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement), is a bill which we don't see any reason why it can't proceed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our government had been instrumental in creating a transnational securities system. During our time in our government the former premier, the current member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger)—and he was Finance minister delivering not one but 10 balanced budgets in a row—had been instrumental

in creating the passport system to create a transnational system for securities trading here in Canada and, at the same time, protecting Manitobans' very, very valuable securities industry right here in our province, and that, to the former premier, the member for St. Boniface's (Mr. Selinger) credit, he was—he built a foundation in which there was considerable balance between a national interest and, at the same time, safeguarding provincial interests as well.

The—that this is—and so this bill simply builds on that solid foundation that was built by our government in partnership with other governments across Canada. It's not surprising that the Finance Minister would pick up on our lead and utilize it. And that's good; he should do more of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I do have a few observations.

The minister says, well, he's protecting investors and, of course, that would be the priority of his government. We're here on behalf of the people of Manitoba. He's made it very clear that he's here to protect the elite, the 2 per cent in this province, and not speak on behalf—ever on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

Now, if it were true that, as the minister says, that this is also designed to protect consumers, then I would suggest that if he really wants to protect consumers, he's got a lot of work to do. Instead of imposing new education taxes on seniors, he should've undertaken our—followed our lead, I should say, and done what we did, which was to ensure that seniors, after a lifetime of paying property tax into the education system, would see a very, very huge decrease in that education property tax bill. And, instead, the Finance Minister has imposed new taxes on seniors—hardly a matter of consumer protection.

This is a Finance minister at the other end of the spectrum, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who says he wants to protect consumers and yet, he imposes new taxes on students, as well, by lifting the tuition rebate program and by jacking tuition rates by upwards of 5 per cent. He's not protecting consumers there; he's not protecting students; he's not protecting families. In fact, he's undermining the very kind of consumer protection we gave in education to ensure an affordable and accessible public education system and post-secondary education system for all Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Finance Minister was actually interested in consumer protection, he would rein in the Minister for Crown Services, who goes around suggesting that Manitoba Hydro is in a very, very difficult financial position, when it's been shown, both by their own consultant and by Hydro itself, that in—within three or four years, Hydro will be generating net income of over \$500 million. So there's no need to jack those rates is the point there.

And, if the Finance Minister was really interested in protecting consumers, he would have a discussion with the Minister of Crown Services (Mr. Schuler) and have a discussion with the Premier (Mr. Pallister) in order to ensure that Manitobans are not victimized by unduly high hydro rates but, in fact, continue to benefit from low hydro rates that only serves to promote wealth in our economy. It only serves to promote green and clean renewable energy for generations to come. It only serves to promote good jobs in the trades and in other areas of Hydro, but, in particular, in the trades both down here in the south and up north as well. And we know the government's record on the North, which has been nothing short of a disaster.

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

By investing in Hydro and keeping rates low, of course, that allows for us to have very real and significant partnerships with indigenous communities on the North and their traditional lands, so that they, too, will benefit in a very direct and immediate way from hydro development in this province. If the Finance Minister was really interested in consumer protection, madam 'speakder'—Madam Speaker, he would, of course, continue to support a whole range of initiatives undertaken by our government, in the past, to ensure that Manitobans are protected when they go to purchase something and that they're seeing the real price at the real cost.

And so, while we have no objections to this particular bill proceeding, Madam Speaker, it's a considerable disappointment to us that the minister tries to pretend that this is about consumer protection, because he actually—he's got a lot of work to do when it comes to protecting the consumers of Manitoba.

\* (11:40)

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, just a few comments on this piece of

legislation. I have had examples brought to me where there were individuals with—who had been found in other provinces to be not following the appropriate procedures and had been, as it were, called out, and this transgression was recorded in other provinces. But, because of the proceedings that we have here, there was a delay in notification of ordinary Manitobans who were looking after and trying to make sure that their life savings were properly secured, and the result was that if you don't have this notification quickly when there is a disciplinary action taken in another jurisdiction, it actually can be quite harmful to ordinary Manitobans who are looking after their compiled life savings and hoping to make sure that they have a good retirement and sufficient money to see them in their retirement.

