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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
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(Hansard)

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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	Ind.
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	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
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PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
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REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
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WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, November 6, 2017

The House met at 1:30 p.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.

Please be seated, and good afternoon, everybody.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Madam Speaker: Introduction of bills? Committee reports? Tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage. And I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame 2017 Inductees

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an inspiring group of athletes and individuals who have made significant contributions to sport in our great province.

The 2017 inductees into the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame were celebrated Saturday at a ceremony in Winnipeg.

This year's inductees include Cindy Klassen, the greatest winter Olympian Canada has ever produced.

And, Madam Speaker, we are so fortunate that Cindy was able to join us here this afternoon. She is joined by her brother and her parents, who all hail from the wonderful constituency of River East.

And I am thrilled to welcome several other special guests who are 2017 inductees: Jaimie Dawson, Jamie Hancharyk Jones and Dr. Wayne

Hildahl. Thank you all for taking the time to be here today.

Madam Speaker, I would like to read the names of the other inductees for 2017: Sandra Carroll, Coleen Dufresne, Art Johnston, Bob Kraemer and, finally, the 1995 Kelly MacKenzie Curling Team.

Congratulations to all of this year's inductees. Your accomplishments will forever be enshrined in the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame and Museum. Please know that your legacy will always be there to inspire future generations.

And, Madam Speaker, I'd also like to recognize another important sports ceremony that took place this weekend: the Baseball Manitoba held its 2017 awards banquet in Brandon on Saturday.

I want to make a special mention of the Female Player of the Year. A big congratulations to Jamie Johnson of Team Manitoba. Jamie is also the niece of the honourable First Minister.

Madam Speaker, I invite all members of the Chamber to join me in congratulating all of the 2017 Baseball Manitoba award winners and this year's inductees of the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame.

Thank you.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): In Manitoba, we are fortunate to have a rich history and long heritage of excellence in sports. The Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame recognizes the finest in sports history in our province by honouring those who have made their own achievements, and those who have contributed to our community.

On November the 4th, Manitobans celebrated this year's hall of fame inductees. This year they recognized Sandra Carroll, a legend in University women's basketball; Jaimie Dawson, a 1996 Olympian in badminton; Jamie Jones, who represented Manitoba in four different sports at the national level; Bob Kraemer who did the same in six sports; and the greatest Canadian winter Olympian, Cindy Klassen.

The Hall of Fame recognized a few Manitobans who helped our province produce hundreds of successful professional athletes: Coleen Dufresne was a leader in university athletics; Dr. Wayne

Hildahl was a pioneer in both sport medicine and Special Olympics; Arthur Johnston, a former president of the Manitoba Golf Association. Manitoba's first female world junior curling championship team, the 1995 Kelly MacKenzie curling team, was also inducted.

These athletes' achievements earned their place in Manitoba sports history. On behalf of our NDP team, congratulations to all of you.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to speak in response to the minister's statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to respond to the statement? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Lamoureux: Sport is recognized internationally as a tool for development and a powerful agent for social change. It is a culturally accepted activity that brings people together and unites families, communities and nations.

I am proud to rise today to congratulate this year's Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame inductees. And allow me to name them off just one more time: Sandra Carroll, Jaimie Dawson, Coleen Dufresne, Dr. Wayne Hildahl, Art Johnston, Jamie Jones, Bob Kraemer, the 1995 Kelly MacKenzie curling team and, lastly, Cindy Klassen.

Madam Speaker, you know, my colleague from Keewatinook and I often get addressed as Cindy Klassen mistakenly because of my first name and her last name. And it being a common mistake, we never really minded because she is truly an inspiration.

Cindy Klassen has always been a personal hero of mine for helping break down barriers for women in all fields. And she is a woman of integrity who believes in doing her best and treating the opportunities in her life as a blessing. I am thrilled that she is here with us today.

Just to wrap up, allow us to congratulate all the inductees this year for their inspiration and accomplishments.

Thank you.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Teulon's 25th Annual Pumpkinfest

Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Agriculture): I was pleased to attend the 25th annual Pumpkinfest that was held in Teulon on September 23rd. Every September, pumpkin patches, gardens across the

Interlake and beyond are picked of their finest and 'upmost' bounty, then brought to be showcased in the Teulon's signature fall celebration.

Teulon's Pumpkinfest was certainly a place to be as hundreds of people stood—stopped by to take part in the day's 'festivities.' There were plenty of pumpkins and veggies for sale with a successful fall event. I had the honour this year of emceeing the largest pumpkin weigh off.

This year's largest pumpkin, weighing 636 pounds, won first place, with a 520 pumpkin pound coming in second, 479 pounds took third place. Forty-five different categories including everything from baking, photography and pumpkin carving were also judged.

Children were kept busy all day with an abundance of activities, including face painting, a petting zoo. A fun-filled day was had by all who attended.

In order to host such an event this size, a great deal of time, effort and money is required. The Teulon and District Agricultural Society strive each and every year to make the event bigger and better than the year before. Their mission was to promote rural living.

* (13:40)

Madam Speaker, joining us today in the gallery is Lana Knor, co-chair of the Teulon and District Agricultural Society, and her children Kelvyn and Kevin. I would ask the House to join me in recognizing their efforts, along with the many organizers and volunteers who make these events so successful. Without community support, these fantastic events would not be possible. Mission accomplished.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Tina Jones

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honour an amazing woman in my Riel constituency. Tina Jones is a very successful entrepreneur, philanthropist and an active contributor to our community.

Tina Jones combines her education as a teacher with a dynamic entrepreneurial spirit and endless energy to bring new and innovative programs to Manitoba in fields as diverse as wine and spirits to

sports education, to health and nutrition. She applies the same energy to her extensive community work.

Tina and her sister, Lia Banville, started the Banville & Jones Wine Company in 1999. Their store has been selected as one of the top 20 wine stores in Canada. In 2017, Banville & Jones Wine Company was recognized as the Employer of the Year by SCE Lifeworks for creatively supporting the employment of a person who brings to the workforce a unique set of life skills and abilities.

Madam Speaker, the list of community and charitable causes that Tina Jones lends her time, talent and her energy to include: St. Amant Centre, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, CancerCare foundation, Habitat for Humanity, Children's Hospital Foundation and many other community and charitable causes. She is currently serving on the HSC foundation as chair of the board, as well as chair of donor development.

I would also like to offer my sincere congratulations to Tina for being recognized as an Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser at the upcoming Manitoba Philanthropy Awards luncheon, and for being nominated for the University of Manitoba Distinguished Alumni Award.

Madam Speaker, Tina Jones has been a friend and a role model to me and countless other women in Winnipeg. I am proud to call Tina my friend and I am very pleased to be able to honour and recognize this remarkable woman today in the Legislature.

And she is here today with her husband Mike Jones and her daughter Julia Jones. And I ask all members of the Legislature to help me welcome them and applaud her efforts.

Faouzia Ouihya

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Carman will soon be famous as the hometown of a Casablanca-born singer named Faouzia Ouihya. Using her first name as her stage name, Faouzia has captured the attention of the world, making her mark on the international music industry with her mature voice.

This past September, the 17-year-old beat out 6,000 contestants from 100 countries to win the grand prize at the Nashville-based Unsigned Only Music Competition, convincing judges that she is the next big thing.

As the event's first-ever teenager to land the award, she won \$20,000 US in cash, a scholarship to

Berklee College of Music's five-week summer performance program and one-on-one mentoring sessions with executives from big record companies such as Island Records and Sony Music Nashville.

On the same day as her latest single, *My Heart's Grave*, was released, Faouzia signed with Paradigm Talent Agency.

When Faouzia was a year old, her family moved from Morocco's biggest city to Notre Dame de Lourdes, before settling in Carman.

Being fluent in English, French and Arabic, Faouzia began writing her own soulful music influenced by the Arabic music her parents would all-would play all day. It is how—it is about how being different is okay, said Faouzia, as quoted in *The Globe and Mail*, who felt excluded as a young girl: As a kid, maybe not just fitting in is the biggest thing I've had to overcome.

Faouzia says her inspiration mostly comes from her parents for their courage to move to Canada and also from her two sisters. If I can just take a part of how strong they are and put it inside me and follow their example, then I'll be set, she says.

Upon meeting Faouzia, I was immediately impressed by her cool, calm, humble nature. She's a young woman with an outstanding talent, not only dreaming big for herself but serving it—using it to serve others.

Members of the Assembly, please welcome Faouzia and her sister, Samia.

Affordable Housing

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Madam Speaker, many of my constituents are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet due to rising housing costs. The recent media attention on rising homelessness in West Broadway should cause the Pallister government to act, but their policies are actively making the situation worse, not better.

After 18 months in office, the Pallister government has failed to fund a single new social housing project. The Housing First experiment our NDP government funded proved that providing safe, stable and affordable housing is necessary and far more cost-effective so vulnerable people can begin addressing other challenges in their lives. We were also building hundreds of new social housing units every year, but the Pallister government has slammed the door shut. No kidding, homelessness is on the rise.