So, in contrast to the words of the member for Fort-Garry Riverview (Mr. Allum) that this is not a consumer protection issue, in fact, it is, and it is a protection in this case largely not for those who are most wealthy, because they tend to have people who are really strong advisers and they can, you know, go and seek out people. But it's a protection for people who are just ordinary folks who've worked all their careers, who have some money in RRSPs or pensions, and this is a safeguard for them that before they trust their investments to somebody, they can check up and see if the individual has been disciplined in another jurisdiction and they can then be protected.

So it is for that reason that there is an important consumer protection element here that we as Liberals are ready to support this legislation because I have seen individuals who have been hurt and hurt badly as a result of their not being notified quickly enough that there is a problem with individual financial advisers or others. And so I'm pleased to support this amendment, and I look forward to this change becoming law.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement).

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

### **Bill 3—The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act**

**Madam Speaker:** Moving now to concurrence and third reading of Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act.

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Pedersen) that Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act; Loi du Manitoba sur les régimes de pension agréés collectifs, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Friesen:** I'm pleased to be able to stand and put a few brief comments on the record in respect of our Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act at third reading.

We were pleased to have, at the committee stage, a number of presenters on this bill who spoke in favour of the government's proposal to bring pooled registered pension plan options to Manitoba, and we were pleased to hear their comments and to talk about the need for financial literacy. Some of them spoke about the need for additional products available to Canadians. We had a good discussion around the need for Canadians to adequately prepare for their own retirement. And we talked about the number of Canadians who are not currently within a—some kind of registered pension plan, who are not part of a defined contribution plan or a defined benefit plan. We talked about the need for those citizens to have additional opportunities to save. And we also spoke, of course, and we heard presenters speak, about the relationship between this legislation and the other ways in which Canadians must save for their own retirement.

Now, the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) says they don't stand in favour of this bill. I have comments that I just even reviewed today. He talked about the bill as a betting on a last-place horse and said it had no value. And yet we know that, based on our consultations, over 90 per cent of Canadians support this mechanism, pooled retirement pension plans.

The member for Fort Garry-Riverview said that there was little or no consultation with members, and we went on to give a list to that member of the various groups that were consulted. This government met with the Manitoba Association of Senior

Centres, met with the Canadian federation for independent business, met with Great-West Life. We met with the Investors Group, we met with Wawanesa, we met with Advocis. We had meetings with the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. We received letters from hundreds of individuals and small businesses on CPP and the necessity to plan for retirement. We included in that—we received correspondence from the Manitoba government employees' union—MGEU—and the Federation of Labour and many national and local advocacy organizations.

All of these groups we conversed with, and yet the member stands at committee and says didn't consult with anyone. So, first of all, let us just say the member's wrong again—wide-based consultation but, of course, also wide-based support among Canadians for this type of provision. So if the member doesn't think that adequate savings for Canadians is a priority for him, he should say so. And perhaps he does not, because his government raised the PST, they widened the PST, they missed their budgetary targets year after year after year. They increased the borrowing requirements of our province by billions of dollars, and they siphoned thousands of dollars each year out of the pockets of Manitobans. If that money had been left in the pockets of Manitobans, they could have used that to more adequately save for their own retirement.

So I hope that the member has some explanation as to the difficult position that he has put himself in, saying, on one hand, that we should not move forward with pooled registered pension plans and yet at the same time knowing that his own record as a government was to raise taxes, leave less money in the pockets of Manitobans and impact negatively the ability of Manitobans exactly to save for their own retirement.

The—so what I would want to stress about this legislation that we've brought is that we know, Madam Speaker, that many working Manitobans, employees and self-employed, don't have access to a workplace pension, and we know that these plans, PRPs, are designed to help people save. They're designed in such a way so that those savings opportunities come at lower administrative costs.

\* (11:50)

In essence, it takes a conventional savings vehicle, like a defined contribution plan, and makes

it available to a greater extent to employers in smaller operations so that they can get the scale necessary. They do not need to incur those charges directly as a company. Many small companies say, listen, I'm running a company, I'm meeting payroll, I'm trying to sell product, I'm running inventory, I'm doing accounts receivable, I'm doing accounts payable, I'm paying my water bill, I'm doing all these things, I do public relations, I solve problems. And they're saying, we do not have time to also figure out what pension to provide for our workers. And one of the benefits of a PRPP format is that it allows those employers not to have to go it themselves. They can sign on. There are companies with that expertise who are registered, and those companies would be then selected. They would be granted this ability in this jurisdiction to offer these products. And those companies can say, we've got this, we can offer these products, they will be competitive products. Now those fees are defrayed across a larger group of employers, and it effectively makes possible what was not hitherto possible for the employees in those companies and employers themselves when they are self-employed.