Homeowners in 23 neighbourhoods across Manitoba have access to the community housing improvement program. Its small subsidies would help homeowners complete repairs they otherwise couldn't afford, leading to more stable housing and more stable neighbourhoods. Naturally, the Pallister government heard about this great success story and cut all their funding to it this year.

Renters are facing multiple attacks from this government. The Rent Assist benefit brought in by our NDP government provides financial support to Manitobans living in private sector rental housing. The Pallister government's cuts now mean that students, seniors, low-income workers and other vulnerable people have hundreds or even 1,000 dollars less per year to pay their rent.

Not even Manitoba Housing residents have been spared, Madam Speaker. In a truly warped celebration of Canada Day, the Pallister government on July 1st increased rent in Manitoba Housing by up to \$60 per month. This is so counter productive it is mind-boggling. As one media report documented, a single mom raising two children with special needs was evicted when this rent increase meant she fell behind in her rent payments.

On behalf of all of my constituents, I call on the Pallister government to immediately reverse course on its housing policy, stop attacking the most vulnerable residents of our society, and start doing its job of making our lives better, not worse.

Madam Speaker: Further members' statements?

Intercultural Awareness Training in Schools

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): I stand today to propose that intercultural awareness training at grade-school level is important instead of interfering in the judiciary system.

Sometimes what is a normal inquiry in one culture could be considered harassment to another culture. This does not mean the individual intended to be inappropriate. We live in this diverse community. People come here from different countries with different values and perspectives. Therefore, people in authority must learn to understand the variety of cultural values and decide on those bases.

We should not allow people to be unnecessarily accused of something which they are not committing

intentionally or allow people to be taken advantage of because they are from a different cultural understanding.

Culture is not simple. Culture is an integrated pattern of human behaviour. It includes thoughts, languages, practices, beliefs, values, manners of interacting and behaviours of social groups. This means we must take into account diversity of how varying cultures perceive these components.

The proposed bill to train judges on the base of one culture will be unfair to all other cultures.

Instead, let us start educating with intercultural awareness training at grade-school level. Our changing demographics in Manitoba present an exciting time in cultural diversity that should be reflected in our province's classrooms.

Our teachers should be cultural brokers bringing about a mutual understanding by interpreting and explaining cultural differences. Let us raise generations of people who understand there will always be differences to consider when we interact. We must learn about and be respectful of the differences.

Otherwise, people who play identity politics will try to throw innocent people under the bus. I have seen this from members in this room. And this behaviour can ruin the lives of genuine, respectful people focused on doing good for the community.

I urge the Education Minister to advise his department to start such a compulsory course in the school system. Let's build cultural understanding among our people—whole population.

Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today Emma Carey, daughter of Deputy Clerk Rick Yarish, and Ben Donkin from Albany, west Australia.

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

* (13:50)

ORAL QUESTIONS

Changes to Health Services Impact on Front-Line Workers

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): You know, again and again, front-line health-care workers are speaking out about the damage that this government's cuts are going to have to our health-care system here in Manitoba. The front-line health-care staff we've spoken to are worried because they know that the Premier's rush to make cuts is going to have a real impact on the care that their patients receive.

Nurses are worried. One who we spoke to, who was also recently laid off, said, quote, she was blindsided by the Premier's cuts. She went on to say that, quote, she felt devalued by this process because it's only about the money. End quote.

The flaw in the Premier's plan is clear. He ignores the fact that his cuts may make the situation in our province worse. Front-line health-care workers and the patients that they serve are speaking out, but we're concerned that their voices are being ignored.

Will the Premier guarantee that no nurse or front-line health-care worker will face reprisal for speaking out against his cuts?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, again a bizarre question, Madam Speaker, from the new leader of the NDP. The people who work in our system want to see it work. They want a system that works. They want to work in a system that works. They do not want to work in a system that is broken. They do not want to work in a system that fails to deliver good services in a timely way to people who need them. That's the feedback we've been getting.

What the member opposite is trying to do is, of course, the usual—unfortunate—the usual thing that the NDP does, which is to try to frighten people and try to support a status quo which isn't good enough for Manitobans, it isn't good enough for Manitoba patients, it isn't good enough for Manitoba health-care workers either, Madam Speaker. And the fact of the matter remains that they broke the system which we are committed to fixing.

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

Mr. Kinew: The key words in that answer from the First Minister was that those health-care workers want to work, and yet he has laid off nurses at Victoria hospital, at Deer Lodge Centre. He's

deleting hundreds of nurses at St. Boniface Hospital, at Health Sciences Centre, at Riverview Health Centre and others.

But despite the Premier's election commitment, nurses are losing their jobs. Despite the Premier and his government's repeated assurances, nurses are losing their jobs.

From that same nurse that I just referred to speaking out against these cuts, well, she had a job at one of the sites that are subject to the Premier's consolidation, but her position was deleted and then she was laid off. She tried to find work at another centre but faced the same problem: deletion and layoff. She is now out of work, directly contrary to this government's claims.

Who should Manitobans believe, the Premier or these front-line health-care workers?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, the previous administration knew, as this member knows, that the system is broken. They had the information—they commissioned the information—but they didn't have the courage to act on the information. They were too afraid.

And the scaredy-cat attitude that the member depicts with his preambles is dangerous, not only in itself, Madam Speaker, because it interferes with the progress we need to make to make the system work better, it also serves no purpose other than to frighten those who are working in the health-care system and those who need its services.

Manitobans wanted better a year and a half ago. They voted for a government that had the courage to make things better, and that's what they got, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Kinew: So let's just review the timeline. In the last election, the Premier promised no cuts to front-line services. I believe he may have knocked on a lot of doors and made that promise, along with all of his backbenchers and ministers.

When they rolled out their changes, their cuts to the health-care system, repeated assurances: nobody who wants a job will be out of a job. And yet we are hearing directly from a nurse, not once, but twice, faced deletions and layoffs and is now out of work.

When we asked her what she thinks about the overall nature of the cuts to this health-care system,

she said, quote, it's not safe. The Premier's cuts means that there are fewer and fewer nurses working at the bedsides of Manitobans. This is a serious impact on the quality of care that patients in our province—that they will receive.

Will this Premier listen to the nurses working at the front line? Will he reverse the cuts that he's making to our health-care system?

Mr. Pallister: Well, the member weakens his argument by putting misinformation in his preamble yet again, Madam Speaker.

We are investing a record amount in our health-care system. We have—this year alone, over \$500 million more than the NDP government ever did. The member, in repeating his misinformation, may convince—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —a few of his colleagues, other of his colleagues know it is misinformation and do not support this kind of misinformation.

That being said, Madam Speaker, while he is preambling he needs to understand that if he fails to admit there is a problem he will never be committed to fixing it. He can't get to step 1, he can't get to admitting that there's a problem with a system that's broken, that's failed to deliver health care to Manitobans, that's 10th out of 10 in most measures.

We understand that he and his colleagues broke the system, Madam Speaker, and so do each and every health-care worker in the province, and while they're not admitting they broke it, we're accepting that they did and we're willing to fix it.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Changes to Health Services Impact on Riverview Health Centre

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): The Premier is the one who seems to have difficulty accepting the facts, because the fact is he is making cuts to our health-care system. Physio—cut. Occupational therapy—cut. Three emergency rooms—cut. Eighteen rural EMS stations—cut. And now we're hearing over the weekend some very harrowing stories out of the Riverview Health Centre.

Now, first, as a result of the Premier's orders, they tried to relocate patients from the chronic-care ward to the Deer Lodge Centre, which is also seeing

cuts. Now, after the patients spoke out, they were allowed to remain. However, they then learned that the WHRA plans to have fewer nurses for the patients remaining there at the Riverview Health Centre. One patient, Shawna Forester Smith, said, and I quote: I felt like I was getting the rug pulled out from under me, and I was really angry at the level of secrecy. Nobody told the patients what was happening.

Will the Premier stop his plan for cuts, and will he start by ensuring that there's strong, quality care for the patients at the Riverview Health Centre?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Not only was the system the NDP oversaw in its gradual demise over the last number of years broken, Madam Speaker, not only did every health-care worker in the province understand that, but it grew. It grew excessively at the top. We are addressing that by trimming at the top.

It also lost effectiveness over time, and so the people he claims to be defending by telling everyone here that we should go slow are the very people who understand that you don't go slow when you've got a serious problem you need to solve. You need to face up to it.

Now, we know and we sympathize with workers who are being displaced as moves occur in the system. We understand that it's not easy and we accept that and we accept the responsibility of doing everything we can to protect those workers, and we will.

But the fact remains that we need everyone—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —to help. We need all hands on deck, and front-line workers are stepping up and doing their part. Administrators are doing their part. Manitobans are doing their part. We're doing our part. The only people who aren't willing to do their part, Madam Speaker, are sitting over there on their hands telling everybody that a 10th out of 10 system is good for them. It isn't.

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

Mr. Kinew: I'm not saying go slow, I'm saying go smart, and laying off nurses, closing emergency rooms, closing clinics, closing EMS stations, that's not smart. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: If you wanted to be smart, you would move upstream and invest in preventative care to keep people healthy at home.

Now, returning to Riverview health care, we know that the Premier's plans—know that those patients will have less nurses working with them at the bedside. One WHRA official said that these changes might result in a lack of continuity of care. What that means—what a lack of continuity of care means—is that when you go to visit your elderly relative at Riverview, there may be a different person working with them each and every time. And the staffing ratios are being changed so that there's less highly trained people working at the bedsides of those seniors.

* (14:00)

The Premier needs to put patient care first. Will he stop the deletions and reductions at the Riverview Health Centre?

Mr. Pallister: Well, the member opposite is suggesting that we should keep the 10th out of 10 system, go really slow in fixing it and that somehow that means that he cares about patients. Madam Speaker, that's a total contradiction—total contradiction.

The people who work in our health-care system understand these changes are needed. They understand that they want to work in a system that works for patients first. That's what they want.

I understand that change is not easy; so does the member opposite. But it does take courage—it does take courage—and we appreciate the courage that's involved in making these changes. The member says he has a better idea. His better idea involves ignoring all the expert advice we've received and his government received. He says he knows better than all those people. He says he knows better, because he's scared, Madam Speaker. He's a scaredy-cat, and he wants to see no changes occur so we can keep a 10th out of 10 system in place and that'll make him happy. Well, it won't make Manitobans happy who need health care. Changing the system and making it work will. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: I'm beginning to have some significant difficulty hearing the questions and answers, and I would ask members, that when people are standing to pose their question and pose their answer, I would ask that members in the House show

some respect to those people and especially to me when I have to be listening for whether or not the language used is parliamentary and appropriate.

So I would ask for some consideration by all members. I don't think a lot of heckling serves democracy particularly well, and I would ask for everybody's consideration.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: The Premier can keep attacking me all he wants, and I'll keep getting right back up and standing up for the people of Manitoba and what they count on: a strong, publicly accessible health-care system in this province.

Now, we know that the Premier's cuts is being driven by one thing: he's trying to save money. But those cuts won't make patient care better. They won't improve our health-care system. *[interjection]* I hear the member from Brandon East telling me to keep on going. He knows what I'm saying is right. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: He can't stand up for his constituents—*[interjection]*—against this Premier, so he likes it when I get up here and demand that health care stay strong and—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Again, I—after admonishing everybody on the heckling in the room and the noise level, it just escalated seconds after I asked for everybody's co-operation.

I would ask for co-operation. I think it's important that we hear the words. It's important that we keep the tone so that there is a respectful environment here. That is what we're to do, is to address democracy, and I would ask everybody that, you know, let's do it with good decorum.

And the member still has about 18 seconds to go in his question.

Mr. Kinew: A patient at Riverview, Shawna Forester Smith, said it seems silly—and I'm quoting here—to replace all the staff that have been here for so long and know all the patients with newer nurses so they can lower the nurse numbers and change the staffing rotation. It's unfair. End quote.

Will the Premier listen to the patients, to the nurses? Will he stop his plan for cuts and ensure that there is strong health care—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Pallister: If change was easy, Madam Speaker, the NDP would've done it. They didn't have the courage to do it. Neither does their new leader. He's got the same-old, same-old position as the previous leader. Let's just sit back, he says. Let's go slow. In fact, he just said let's stop entirely.

Madam Speaker, he's afraid to proceed, and his party's afraid to proceed because they're scared, they say. They say it's too scary. What is scary is the worst waits in Canada. He says we shouldn't do it because it might not work. What doesn't work is a broken system. And he says we shouldn't do it because it's just too hard. It's hard on Manitobans to have the most ineffective, inaccessible, longest waiting health-care system in Canada.

It takes courage to change it. They broke it. We'll fix it.

Rural EMS Station Closure in Boissevain

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Health plans to make major cuts to Manitoba's rural EMS stations. Manitobans, whether they live in the city or outside of the city, consider emergency health-care services to be front-line services.

One of the EMS stations to be closed is located in Boissevain, the second largest community in Arthur-Virden constituency. Residents, health-care workers and Boissevain's town council know their ambulance service is an essential health service. The town administrator described the minister's cuts as just picking dots on a map.

Why does the minister plan to close Boissevain's EMS station?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): We know that for many years—the many years that the NDP were in government—the EMS service in rural Manitoba, and particularly in Westman, wasn't reliable, Madam Speaker. I assume that that is why the former government asked Reg Toews to do a report on EMS services. Mr. Toews reported back; he provided a number of recommendations.

I would quote an individual who said the recommendations in this report will guide us and usher in a better, more co-ordinated, more responsive era of EMS in our province. That was Theresa Oswald, the former minister of Health. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

The honourable member for Minto, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Swan: Madam Speaker, the town of Boissevain has put forward many good reasons to save its EMS station. These reasons were outlined in a report prepared for the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk), who I do believe has passed it on to the Health Minister.

Boissevain's ambulance response time is just three minutes during the day and seven minutes at night. If the EMS station closes, the community will have to wait about half an hour, even in good weather, for an ambulance from either Deloraine or Killarney.

More than 1 million vehicles pass through Boissevain on Highway 10 each year. It's the closest health centre to Turtle Mountain and the peace gardens.

Will the minister listen to the people of Boissevain and cancel his plan to close their EMS station?

Mr. Goertzen: Certainly, the EMS system in western Manitoba and many parts of rural Manitoba was not working well. We were pleased as a government to hire 20 new full-time paramedics last year, many of them which were—many of those 20 new paramedics were located in western Manitoba. We know that when this government, the—or, sorry, the former government, the opposition, had the opportunity to stand up and support those 20 new paramedics, what did they do? They voted against each one of them, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Swan: This minister and this government needs to know this is a real issue affecting real people.

Late last month, a driver was seriously injured in a car accident—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Swan: A woman who witnessed the accident asked another vehicle to drive 10 minutes down

the road for cell coverage and call the ambulance, and she waited for the closest ambulance from Boissevain to arrive. She told media she worried about what would happen had the Boissevain ambulance not been there.

She says she has no doubt the minister's plan to cut EMS services will increase response times and will lead to more fatalities. She says we can't let rural Manitoba be given second- or third-rate service.

Will the minister listen to the people in and around Boissevain and cancel his plan to close their ambulance centre?

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Madam Speaker, the member opposite, the member for Minto, makes the point. The point is that the current system, the ways it's been structured, isn't working. He gives an example of how it's not working. That is why it needs to change; that is why there needs to be more full-time paramedics; that's why there needs to be more ambulances. That is why, I presume, the former NDP government hired Mr. Toews to do the EMS review.

*(14:10)

After the EMS review was released, somebody in this Legislature said the EMS review was a very important process that we went through to improve emergency services in Manitoba. That was the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), the former premier. Is that why the member for Minto rebelled against his own caucus, Madam Speaker?

Post-Secondary Scholarships Private Sector Funds Raised

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): This government is failing to provide students with opportunities to make post-secondary education affordable in this province.

The Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative has only raised 1.8 of the nearly 20 million dollars that this government said that they would need from the private sector, and yet the government hasn't offered any plan to keep up with the demand that is being created by their own cuts.

We're now in November and we haven't had any update from this government or from the minister on whether they've managed to raise more funds or are meeting the targets now.

Will the minister tell us how much money has been raised through the private sector to date?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): I thank the member for the question, and he certainly continues to make our case in pointing out that we have increased the amount of money available through Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative from a mere \$4 million in their government to \$20 million under our government. During the time that they were in government, not only did they not increase that amount, but they actually cut the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative and froze it for four other years. I think he's really doing a great job on pointing out that we are helping Manitoba students.

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

Mr. Wiebe: Students are feeling the pressure as they work hard to make post-secondary happen for themselves, and I asked the minister a pretty straightforward question and I didn't hear an answer, so maybe we'll try that again.

Instead of providing more funding opportunities through scholarships and bursaries, this government is actually failing to keep its own promise, while at the same time raising barriers for students. At this rate, it's clear that the government won't reach their target of raising \$20 million through the private sector.

Will the minister tell us today: Has he adjusted his plan based on the amount of money so far, or are there additional incentives or resources being provided to encourage more private investment?

Mr. Wishart: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to answer that question. The number the member likes to quote is a mid-term estimate number, and we are certainly in line with what we expect in terms of Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative. And, on top of that, we have put in place a bursary program of \$10.5 million that didn't exist under the previous government.

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

Mr. Wiebe: I acknowledge the minister is right: we are working with an out-of-date number.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wiebe: We're working with an out-of-date number. I'm asking the minister here in question

period if he can give us an update on that number. That was the question that I've posed to him.

The bottom line is, Madam Speaker, this government isn't giving much hope to post-secondary students that their education will be affordable for the many that are struggling already. Tuition rates are set to go up by 30 per cent under this government. Tax rebates are being cut. Bursaries aren't meeting targets.

And what we're asking is for this minister to take this issue seriously and to tell this House how students are going to be supported by this government's failed bursary plan?