Madam Speaker, there's a few more things that I would want to stress about the legislation. We know that in Alberta, in Nova Scotia, in New Brunswick and Quebec similar legislation is in place, and also in Ontario and British Columbia we know that this conversation continues as well. We understand that Ontario will sign on very soon, so the—so if the opposition doesn't see the value in this in this jurisdiction, they have to understand that they are essentially standing alone, because other jurisdictions, regardless of their political stripe, see the value in this.

It's another arrow in the quiver is how we've described it. It will not be everything for everyone, but it's part of that larger conversation about adequacy in retirement, and we've welcomed that conversation with Manitobans. I noted with interest even just last week that the Minister for Education was speaking about literacy and financial literacy even in schools. I understand that the minister is speaking now about proposals that would strengthen financial literacy for students. And I think that's such an excellent step and an excellent way in which educators can facilitate this conversation. When you think now in high schools, I mean, you could choose to take a course in accounting, but many students do not. You can take—they used to call it basic math or they had another—*[interjection]* Yes, they had

another, a number of different names for that, consumer math at one time they called it, and that course would include some of that accounting procedure. But I really believe that Manitobans would welcome a more broad-based approach across Manitoba schools.

I think about my own daughter who came back a year after university, and she was very agitated and very nervous. And she said, Dad, I just don't know if I'm going to be able to save adequately for my university next year. And I said, well, I mean, have you put this all down on paper? Have you been analyzing this? And I realized that a lot of her fear and her agitation really just went back—down to the fact that she hadn't done enough planning. And we simply started adding up her income in one column and we started adding up all of her expenses, and then we started looking at the balance on the other side of that. And then she said, well, you know, I thought of something else I should add into—some ancillary income that I have, and here's some additional shifts that she had been picking up from a restaurant she was working at, and what I found that—was that through that conversation her agitation or nervousness was replaced with confidence, because what she realized she had was a plan, a plan for her to be able to pay her tuition and pay her books. She would have to work hard that summer.

But I thought it was a good example to me of how we need to facilitate that conversation with people, what it means for them, what CPP means for them, what OAS means for them, what their own savings, what their home equity means for them, how being good managers of their household expenditures, what that can mean for them. So perhaps that's a good point at which we should stress; now, perhaps, it becomes apparent why the NDP don't stand in praise of this kind of legislation, because we know that when it comes to their own record on financial management, it was a dismal record of mismanagement and underperformance, each and every year, outspending their planned budget, having to make excuses and rationalize their lack of progress in front of bond rating agencies and rationalize that lack of progress in front of Manitobans who became more and more impatient with the explanations.

First, they said they'd balance by 2012. Then they said, we meant 2014 but we're on track. Then they said 2016. I finally remember the member for Selkirk who was the Finance minister at the time saying, well, we're not going to budget by—we're not

going to balance the budget by some kind of arbitrary target, and he used the word, an arbitrary target. And, Madam Speaker, I can tell you the media and Manitobans really picked up on the use of the term arbitrary target when it came to describing central government's path back to sustainability in spending, and, indeed, we know what the situation was. Manitobans lost their patience. Manitobans are a patient people but they lost their patience with the former government.

In this same way, it's important for us to have a vehicle in place that assists Manitobans to be able to make those contributions to their own retirement.

A few things to basically to note: We know that, in respect of these plans, we know that if an employer chooses to bring in to the workplace, there's flexibility: auto-enrolment, but you could opt out within 60 days; at any point in time an employee could reduce to zero the amount of their contributions; and we know, as well, that there's no restrictions of any types on the investments that can be offered. It works much the same way as an RRSP in those respects.

We know it's—this kind of plan is welcomed by employers. It's welcomed by workers and it's—we're pleased to be at third reading with this bill and invite the opposition to support the legislation.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** As with Bill 2, on Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act, we see no reason why this bill shouldn't proceed on, but, unlike the Finance Minister we don't see any big reason to celebrate it in the same way that he wants to.