Mr. Wishart: As I repeat, we are working co-operatively with the post-secondary institutions, whose job it is to work with private industry to help raise that additional dollars, that will be available with matching government dollars, to be available to help those students in need, either through scholarships or bursaries.

This is a program that has been greatly amplified under our government, going from 4 million to 20 million dollars and is—and Manitoba students made it very clear they wanted upfront assistance, and we have been very happy to provide them with that.

Northern Manitoba OmniTRAX Layoffs

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): Job losses in the North are hurting families. We've already heard that the North could be losing up to 1,500 jobs in the coming years, but we don't—we won't know the true impact if this government isn't clear on how—just how many job losses we are seeing today.

We are asking the minister to tell us today how many workers OmniTRAX has laid off in the latest rounds of cuts.

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I appreciate the question because that allows me to talk about the Look North Task Force, which is recognizing the issues that northern Manitoba is—faced, which the previous government failed to recognize, failed to take action on for 17 years.

This government is now taking action to work with the North to create good, well-paying, long-lasting jobs.

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

Ms. Lathlin: It is provincial law for all companies in Manitoba to inform the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade if there will be more than 50 layoffs. It looks like the government is asleep at the switch while the North is losing jobs.

More importantly, the people of the North need to know: How many jobs has OmniTRAX cut in our communities?

Mr. Pedersen: Madam Speaker, the previous government put \$20 million—over \$20 million into Tolko, and what did they do? They left the town—leave—without any industry.

We worked with Canadian Kraft Paper to re-establish that business. Canadian Kraft Paper is now expanding their business, they're investing in that business. They're creating new jobs each and every day, far more than anything the NDP could ever hope for.

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

Need for Employment Plan

Ms. Lathlin: Manitobans in Flin Flon, Thompson, The Pas and Churchill are worried. They are worried about their communities' future. The cost of food, supplies, across the North is increasing while the news of job losses every day 'underlans'—underlines the massive challenge ahead of us.

The government needs to act now. It needs to provide real supports and invest in the North.

Will the minister table his job plans today?

Mr. Pedersen: Madam Speaker, this government continues to work in partnership with all people across the North. Another great example of that, beside the Canadian Kraft Paper, is Chief Ron Evans working on—and his committee working on a protocol with First Nations, on a mining protocol that will develop long-term, good jobs that are good for the economy and good for the local communities that these mines will be developed in.

We will continue to work in partnership with all northern Manitobans.

Made-in-Manitoba Green Plan Out-of-Province Consultants

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Madam Speaker, the Premier keeps talking about the

Leader of the Opposition recycling advisers from other provinces. Well, yes, the NDP often failed Manitobans on the environment. The Premier has done no better in reusing NDP ideas and recycling staffers.

Madam Speaker, everyone knows that the brains behind the made-in-Manitoba climate change plan is (1) not from Manitoba, and (2) does not reside in Manitoba, yet this government has no problem using our tax dollars to pay for his commute back and forth from Ottawa.

Madam Speaker, there's obviously a shortage on Conservatives in Manitoba who support the Premier's idea. Why else would he decide to bypass our intelligent Manitobans and hire from outside of Manitoba?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, Manitoba is the most open province in the most open country in the world. We welcome people here from all over the planet, and we welcome them to give them the opportunity to help and to grow as people, as individuals, but also, frankly, to add to the well-being of others in our province.

I don't think we're going to close the borders, as the member wants. I understand her federal party seeks advice on fundraising from the Cayman Islands.

* (14:20)

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

The honourable member for Burrows, on a supplementary question.

Impact on Manitobans

Ms. Lamoureux: Agriculture represents one third of all greenhouse gas emissions, which is huge. And yet, there are serious unanswered questions about this government's planned carbon tax. One of the most important questions is just who exactly will be paying for it.

Will the Premier take responsibility and admit that his two-tier carbon tax will fall mostly on those who can least afford it, like our families, our small businesses, our seniors on fixed incomes and our students?

Mr. Pallister: Well, let's talk about two-tier, Madam Speaker. Let's talk about a federal party, a federal political organization, a federal government,

that talks all the time about standing up for middle-income Canadians and then gets its fundraising advice from the Cayman Islands. Let's talk about that.

Let's talk about, quite frankly, Madam Speaker, the Liberal government in Ottawa's attack on small business, its attack—its proposals to attack farm families. Let's talk about that.

Madam Speaker, this is not our idea of how you find progress, and that's why this government stood up and defended the small- and medium-enterprise sector from these wrongful attacks, and we will continue to stand up for farm families in this province, who are important contributors to our economy.

Madam Speaker, we have a plan—a green plan, as opposed to the previous government, which had none. We have a green plan which was well designed, well consulted with by Manitobans and which will work better for our environment and better for our economy. I'd encourage the member opposite to support it and not a made-in-Ottawa plan.

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

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Ms. Lamoureux: Last week, the Premier announced that his Cabinet, all MLAs and senior bureaucrats would all have to disclose any interests that might be affected by the new marijuana legislation and completely remove themselves from any decision making. The Premier should hold himself, his caucus and senior bureaucrats to the same standard with his new carbon tax.

Madam Speaker, will the Premier and his entire caucus declare their conflicts on ownership and agriculture businesses and do the right thing by removing themselves from voting on his climate-plan carbon tax?

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

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —misguided question, I would say, from the member opposite. We are very interested in getting the input of Manitobans on our made-in-Manitoba plan. I'd encourage all Manitobans to go on the website, manitobaclimategreenplan.ca, and have their say and be heard.

The Liberal Party here in Manitoba has told Manitobans—over 35,000 of them—that they don't respect their views, don't want to hear them, and they've called them garbage, in fact, Madam Speaker. They've said to Manitobans: if we want your opinions, we'll give them to you. And the fact remains that we have a plan, that can work better for Manitoba's economy, better for Manitoba's environment, and the details are to be ironed out with the input we respectfully ask Manitobans to provide us with.

Madam Speaker, this isn't about Bill Morneau. It isn't about his tendency to not declare assets. It's not about any of those things. It's about openness, accountability, transparency and making sure that we have a plan that works best for Manitobans, something the NDP and Liberals don't seem to want to support.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Transparency and Accountability Government Initiatives

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): Our government has made a commitment to be open and transparent with Manitobans.

Can the Minister of Finance please outline what he is doing to ensure accountability and transparency for Manitobans, and how does that compare to the previous government's record?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I thank the member for the questions. Manitobans said loud and clear that they wanted a government that was open and transparent, and we are delivering that. The NDP buried political payments to departing staff for a year and a half. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Friesen: It's why last year we introduced Bill 14 to ensure political and technical contracts and severance payments are fully disclosed in a timely manner. We just released both phases of our fiscal performance review. We told Manitobans we would, and we did so. We've been hosting consultation meetings across the province.

We know, Madam Speaker, that our record is clear. We are accountable to Manitobans. We're listening to them, and we will get results on all of their behalf.

Project Labour Agreements Safety Training and Wages

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): There is no forced unionization in a project labour agreement. Madam Speaker, those are the words of the current Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen), denying this government's position and election platform, spoken in concurrence on June 28th, 2016.

Can the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler) tell the House why this government is starting a process to reduce or eliminate project labour agreements based on a claim that, quite simply, isn't true?

Hon. Eileen Clarke (Acting Minister of Infrastructure): And I take pleasure in the opportunity to reply to this.

During last year's election this government promised to shop smarter. One of the areas where we believe we can find savings for taxpayers is with procurement policies and tendering practices.

Under the NDP government, the use of project labour agreements were expanded to an increasing number of major projects for purely ideological reasons. These agreements forced unionization on workers. This government has a better plan.

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

Mr. Lindsey: Under project labour agreements non-union workers pay a fee for service; they do not pay union dues. That fee means that non-union bidders have to offer their workers fair wages—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lindsey: —training and safe working conditions. PLAs also prevent work stoppages and reduce disruption. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lindsey: Project labour agreements have been around for close to 50 years, and we think that the right to fair wages and safety doesn't change over time—well, unless, of course, it's to get better.

Will the minister commit to maintaining fair wages, safety for workers and quality under project labour agreements?

Ms. Clarke: I think the member opposite made a very good point: you can pay extra fees or union

costs. What does it do? It increases costs, it discourages some contractors from bidding and it infringes on the rights of all workers.

Using government contracts to—for ideological approach is not an acceptable practice.

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

Mr. Lindsey: Former Premier Duff Roblin introduced project labour agreements to prevent fly-by-night contractors from using poorly trained and unqualified labour for critical infrastructure projects like the Red River Floodway.

When it comes to major infrastructure products, Madam Speaker, Duff Roblin recognized the lowest up-front price doesn't necessarily mean the lowest overall cost and certainly not the best value.

Will the Premier follow the example set by his predecessor, uphold project labour agreements that ensure workers are properly trained and the work is done safely? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Duff Roblin didn't have the benefit at the time in Manitoba of a Construction Industry Wages Act, Madam Speaker, that protects workers in this province. We do.

The argument the NDP makes is specious and it's been specious for a long time. The argument they make is that we need to force these union dues on everybody, even though three quarters of the construction industry workers have chosen not to be unionized, because it'll stop strikes.

* (14:30)

You know how many strikes there've been, Madam Speaker, in all the projects, all the government projects in the history of Manitoba? None.

So they say we should drive up the cost of doing business in this province, so we can protect what? We can protect an ideology. So we can protect an ideology, Madam Speaker, that is outlawed throughout most of the United States—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —in every European country, Madam Speaker. What they're proposing we keep going here in Manitoba is against the law, even in socialist countries.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a point of order.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Two quick points of order.

First one—I'm not sure how much this is a point of order or not, but during one of my preambles in question period, I incorrectly referred to the member from Brandon East heckling me during my comments. I'd like to apologize to the member, withdraw that and instead point out to the House it was obviously the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) who was heckling. And I would just reiterate my commitment to continue standing up for his constituents against these terrible health cuts that are being pursued. So, I would leave those—I would leave that to you.

On the other point of order that I wanted to raise before you, Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I think—we will deal with the first point of order separately from the second. And I would indicate to the member that he does not have a point of order, but appreciate his correction of that—of his comments.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: And the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a second point of order.

Mr. Kinew: This point of order is related to the first one, and it is just, you know—one of the important functions that this House serves in a democracy is that it offers the opposition standing in the, you know, symbolic role of giving voice to the people of Manitoba, an opportunity to question the government on their current priorities.

I would argue that the amount of heckling that is taking place during question period these days is actually counter-productive—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —to that end. We have 40 minutes in question period. That is opposition time. It is time for the opposition to bring forward issues of importance which matter to the people of Manitoba. However,

over and over again, we hear, you know, members from the backbench of the government side heckling and interrupting the questioning that's going on and also, you know, taking up unnecessary time during question period.

We heard several times today that that happened. You interjected and called the members to order, and the heckling continued nonetheless in question period—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: Recall that the member from Interlake, you know, even asked in question period, is this thing on, at a point in time where you had called all members to order.

So, again, I would ask, Madam Speaker, if we could hear some directive for this House as to the proper conduct in question period, and my point being that we should be able to ask the questions free of heckling so that we can stand up for the things that the Manitoba electorate have sent us here to do.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): I certainly look forward to your ruling on this point of order.

I appreciate the member raising this question, and I know he doesn't have the experience in the House, and some of us have considerable experience. And certainly we recognize from past history, I think the heckling was a lot worse a number of years ago.

I know you certainly have done what you can to bring the House under order. We appreciate the work that you're doing in that regard, but I think, you know, on reflection and past history, we're certainly maybe not where we should be, but we're certainly a lot better than we used to be.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on that same point of order.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): On the same point of order.

You know, clearly, in this part of the Chamber, there was a lot of noise which made it difficult to hear some of the questions and some of the answers, and I would just echo and support the call for a little bit less noise at the time that we're trying to pose and answer questions.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: On that point of order raised by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew), I would point out, from sitting up here and listening very carefully to all sides, there's heckling going on all throughout the House, and it isn't just one side or the other.

There is considerable noise in this House, and I have looked last week through all of Hansard, and I found there were a number of times I did have to call order, far more than I have in the last year and a half. And so there is some dynamic going on here. It started last week, it appears to be continuing this week, and I would point out that what we do need to do in order to demonstrate that we are here speaking on behalf of people, on behalf of our constituents and promoting democracy, is to have more respect in the House for people that are asking questions and answering questions.

Points of order, also, are not to be used to put comments on the record or to—besides not putting comments on the record, they're not to be used for debate. So I would point out that there is no point of order.

* * *

Madam Speaker: But I would encourage members—and I think there was a good effort when we first started out, that we would work a little bit harder to address the issue of heckling, and I would encourage people to revisit that. Those introductory speeches that everybody made gave everybody a really good sense of why you all came here to this Legislature. So I would indicate you might want to revisit that and perhaps in the next while we could see the level of heckling decrease in the House. I think it would be much better for democracy at all levels.

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Brandon West, on a point of order.

Mr. Helwer: I listened intently to the points of order brought by the member, and I'm sure you will caution the member as to whether he can identify if members are in the House or not, Madam Speaker. And you ruled on his point of order, so thank you for that.

Madam Speaker: On the member's point of order, there is a rule in the House that we are not to be mentioning whether members are present or absent

from the House. So I would indicate that one probably needs to be more careful as we are doing speeches in here that we are not referencing the presence or absence of members, whether it's in debate or in points of order. So I would ask for co-operation.

And also, when the Speaker is standing, there is to be absolute silence in the House. And that is one of the main rules that we have in our Chamber that does promote decorum, that is the respect for the Chair, that when the Speaker stands there is absolute silence in the House. And I would ask for your co-operation in that matter.

PETITIONS

Transit Funding

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017, section 88(8) repeals the portion of The Municipal Taxation and Funding Act which states, quote, "The municipal grants for a fiscal year must include for each municipality that operates a regular or rapid transit system a transit operating grant in an amount that is not less than 50 per cent of the annual operating cost of the transit system in excess of its annual operating revenue." End quote.

(2) Public transit is critical to Manitoba's economy, to preserving its infrastructure and to reducing the carbon footprint.

* (14:40)

(3) Eliminating the grant guarantees for municipal 'transit' agencies will be detrimental to transit services and be harmful to provincial objectives of connecting Manitobans to employment, improving aged infrastructure and addressing climate change.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plan to repeal the annual operating grant for municipal transit agencies and remove section 88(8) of Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017.

This 'petition' is signed by Jacob Colson, Noah Howe, Jones Odusanya and many, many more Manitobans.

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

Northern Patient Transfer Program

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

The background to this position-petition is as follows:

(1) Manitobans recognize that everyone deserves quality, accessible health care.

(2) The people of northern Manitoba face unique challenges when accessing health care, including inclement weather, 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 has also substantially cut investments in roads and highways, which will make it more difficult for northerners to access health care.

(6) The provincial government's 'austerity' 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 the 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 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 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.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Manitobans recognize that everyone deserves quality, accessible health care.

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

(3) 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.

(6) The provincial government's austerity 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 the 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 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 Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this petition, Madam Speaker, has been signed by many, many, many Manitobans.

Taxi Industry Regulation

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 there are both the provision of taxi service and a fair and affordable fare structure.

(3) Regulations have been put in place that have 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 the 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.

This petition is signed by many Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: Further petitions?

Transit Funding

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017, section 88(8), repeals the portion of The Municipal Taxation and Funding Act which states, quote: The municipal grants for a fiscal year must include for each municipality that operates a regular or rapid public transit system a transit operating grant in an amount that is not less than 50 per cent of the annual operating cost of the transit system in excess of its annual operating revenue. End of quote.

(2) Public transit is critical to Manitoba's economy, to preserving its infrastructure and to reducing the carbon footprint.

(3) Eliminating the grant guarantees for municipal transit agencies will be detrimental to transit services and be harmful to provincial objectives of connecting Manitobans to employment, improving aging road infrastructure and addressing climate change.

* (14:50)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plan to repeal the annual operating grant for municipal transit agencies and remove section 88(8) of Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017.

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

Concordia Hospital Emergency Room

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 provincial government has announced the closures of three emergency rooms and an urgent-care centre in the city of Winnipeg, including

closing down the emergency room at Concordia Hospital.

(2) The closure—the closures, I'm sorry, come on the heels of the closing of a nearby QuickCare clinic, as well as cancelled plans for ACCESS centres and personal-care homes, such as Park Manor, that would have provided important services for families and seniors in the area.

(3) The closures have left families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg without any point of contact with front-line health-care services and will result in them having to travel 20 minutes or more to St. Boniface Hospital's emergency room for emergency care.

(4) These cuts will place a heavy burden on so many—on the many seniors who live in northeast Winnipeg and visit the emergency room frequently, especially for those who are unable to drive or are low income.

(5) The provincial government failed to consult with families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg regarding the closing of their emergency room or to consult with health officials and health-care workers at Concordia to discuss how this closure would impact patient care in advance of the announcement.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse the decision to close Concordia Hospital's emergency room so that families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg and the surrounding areas have timely access to quality health-care services.

This petition was signed by many Manitobans. Thank you.

Health-Care Investment

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislature.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

The Premier has launched an attack on Manitoba's health-care system, imposing reckless cuts to facilities and services, which will have a devastating impact on the health and safety of Manitobans.

The Premier has broken his promise to protect the front-line health-care services families and seniors depend on, as well as to protect the front-line workers who deliver those services.

The Premier is closing three emergency rooms and an urgent-care centre in Winnipeg, forcing families in south and northeastern and western Winnipeg to travel farther for emergency health care.

The Premier has already shuttered the St. Boniface QuickCare Clinic and has announced plans to close four more clinics in Winnipeg, meaning families will no longer be able to access primary health care in their communities.

The Premier cancelled \$1 billion in health-care capital projects, including a new facility for CancerCare Manitoba, primary-care clinics for St. Vital and The Pas, the consultation clinic for Thompson, a new facility for Pan Am Clinic, two new personal-care homes and an international centre for palliative care.