We know, despite his claims to having a long and comprehensive consultation, and that may be true; he may have got letters and notes and all kinds of things, as he says. When it actually came time for the public to show up at a public committee, there was just a few people that I could count on one hand.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Allum:** So this is hardly the kind of things that Manitobans have been—

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

**Mr. Allum:** —have been asking for.

But I would say that our objections to the concept of pooled registered pension plans revolves around a couple of things. One, of course, it's not

mandatory for employers to participate in pooled pensioned retirement plan. And for us, Madam Speaker, when an employee gives a lifetime of work for an employer and, yes, they're compensated with salary and, yes, they're compensated with benefits, I suppose, but certainly not always and certainly not always in the private sector. It—nevertheless, one would expect that an employer has an obligation to also ensure that that employee who has given years and years of service to the well-being and welfare of that particular business should also have an obligation to participate in a pension plan.

That's why on this side of the House we have been front and centre for generations on trying to improve and enhance the Canada Pension Plan. That was always our priority, and we know that the government and, in particular, and I'm sorry to say this, bungled their way through the enhancement and expansion of the Canada Pension Plan.

We know—I've told this story many times, but it's always worth repeating, I think—is a brand new Finance minister, newly minted, gets on the plane with his staff, goes to a Finance meeting, a fed-prov Finance meeting with all the other Finance ministers across the country, including the federal minister. They all agree—with the exception of Quebec, because, of course, Quebec has its own QPP as it is—they all agree that they're going to work together to enhance and expand the Canada Pension Plan, and the Finance Minister simply didn't know what to do, was a deer caught in the headlights. He dashed out of the media session so quickly he could've run back to Manitoba faster than he flew.

\* (12:00)

He wasn't sure what he wanted to do. He came back, got instructions, and the instructions from the political operatives in the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) office was, you know, we've really bungled this, we've embarrassed ourselves on the national stage. So the best thing we can do is try to act like New Democrats and add additional things to the enhancement and expansion of the CPP.

So the Finance Minister tries to save his skin by putting forward this proposal at the eleventh hour, long after everyone else has gone home. The Finance Minister, in return, some months later, writes him a letter saying yes, not bad ideas, we'll get to that some day, and the Finance Minister runs around with a letter from the Finance Minister as though he got a chocolate bar from the head boy scout, as though he had actually accomplished something and, in fact,

he'd done nothing except to embarrass Manitoba on the national stage.

Our province, at the centre of this country, should've been at the centre of that debate, should've been on board with the original proposal or should've brought their enhanced plans to that meeting to make sure that there was an even more comprehensive expansion and enhancement of the Canada Pension Plan.

It's a great disappointment to us that the Finance Minister didn't do that. It's a colossal disappointment that he thinks that in some way this pooled registered pension plan is somehow an adequate substitute for doing the real work of a Finance minister on behalf of Manitobans and Canadians on the CPP.

As I said, employers have no particular skin in the game when it comes to pooled registered pension plans. That's a problem, that's a mistake. It's also true that those that have been rolled out across the country, as the Finance Minister wants to say, nevertheless have had little to no uptake, and, in fact, when we asked at committee about the uptake, nobody had any statistics. Nobody had any information, though those who did come knew that there was money to be made in that business for them, and that's okay, no objections there. But nobody—nobody—had any information, any statistics, any validation that there'd been any uptake for this plan across the country, and that's because there isn't a comprehensive approach to it, that's because employer and employee don't walk hand and hand together into this plan, but the employee is required to go ahead and do it and maybe, just maybe, after a lifetime of service, maybe the employer might be involved, but otherwise that employer—employee's left on their own.

So, Madam Speaker, we're not going to get in the way of this particular bill. It is what it is. It's, again, another example of a government whose priorities are misplaced in many ways, who celebrate the smallest little victories. They would do well to get on with building a fair, more equitable, more just, more inclusive society of—for Manitobans rather than having us deal with these kinds of bills in the Legislature.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, briefly, this piece of legislation provides people with an additional option with regard to the use of these pooled registered pension plans. I think

that's reasonable to do. It is disappointing that the option of this type of plan has not had much uptake elsewhere or that we don't have any statistics on its usage. That would've certainly been helpful and maybe, in fact, if things had been looked at more carefully elsewhere, and there's a low uptake, there would've been a possibility of modifying it slightly to improve the chances of this being a more useful instrument.

But, that being said, we're ready to support this legislation.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act.

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

I declare the motion carried.

#### **Bill 14—The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act**

**Madam Speaker:** We will now move to Bill 14—concurrence and third reading of Bill 14, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage (Ms. Squires), that Bill 14, the emergency medical response and stretcher transportation act, be reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living, seconded by the honourable Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage, that Bill 14, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act, reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

**Mr. Goertzen:** I have spoken on this bill in second reading and committee, so I will be brief.

At third reading, the bill primarily establishes the responsibility and authorities of the provincial medical director and enabling the provincial medical director to determine the drugs and the medical devices to be carried by emergency medical response vehicles, rather than requiring this to be done by regulation.

It also enables the department to discontinue regulation of paramedics when the profession transitions to self-regulation. Members will know that the Toews report was recently released and we are moving forward with paramedic self-regulation. It also provides for prior consultation with the regional health authorities rather than municipalities in relation to licensing of new land EMRs, and it is helpful in the reduction of the fees for ambulances, which was an election promise and which we are currently fulfilling.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** I appreciate the opportunity to rise in the House today and to put a few words on the record with regards to Bill 14.

And, as the minister mentioned, this bill makes a number of changes to The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Act, provisions such as adding the following—or, sorry—adding the allowance for the implementation of a standardized fee structure for emergency medical response services, including the ability to set the maximum amount that may be charged.

The funding provisions in the act are updated to reflect the current funding structure for providers of EMR services, and the responsibilities of the medical director of provincial emergency medical response services are formally set out, including the requirements to establish medical quality assurance programs for EMR services. And, as well, as the minister has noted, this bill also contains some consequential amendments to The Highway Traffic Act and The Testing of Bodily Fluids and Disclosure Act.

So it is an honour to rise to put a few words on the record. I did so at second reading. Of course, we went through the committee process as well, seeking public input to this bill, and we've also had an opportunity to consult with many first responders to talk a little bit about the work that they do and ways that this government can support and enhance the work that they do.

And, you know, I've got nothing but the utmost respect for those first responders. They do amazing work each and every day, and in talking with them, understanding more about the pressures that they're under, it really humbles myself and, I know, our entire caucus, to hear of that amazing work and to talk with them about ways that we can help them do their jobs better. And we have a strong record on this side of the House in supporting first responders and supporting the work that they do and, you know, I think it's quite detrimental, in fact, when, you know, the work of first responders is brought into the House and used as a political, you know, gotcha or catchphrase. And we heard those words not once but twice this week, Madam Speaker, from the Premier (Mr. Pallister) when he referred to the STARS emergency helicopter as a shiny red helicopter and accused the former government of using it for political purposes.

\*(12:10)

Well, the Premier knows very well, I think, the work that the STARS helicopter does in this province, work that, again, I have very high regard for and much respect for, and yet it's used in here—again, it's just a, I think, a throwaway line. I do believe that the Premier understands the value in the STARS helicopter. I would imagine that if the situation were presented to him in his government's tenure to stand behind the good people at STARS and the work that they do or not, I think he would choose to do that. I think that's probably his intent, and yet, again, it's used politically and that's—that is a shame.

So I wanted to put that on the record because I think when we're talking about this bill and a way to enhance the work of our first responders, to use those kind of words in this House, I think, is not helpful, and I do believe that the minister is taking some steps here that could help enhance the work that first responders do, but that work is then undermined by the words of his leader and the Premier of this province.

The other thing that I wanted to point out, Madam Speaker, is that this bill is part of the regulatory changes, as far as I understand it, to allow for the reduction in cost to patients for emergency medical transportation, and it helps to equalize some of those costs across the province. So folks that live in rural areas, northern Manitoba, other parts of the province, would have some equalization in the costs that they would incur by using these medical

transportation system, and, again, this is something that, you know, every party in the last election spent a great deal of time talking about and debating, listening to constituents. Every party across this—across the political spectrum had a plan, had a policy around this and a way to enhance the services and reduce the costs that folks incur when using medical transportation and it was with great fanfare that the members opposite talked about this being one of their centrepieces of their campaign, one of the most important planks that they ran on. You know, I would imagine every member opposite, when knocking on the door, said, don't you just hate these high ambulance fees and wouldn't you like somebody to do something about it, and, of course, Manitobans agreed, again, as every political party in the last election agreed. It was a point where there was agreement.