The Premier's millions of dollars in budget cuts have forced the WRHA to cut crucial services like occupational therapy and physiotherapy in hospitals, lactation consultants for new mothers, the Mature Women's Centre at Victoria Hospital, a home-care—and a home-care program for the chronically ill.

The budget cuts have also resulted in raising of fees for seniors in the long-term care program and cancel the program that recruited doctors in rural communities.

On top of these cuts, the provincial government has opened the door to privatization by bringing in private home-care companies and expressing interest in private MRI services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately reverse these cuts which hurts families and seniors' care, weaken health-care services, and drive health-care workers out of the province and to instead invest in the provincial government health-care system in order to protect and improve patient care.

Signed by Emily Coutts, Daniel Richards, Dave Sauer, Bob Linsdell and many, many other Manitobans.

Concordia Hospital Emergency Room

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government has announced the closures of three emergency rooms and an urgent-care centre in the city of Winnipeg, including closing down the emergency room at Concordia Hospital.

(2) The closures come on the heels of the closing of a nearby QuickCare clinic as well as cancelled plans for ACCESS centres and personal-care homes, such as Park Manor, that would have provided important services for families and seniors in the area.

(3) The closures have left families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg without any point of contact with front-line health-care services and will result in them having to travel 20 minutes or more to St. Boniface Hospital's emergency room for emergency care.

(4) These cuts will place a heavy burden on the many seniors who live in northeast Winnipeg and visit the emergency room frequently, especially for those who are unable to drive or are low income.

(5) The provincial government failed to consult with families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg regarding the closing of their emergency room or to consult with health officials and health-care workers at Concordia to discuss how this closure would impact patient care in advance of the announcement.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse the decision to close Concordia Hospital's emergency room so that families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg and the surrounding areas have timely access to quality health-care services.

Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by many, many Manitobans.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government has announced the closures—[interjection]—sorry, Madam Speaker. I'll start again.

(1) The provincial government has announced the closures of three emergency rooms and an urgent-care centre in the city of Winnipeg, including closing down the emergency room at Concordia Hospital.

(2) The closures come on the heels of the closing of a nearby QuickCare clinic, as well as cancelled plans for ACCESS centres and personal-care homes, such as Park Manor, that would have provided important services for families and seniors in the area.

(3) The closures have left families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg without any point of contact with front-line health-care services and will result in them having to travel 20 minutes or more to St. Boniface Hospital's emergency room for emergency care.

* (15:00)

(4) These cuts will place a heavy burden on the many seniors who live in northeast Winnipeg and visit the emergency room frequently, especially for those who are unable to drive or who are low income.

(5) The provincial government failed to consult with families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg regarding the closing of their emergency room or to consult with health officials and health-care workers at Concordia to discuss how this closure would impact patient care in advance of the announcement.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse the decision to close Concordia Hospital's emergency room so that families and seniors in northeast Winnipeg and the surrounding areas have timely access to health-care services.

And this petition, Madam Speaker, is signed by Betty Charney, Anita Capek and Linda Martens and many other fine Manitobans.

GRIEVANCES

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview, on a grievance.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): No one is ever pleased to get up on a grievance, but today this—I feel it's incumbent upon myself to raise issues that have been bothering myself but more importantly bothering the people of Fort Garry-Riverview for quite some time.

And the central theme of my grievance today is the objection on my part and on part of my constituency that I'm very, very proud to represent, is a simple objection to the overt, hyper-partisan actions of the Pallister government that seems relentless. It has happened time and time again since

the last election with no apparent will to stop and to do the right thing on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

Now, what does this result in? This hyper-partisan activity of the government, what does it really result in? Does it do anything for anyone, Madam Speaker? Well, no, it doesn't. It simply distorts the public record; it deceives the people of Manitoba and it degrades political discourse in this province and none of us should accept that ever.

Madam Speaker, during the past election the government said they were going to aim higher, but every day seems to be a race to the bottom with this government. My friend from St. Johns says that we should be here to lift people up and instead there seems to be an intention on the part of the government instead, and this is difficult for me to say, but seems to be not only a race to the bottom, but to play to the lowest common denominator in our province, and I don't think that's what we all stand for, I don't think any member in this province stood for election for that purpose and I think—the government asked us to aim higher. They go lower every day and that, I have to say, is the essence of my grievance today.

And you don't have to go very far to see that. You only have to see question period today to know what hyper-partisan activity actually looks like. The member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), the Leader of the Opposition, got up and asked the Premier (Mr. Pallister) about health care—very important questions about health care, very, very important to the people in my constituency where Riverview Health Centre is located. One of my constituents wrote me over the weekend and found the Premier and the Health Minister's actions in relation to the Riverview Health Centre to be despicable, and that's a direct quote. Despicable. She said, why, why? She asked me, it's a rhetorical question: Why should a patient have to plead to stay in their home, which is the Riverview Health Centre for this particular person, and then on top of it why do they have to plead to have the proper health-care givers at their bedside? Neither of those things should happen, And yet what is the answers that we get from across the floor?

An Honourable Member: They're not answers at all.

Mr. Allum: They're not answers at all, says my friend from Minto, and he couldn't be more right. That was actually some kind of sideshow carnay act

that we were seeing, not, Madam Speaker, what should happen in question period, which is the delivery of good answers on—questions on behalf of the people of Manitoba and then, on top of that, good answers. But we don't get good answers; what we get are hyperpartisan political dialogue that does nothing for the people of Manitoba. And the member from Morris is actually front and centre in that particular egregious activity. And I would ask him to do better, to aim higher and to speak honestly and forthrightly with the people of Manitoba instead of doing what he does—seems to do best, which is to heckle from the backbenches of the Conservative government, because he ain't never going to see the front benches any time soon.

My friend from Minto got up to ask about EMS services in Boissevain. The Minister of Health treated it as nothing short of a joke. My friend from Concordia got up to ask about bursaries for—to support students in this province and he asked repeatedly, could the minister give us an update, tell us what the number is today. Did you hear—did anybody in this House, any member of this House get an answer to that? No, we didn't, Madam Speaker. But that's an example of the hyperpartisan political discourse that masquerades as answers in this House.

My friend from The Pas got up and asked really, really important questions about jobs in the North. And what did she get from the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen) but something that didn't even approximate an answer, Madam Speaker. Instead, it was a terrible disservice to the people of Manitoba and the people of the North who have huge anxiety, huge stress about their jobs, about their families, about being able to pay the mortgage and put bread on the table and send their kids to school, but did they get an—did she get an answer for that? She absolutely did not, and that's not right.

My friend from Flin Flon got up to ask a very important question about project labour agreements. They didn't understand the question, says my friend from Flin Flon, and that might be true, but even then—even then—the Premier (Mr. Pallister), who made it a point of getting up, gave distorted answers to questions that are of central importance to the people and their families of the North.

That's subject for a grievance, Madam Speaker. That's why I'm standing here today. The fact of the matter, though, is that the answers given on project labour agreements is quite consistent with a

government who cares not a whit for the people of Manitoba. As my dad used to say, only the bosses will tell you that lower wages, no safety standards, no benefits, only the bosses will tell you that's a good thing for you. Nobody else believes that. Certainly, workers in Manitoba don't believe that.

There has been a litany of misdirection happening from this government since the day of the last election and it needs to stop, because, as you yourself today said, Madam Speaker, we're all here to represent the people of Manitoba, and we on this side, we're good for a good debate. We're—that's okay, fact to fact, argument to argument—

An Honourable Member: Bring it on.

Mr. Allum: Bring it on, says my friend from Concordia. That's exactly what we're doing. We're good with that. But don't give us half-baked, hyperpartisan political answers to questions that are central to the very people that we represent.

Madam Speaker, last week I asked relentlessly of the Finance Minister, will he call the BITSA legislation to standing committee so that people can have their say. The fact of the matter is that instead of cutting transit in the budget, which he shouldn't do, but he should've done it there, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) hid that in the budget's implementation bill.

* (15:10)

That kind of sleight of hand is characteristic of a government that is focused on hyperpartisan activity instead of dealing honestly and forthrightly with the minister—with the people of Manitoba.

You know, Madam Speaker, I asked him, will he send it to committee, yes or no. I've asked a few questions like that over my time, that yes or no. You don't get either a yes or a no. You don't even get a maybe.

But what was worse than that, the members who have a functional transit over 1,500 who'd signed that petition, were viewing that day and they wanted to know if the minister would send that bill to committee where it belongs. He didn't answer. He didn't give a yes or a no or a maybe. He didn't answer at all, and that is characteristic of this government and why we will take this out onto the streets of Manitoba from door to door.

The member for Morris (Mr. Martin) continues to heckle from the side. I don't know why he continues to do that. I doubt that he goes to a

doorstep and talks honestly to the people he represents. I don't think they know exactly what he's about, Madam Speaker.