There was only disagreement in the process by which it would happen, and so it was, again, with great fanfare that the members opposite talked about it, and when elected, I believe—and I'd have to go back and check the news releases—there was sort of a just a smattering of things that were identified as being the first-100-day priorities of this government, and I believe this was one of them, saying that something needed to be done. In the Premier's words, not, you know, not tomorrow, you know—or sorry—not four years down the road or, you know, 10 years down the road, but immediately. This was an urgent situation, as identified by the Premier and others, and so it was identified as being a first-100-day priority.

And I guess it was probably a great shock to many Manitobans when they did, in fact, make an announcement, I believe it was in the first budget or in the first Throne Speech, so it was almost immediately that there was an announcement made, but instead of saying, we are going to reduce your ambulance fees by 50 per cent, they said, well, we'll get there, maybe, you know, all we've got to do is—four years from now, and then maybe if you re-elect us and maybe if you even re-elect us again, and somewhere down that road, you know, we'll get to that point, eight years, 12 years, I don't know how long—*[interjection]* I've heard now, this is helpful, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry) has put on the record that it's going to take 20 years, is what his thinking is, and maybe he needs to talk to his member of Health—his Minister for Health and get this straight, because I thought it was by the end of two terms. He's now saying 20 years to get us to a 50 per cent reduction in ambulance fees, and I think

that would come as a great surprise to the people of Manitoba, because when they elected this government they elected it for a few reasons, one of them being that they were going to protect the front-line services that Manitobans count on, they were going to protect the front-line workers who deliver those services and they were going to reduce the ambulance fees by 50 per cent.

Now, I—we could go through all of those promises, promises made—nobody's filling me in on the rest of that because those promises have not been kept to this point. So it's quite concerning to people to see legislation here that enables the government and the minister to follow through on his election promise, and yet that promise has not been committed to in a real way that impacts Manitobans.

In fact, I would argue, Madam Speaker, that not only has the election commitment not been undertaken in the way that I think most Manitobans understood it to be committed to during the campaign, but there's been the opposite effect, and that is that there has been a downloading of responsibility onto our first responders in the government's reorganization of our health-care plan.

So the minister has talked much about the closing of emergency rooms. He's talked a lot about the shuttering of urgent-care centres and he called them the biggest cuts to our health-care system in a generation. That might be paraphrasing a little bit, Madam Speaker, but certainly it is the change—it is a change that was totally unexpected by most Manitobans and they had no idea it was coming.

And, when this change was announced, one of the first phone calls that we received and some of the first discussions that we had was with folks at the Misericordia Urgent Care Centre. And I know the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) has brought up in this House many times about the good work that's being done at the Misericordia Urgent Care Centre. I know that his constituents are affected by the changes that are coming down the road. I know that the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinev), his constituents are concerned by the changes that are coming. The member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) has stood up and stood with the people at Misericordia.

But one of the first things that we heard from the people at Misericordia was—and again, the member for River Heights pointed this out—that they have a first-class, a world-class ocular program there, and their speciality is in eye care. And so when talking to

the folks at Misericordia and then further talking to some of the first responders, what we learned was, what they told us was, you know, if somebody has a severe eye trauma anywhere in the city, if it happens in, you know, in North Kildonan or in Transcona, the most likely place that that patient would be transported to is not to Concordia but instead would go straight to Misericordia because not only could they get in, get triaged and emergency treatment or urgent treatment at that hospital, but then could, in fact, stay in that hospital where they would continue to be seen and to be—get the care that they need and get operated on, if that's what was necessary.

So, it was—it's an efficient system in that way because the first responders are able to take those people directly to the hospital that is going to be able to give them the right care throughout their treatment. You know, I think the same sort of situation happens at Concordia Hospital. Of course, Concordia is a world-class centre for hip and knee replacements. If there's a trauma that is experienced that is specific to a joint and that surgery would need to be done at Concordia, the first responders would take them to that hospital to get service right away and then be able to stay in that system to be taken care of.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Now, what we're seeing with the changes that have been proposed is that the first responders would have to go to one of the three remaining emergency rooms to get triaged and get care, but then it would be on those first responders, then, it would be their responsibility to take those patients and bring them to the hospital—

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** —that they would then get their—the rest of their treatment at.

\* (12:20)

And so what this—what we understand this to be doing is doubling the work that first responders have to do. It's not just one trip now; it's two trips. And this permeates across the system when you start to look at the impact that having an urgent-care centre versus an emergency-care centre is going to have in the communities where that decision has been made.

So, for instance, in the constituency of Tyndall Park, if somebody is at home—maybe I'll use the example in the wintertime, because we know this happens quite often in the wintertime. We get a

heavy snowfall, you know, somebody is out shovelling their walk and they start to feel chest pains and they start to have concerns. Well, the first thing that they're going to want to do is, you know, in most cases, and we know this statistically, is that most people who are having a heart attack, first of all, don't realize the extent to which the symptoms are showing that there's a serious problem, and then, in most cases—and I know in my own family, and I think I've shared this story publicly a few times, but in my own family with my father, you know, when he was having his heart attack, he didn't realize he was having a heart attack. He knew something was wrong, but he didn't understand. And so what he did was he drove himself to, in this case, Concordia Hospital, where they saved his life.

But in the case that I'm describing in my example in Seven Oaks because, of course, Concordia will have no point of access at all. So, in Seven Oaks, somebody drives themselves to Seven Oaks and at that point they realize that this is a lot more serious than they realize. They realize that this is a severe cardiac situation, and it will then be on the first responders, once again, to double the work that was done before by then taking somebody who was at Seven Oaks and taking them to, I would imagine, the Grace or to Health Sciences Centre or, you know, I don't know why, but maybe to St. Boniface. It would be an additional resource that would be needed to be used, and so my point is, Madam Speaker, simply, that the work of our first responders is going to become even more important.

And I guess maybe I should point out one other example that I've heard from first responders and I've heard from medical professionals that I think will be of a concern in the future, and that is if somebody calls an ambulance now who otherwise would've been able to take themselves to the emergency room, because that was the suggestion of medical experts—I think the Minister of Health echoed that sentiment when the announcement was made on the restructuring of the health-care system, that really anyone who's having any kind of medical problem should be calling our first responders first, should not try to transport themselves but should call them first. Because in the example of, well, the member for Radisson's (Mr. Teitsma) constituency, where you have individuals who live, you know, out in Mission Gardens, I think is part of the member for Radisson's constituency, quite a ways away from the St. Boniface Hospital, quite a ways away from the Concordia Hospital as it exists now. Their first move

should be, according to the minister, according to health experts, should be to call an ambulance. That is what was suggested, because that's where they would get triage, that's where they would get the first care, and we certainly agree with, you know, saving a life is absolutely paramount in this situation.

But what we see, then, is that there's a downloading of responsibilities onto those first responders and those first responders now have to do more with the same amount. There's no additional funding. We're not talking about additional resources for those first responders, but what we're talking about is more work for them, more of an impact on the work that they do, and so, you know, it—what I'm trying—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wiebe:** —to get at here, Madam Speaker, is the idea that, you know, we see the value in our first responders. We understand how important it is that those first responders are doing the work that they're doing and we want to support them in any way that we can.

And yet, when we see legislation that doesn't, you know, specifically talk about additional resources—it doesn't talk about additional resources, Madam Speaker, it doesn't talk about—you know, and again, to reference the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) own words in this House this week—so, I mean, how ironic can it be that we're talking about this particular piece of legislation that impacts those people who are doing the front-line work and, in fact, specifically makes changes for the STARS air ambulance.

And I've heard the minister himself, and I apologize, I can't remember if he talked about it in his opening comments. I know he's talked about it in the past, the amazing work that STARS helicopter staff do and the value of that resource, and yet here we are in this House on the very week, just days before we bring this legislation here for third reading in this House, and the Premier, the First Minister, calls it a shiny red helicopter. That is not helpful, Madam Speaker. It's not helpful in any way at all, and so I think that the minister is coming to this issue in an honest way. I do believe that he is trying to make those resources work better. I think he's trying to listen to those first responders, but I implore him that he continues that listening, that he listens more closely when they say that a downloading of responsibility of workload, of more responsibility, I'll say—and these are folks who are not shying away from responsibility. They are eager to take on this

new role and to work for the betterment and the health of Manitobans, but when the resources aren't there, when they're not being, I think, listened to in the larger picture, I think that's where, you know, it causes a problem.

Now, I can see my time is getting very short, although I do have, I guess, additional time. We could carry this bill over, but I do know we want to move it along here; getting looks from my House leader who's giving me the side-eye here, but I just very quickly want to point out just a few other areas.