But the truth is it's not just the member from Morris, Madam Speaker. It's the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister)—

Madam Speaker: Order. I would again urge members that the heckling in this House being elevated to the extent it is right now is not helping promote democracy in any way. I think it's very important that all comments be heard and that respect be given to who has the floor, and I would urge members to please be very careful with the heckling. It gets very disruptive and it inflames debate and I don't think that's going to move our agenda forward.

Mr. Allum: Madam Speaker, my time is running short. I just wanted to end by saying that the tone for this is set at the top. The member for Fort Whyte, the Premier of this province, he's the one who leads by example and he's the one who demonstrates to every single member of the government side how they should conduct themselves in this House.

So my last and final appeal as part of this grievance is, in fact, to do what you said—the government side should do what they said they were going to do: aim higher, Madam Speaker. I want them to know we're never going to roll over for them. We're going to fight back and we're going to fight for the people of Manitoba every single day.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns, on a grievance.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): So I have the opportunity to do what is my first grievance in this House, and so I guess it's an opportunity to put on the record some things that I would argue and I would suggest to yourself and also members of the House are particularly egregious and disrespectful, and I guess it would be no shock that my grievances today for the limited time that we have, because really, Madam Speaker, you can well imagine that everybody on this side could probably talk for hours and hours and hours on a particular grievance. I will limit my grievance today in respect of women—Manitoba women and girls' reproductive health here, and what we've seen from this Pallister government is nothing short of an attack on women and girls' bodies, and, you know, I want to start with even the discussion or lack thereof in respect of Mifegymiso, which is more commonly known as the abortion pill.

And I think it's important to put on the record that I have been asking questions on Mifegymiso since June of 2016 when we, across the county, knew that finally Canada would be getting the abortion pill, and when provinces and territories knew that they would have to put in some type of policy or plan or strategy or infrastructure in respect of accessing the abortion pill and what would that look like. Of course, keeping in line with the criteria that Canada has set out, but certainly some provinces have gone well above other provinces, and I would suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that Manitoba lags behind, I would suggest, many other provinces who have shown some real leadership and, dare I say, even courage in respect of accessing the abortion pill.

And so, if I can just backtrack a little bit about why the abortion pill is—the discussion and the access to it is so important, and it is this, Madam Speaker.

You know, Mifegymiso is often discussed or talked about as being a game changer. It's a game changer in women's—women and girls' reproductive health. And it is because of the accessibility of taking two pills up to a certain point in a pregnancy versus having to come down and have a surgical abortion and allowing more women and girls to access abortion versus actually, in many respects, some of the limited access that you get in respect of a surgical abortion.

And I want to share a story with you, Madam Speaker, in this House in respect of how this government has missed an opportunity—and actually missed the whole point of Mifegymiso. If you look at some of our northern communities that are fly-in communities, there are many, many instances in which women and girls find themselves pregnant and, had they had full control and access over reproductive health, would have chosen to have an abortion. But here's the reality in some of the northern communities that people kind of don't want to talk about, and it is this: is that if I were to find myself pregnant and I didn't want to have another child or a child at all, as is my right to choose—it is my right as a woman to choose whether or not I continue on with a pregnancy or not. If I'm in an isolated community and I have to fly out of that community to head to Winnipeg for a surgical abortion, everybody knows why I'm flying out of the community. Everybody knows the day that I get on that plane and I fly down to the city. Everybody knows when I get back and I get off that plane. The whole community knows that I have just been in the

hospital; I have just been given drugs; I have just been put through a surgical abortion.

And the reality is, as I'm sure everybody is well aware, is that there are many different discourses in respect of abortion and differing opinions on abortion, and that is—it is what it is. But, oftentimes, women and girls are shamed, either overtly or not so overtly, but you know you're getting shamed, that you've just chosen to have an abortion. And everybody in the community knows that you've done that.

So it really does beg the question: How do I have full control over my reproductive health if my being able to access abortion is limited. Not only is it limited; it is fraught with shaming over my own body. And, actually, Madam Speaker, I would advise you that there is a very sad story in one of the communities in which a little girl was subject to incest for years and actually found herself pregnant and was not even—was under 15 years old. And she was impregnated by a relative and did not have access to abortion because everybody knew what she would be doing.

And here is where Mifegymiso comes in, is that had she had access to that, perhaps she would have chosen that, and perhaps the trajectory of her life would have gone a little bit differently. And this is the material point that this Pallister government is failing to see or is consciously failing to act on and see for their own ideological kind of beliefs in respect of women and girls' control over their reproductive health.

* (15:20)

And let me just say this, is that, as a woman, I find it so egregious that my having full control over my body is dependent upon, predominantly, members opposite and whether or not I have full access to a surgical abortion or to Mifegymiso.

If there was ever anything that was—I could present in respect of a grievance in this House it is that. It is that this Pallister government is consciously thwarting women and girls' full access and rights over our reproductive health and that is offensive and egregious.

On top of that, Madam Speaker, like, the icing and the cherry on the cake in respect of this attack on women and girls' reproductive health is the fact that in the members opposite, you know, concern with the bottom line and not patient care or not women's rights to reproductive health, they cut two lactation

consultants, and I've written about that. I needed that and I'm so grateful for that woman, that nurse, that lactation consultant, that came in and taught me how to nurse my son because I remember I had gone five days and I had just given up, but she came in and she showed patience and love, and that one time allowed me to—the skills to be able to nurse my second son and I am so grateful for that. I was a student when I had both of my sons. I actually wouldn't have been able to afford the formula, but I was given the skills to do what my body does naturally, but sometimes we need help, and this government cut those consultants, and putting on additional work and stress on nurses already to give them those skills.

On top of that they cut the mature women's health centre. I—who does that? Who does that? Who cuts a program that had two specialized nurses that are nowhere to be found in Manitoba but at the mature women's health centre. Who cuts a program that's working that actually helps and services thousands of Manitoba women? Now, for anybody that doesn't know, and if you start going through menopause or—you get bloody hot. You have all kinds of different symptoms. You think you're kind of—you don't know what your body's going through. Women could go there, not only for that. They could go for a variety of different issues.

So, again, Madam Speaker, in my grievance, I just want to reiterate again how egregious and disrespectful these—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): You know, I'd just like to rise and put a grievance on the record around this government's lack of attention to preventative health care and lack of a plan for primary prevention in particular; and upstream interventions in health care such as mental health services in the community; dedicated beds which would allow for harm-reduction approaches when people are using methodone or Suboxone therapy, opioid replacement therapy and also for lack of attention to expanding the pharmacare services that are needed for people to stay healthy in today's day and age.

Now, the reason why I rise on this grievance today and argue that it's particularly urgent for this House to hear about is because of the plan that is being pursued by this government, the plan to close three emergency rooms. The plan to close an urgent-care centre in Winnipeg's inner city and the plan to close many clinics across Winnipeg.

You know, some media commentators pointed out that this government seems to be cherry-picking from the Peachey report and I'm inclined to agree, because my read of the Peachey report was that he recommended that you could consolidate sites if you invested in community health access. However, this government is only pursuing a plan of consolidation without additional investments in community health access points.

In my own community of Fort Rouge, we know that the clinic on Corydon is being closed. This one was first brought to my attention by somebody who works there, and even before the announcement was made this, you know, employee of the clinic had been told that she would be transferring sites. And this is a place in the neighbourhood—a neighbourhood with, you know, many seniors, many young families, also many people with different accessibility needs who are able to live in, you know, the Corydon area and Osborne Village because there's all the services that you need very close together and many in accessible buildings, and yet that service is being taken away from them.

And, when you make these sorts of cuts to health care, it is going to have a real and lasting impact on people in our province.

Again, when the urgent care centres closed at Misericordia, we know that people are going to be diverted to Health Sciences Centre or to St. Boniface Hospital. We know that when Victoria General's ER is closed, for those non-urgent care cases, those patients are going to be diverted to the Health Sciences Centre and to St. Boniface Hospital. Similarly, with the closure of Concordia—which now leaves northeast Winnipeg without an access point, without an emergent care centre. When that's closed, those patients will be transferred to St. Boniface and to the Health Sciences Centre.

Now—Manitobans, you know, don't understand how ER wait times are supposed to get better with fewer ERs and with people—tens of thousands more patients per year—being sent to those remaining emergency rooms without any additional investments in community health.

And you know, when we look at what is happening in our emergency rooms, we know that there are many people there with unique and complex needs. For instance, many people present at the emergency room for undiagnosed mental health problems. They have mental health issues that they

themselves may not yet be aware of, and yet they are suffering from these mental health conditions.

They may present at the emergency room; however, we know that the emergency room is a very expensive place to deliver care. So would it not be better for the patient if they were to have access to mental health services in the community? If we could reach out to this person before they hit a crisis stage and felt the need to go to the emergency room or were indeed brought to the emergency room by somebody else? Would it not be a better quality of life? I think so.

It would be a higher quality of life for them if they could access the mental health services in the community, and it would also benefit the health-care system writ large because delivering care in the community—delivering care to somebody in their home—is a much cheaper place to deliver care than is the emergency room. The emergency room is one of the most expensive places to deliver care in our health-care system.