And, you know, I really could've started with this because this has been an issue that my friend from Flin Flon, my sister from The Pas, has talked about multiple times, and that is transportation for people in the North, and this is crucial. I mean, it's crucial for all Manitobans that they have the right to access health care anywhere they live, but the cuts that are being made specifically to northern health transport and to the transportation of loved ones if they need to accompany the individuals to medical appointments have been devastating, and we continue to not be able to hear a clear answer from this minister with regards to some of those changes. I know that my colleagues will continue to push that issue, and I will support them in any way that I can do that.

At the end of the day, Madam Speaker, as I said, this is the kind of legislation that I think is moving us forward. However, we have not seen some of the supports that I think first responders and others are asking for, and so I do hope that the minister continues to listen to Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I have a few comments on this legislation.

We're generally in support of this legislation, but I think that there are a number of issues which haven't been adequately addressed or discussed. There is a procedure here, an approach to standardizing fees around the province, but we're not told in any way how that is going to be done, on the basis of miles travelled or time taken or how that will-fee structure will affect waiting times. Will the-

what will the fee structure for waiting times be, et cetera.

And there is a corollary here, and that is the concern about standardizing service, and there needs to be much better equity of service between rural and the city of Winnipeg, and right now there are big differences. In Winnipeg, there's much more use of electronic record access. There's quick transfer of information, with EKGs to a cardiologist so you can get a quick diagnosis. There's sometimes start of treatment or you can get to hospitals very quickly. In rural areas, there's a lot more paper records. It's—their investment in technology by the government has not been made. There are long trips. There is not always as quick access to cardiologists because the system is set up differently, and so that—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 28 minutes remaining.

#### House Business

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I'd like to seek leave to read a committee announcement script.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the member have leave to read a committee announcement script? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Micklefield:** On House business, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Tuesday, May 23rd, 2017, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 33, The Minimum Wage Indexation Act (Employment Standards Code Amended).

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Tuesday, May 23rd, 2017, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 33, The Minimum Wage Indexation Act, employment standards code amendment.

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**Madam Speaker:** The hour being past 12:30, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. Tuesday.

Have a good weekend, everybody.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, May 19, 2017

## CONTENTS

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>			
<b>Committee Reports</b>		Zebra Mussel Infestation	
Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs		Smook	2305
Seventh Report		Cox	2305
Piwniuk	2295	Premier's Corporate Holdings	
Standing Committee on Private Bills		Swan	2306
Third Report		Pallister	2306
Wharton	2296	Hydro Rate Increase	
<b>Members' Statements</b>		Allum	2307
St. Norbert Farmers' Market		Pallister	2307
Reyes	2296	<b>Petitions</b>	
National Police Week		Northern Patient Transfer Program	
Swan	2297	Lathlin	2308
Philippine Basketball Association		Neighbourhoods Alive! Funding	
Curry	2297	Swan	2308
Importance of Water Stewardship		Taxi Industry Regulation	
Gerrard	2298	Saran	2309
Eye See...Eye Learn		Lindsey	2309
Ewasko	2298	Maloway	2310
		T. Marcelino	2310
		<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
		<b>GOVERNMENT BUSINESS</b>	
<b>Oral Questions</b>		<b>Second Readings</b>	
Transparency and Accountability		Bill 34—The Medical Assistance in Dying	
F. Marcelino	2299	(Protection for Health Professionals and Others)	
Pallister	2299	Act	
Founding Role of Indigenous Nations		Goertzen	2311
Lathlin	2300	<b>Concurrence and Third Readings</b>	
Pallister	2300	Bill 2—The Securities Amendment Act	
Whiteshell Fish Hatchery		(Reciprocal Enforcement)	
Altemeyer	2301	Friesen	2313
Cox	2301	Allum	2314
Northern Manitoba's Economy		Gerrard	2315
Lindsey	2302	Bill 3—The Pooled Registered Pension Plans	
Cullen	2302	(Manitoba) Act	
Women's Health-Care Services		Friesen	2316
Fontaine	2303	Allum	2318
Goertzen	2303	Gerrard	2319
Pallister	2304	Bill 14—The Emergency Medical Response and	
Sturgeon Fish Numbers		Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act	
Gerrard	2304	Goertzen	2320
Cox	2304	Wiebe	2320
		Gerrard	2324

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