Similarly, too, on the Pharmacare side—again I'm making the point that these are steps of preventative investments that the government could be taking. So mental health being one, Pharmacare being another.

We know that Pharmacare is the—one of the last great challenges for our system—our health-care system to be truly universal, truly to be a free—freely accessible health-care system for all, because if you are somebody who is, you know, living in a low-income situation and you get a free visit to the doctor, do you truly have access to free health care if you're given a prescription—a \$200 medication—which you cannot afford?

And so the real world impact for many people, if you don't have access to drug coverage, or adequate drug coverage, is that they often make the decision to go out with—to go without the medication that they need, to go without the pharmaceutical drugs that they need to be healthy.

What happens to those people? Well, many of them end up presenting in the ER because of the conditions that might have been manageable in the community. People with diabetes; with, you know, renal health issues; people with many, many conditions with the aid and access to better drug coverage would be able to stay home, would be able to stay in the community, and instead are forced to go to the emergency room.

So, again, for these people who are forced to go to the emergency room to be provided with drugs that they could not otherwise afford, we know that saving them that trip to the ER would give them a better quality of life. However, they will be missing out on that.

* (15:30)

Additionally, it would help our system, too, if those people could be treated with the necessary Pharmacare coverage in the community rather than going to the ER. It would benefit the system as a whole. It would reduce the amount of people in the ER waiting room. It would also reduce wait times as a direct result of that phenomenon.

And when we look at the issue of primary prevention—primary prevention, Madam Speaker, of course being helping people to live healthy lives, to have a good diet, to have access to enough exercise so that they can avoid certain chronic conditions and, finally, of course, injury prevention. So primary prevention also includes things like wearing your seatbelt, wearing a helmet when you ride your bicycle.

It includes investing in occupational therapy when a senior leaves the hospital after surgery because if you can have an outpatient occupational therapy visit to your home, that OT professional could fit your apartment or your home with the necessary mobility aids so that you could avoid reinjuring yourself and subsequently having to go back to the hospital emergency room to be treated and potentially avoiding surgeries later on in life.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

So the lack of investments in these areas is certainly short-sighted and will, you know, cause pain to many Manitobans, and that's of great concern to me. I want to live in a province where everybody has the ability to reach their full potential, to be healthy, to feel good about themselves. And so we need to invest in primary prevention just for that inherent belief in each and every person in this province, but beyond that we should also recognize that investing in preventative medicine, investing in primary prevention, in mental health, in Pharmacare, actually benefits the system as a whole.

And what we're seeing now with this current government in office closing two emergency, you know, response stations in the Arthur-Virden constituency, closing three emergency rooms here in the city, closing an urgent-care centre, we know that

there's going to be real impact on families. At the same time, there's no corresponding attention being paid to the importance of preventative medicine, and so for me, that's a real grievance that I'm rising on behalf of my constituents for. There's many, you know, elderly residents in Fort Rouge who would benefit from better Pharmacare coverage. There's many young people who go into the schools in the area like La Verendrye and Earl Grey that would benefit from more investments in injury prevention—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

The honourable member for The Pas, on a grievance.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): It's an honour here to be standing here as the MLA for The Pas to speak on my first grievance here in the—within the Manitoba Legislative Assembly Chamber. As the MLA for The Pas, I could say I probably have a few grievances to talk about here. For example, I just wanted to give an overall as to what has been going on in northern Manitoba and things that have been affecting my communities, family and myself as well.

For example, the closure of the Port of Churchill was probably one of our first disappointments we had and also, too, the paper—possible paper mill closure that happened in my community. And, once again, I just want to say that the MP for Churchill, Niki Ashton, and I have met numerous times with our union members from Unifor from the paper mill, and it was quite enlightening and quite honoured to be working with our union members who were there personally sharing their stories about how much that they're going to work together to keep their jobs so their families and children can continue living in The Pas and in the North and continue going to school.

So, with that, it was nice to see that—how strong our community came together, especially with our local leadership, and worked with the employees and—who agreed to take a 10 per cent pay cut in order for this paper mill to continue, and continue as Canadian Kraft Paper. So it's great to see that we still see our families here working within our paper mill and our families and children within our schools as well.

Another challenging year was the IGA, the closure of our local grocery store on OCN.

We almost lost the OCN Blizzard. And, again, community efforts came together to ensure that this

local, strong hockey club that plays as role models within our community had continued to stay open with, again, the efforts from our community.

Another thing that was another blow to our community was the cancellation for The Pas health clinic. It was an honour to announce that we were ready to go. Like, literally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the shovels were ready to hit the ground. Plans were made with the northern regional health authority and with OCN in how to utilize this extremely badly needed clinic within the North. It had opportunities to house specialists. It had opportunities to recruit and keep doctors in northern Manitoba. And I can tell you, right now, I've received a couple of emails and concerns from constituents that, right now, there are no more doctors accepting any more patients within The Pas. So, to me, that was a huge opportunity lost that basically risks our lives when that clinic was cancelled. That clinic could have housed more doctors that our community truly and badly needs.

But also, too, with that, in regards to health, I must-have turn to when I attended the Northern Health Summit in Thompson a couple of weeks ago, I think that was my third summit that I attended three years in a row, a summit that I believe that is extremely important for me to be present at as a representative of the North, and also just as a northern resident, as well. Today's theme was—this year's theme, I should say, was diabetes. And we had extremely educational and very informative conversations regarding diabetes. I too myself come from a few generations of diabetes. I have diabetes 2 myself, so I extremely know exactly what our panel guests were talking about, especially when they were talking about food security, access to health, even the point of telehealth. If people don't know what telehealth is, it's basically a TV screen where you can communicate with your doctor, whether you're in the south or the North. And it basically eliminates unnecessary travel sometimes and unnecessary stress.

And I don't mean to—well, I just want to share, too, that we participated in this really extremely important exercise at this summit. All of us were there. We were local leaders, nurses, doctors, patients, community people; people from travel organizations were there as well. And there was probably about maybe 120 of us in that room. And we participated in this exercise where we all had to come up with an idea on how to improve health in northern Manitoba and provide a solution. So we

went around and had an idea and switched around multiple times. And then we all gathered in a circle all around the hall and we basically had to rate which one—which idea we thought in our own minds was the most important.

So I don't mean to toot my own horn, but I—my question, my idea came in, yes, as No. 1. I—my idea was to start utilizing telehealth more for medical appointments. Solution: recruit more doctors in the south to get on board with telehealth because, you know, basically that's going to meet us halfway with our health needs and it's going to reduce stress. Our children don't have to lose a couple of days of school. Workers don't have to lose income just to attend an appointment that's probably only going to last five minutes.

So I used to sit on the Aboriginal Telehealth Knowledge Circle nationally as the co-chair, and it was extremely important as to what kind of services that this one particular technology can provide. So with that, that question was voted as probably the most important and great idea. So yes, I'm here tooting my own horn. Thank you very much.

* (15:40)

So—[interjection] yes, and oh—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Yes, you've got six thirty—[interjection]—you've spoke for six thirty-two, so she has additional two and a half minutes—[interjection]—three and a half minutes. Three—yes.

Ms. Lathlin: Okay. Sorry about that constitutional breakdown there, but I'll continue.

Another grievance I have, really, is Bill 27, the Manitoba elections amendment act, but to me, I see that as a voter-suppression act. As somebody who goes campaigning in northern Manitoba, it's really difficult to enter homes and—like, my favourite story's that one in Norway House where I thought I was attending a family supper, a gathering. But really, Deputy Speaker, I was attending a household with 15 people living in there.

So, when I entered, campaigning, knocking on the door, I was let in, and I asked, who are the eligible voters here? And they only had one person. That one person was only on one hydro bill. In fact, that hydro bill didn't even have an address; it had a 10-digit number. So, obviously, those Manitoba elections papers that we had that were stacked this high wasn't useful to us, so, basically, we can only allot maybe only one person to vote, you know, in

that one household, and yet there was 14 other members there.

So, again, that's difficulties that us people in the North, especially living on First Nations, were—it's even more challenging to get our people to get out and vote anyway even for a chief and council, so, you know, try to entice people to vote in all elections, you know, that's going to be putting up barriers towards those people in where they should, and most importantly, should be participating in this election process as well to voice their voice.

And also, too, Bill 23—that's another grievance. It was absolutely 'frustrating' just hearing our fishermen in Norway House, when I went there in August, when the Department of Fisheries and Oceans were there basically telling them this is what the Province is going to do, and this is what we're going to do, maybe. I don't know. Basically, you have to accept it. You know, here we are.

So, basically, our fishermen were there talking about their livelihood. Basically, they were saying fishing is not a holiday. It's not an activity that we do on a holiday; it is actually livelihood. It puts food on the table. It supports our families. It's a traditional cultural act done on our traditional lands, right? So, with that, it was an absolute honour when I was at the Norway House fisheries co-op office. There's this one wall there filled with beautiful black and white pictures of our elders, past board members from generations ago. And to have this bill basically destroy generations of our people building relationships with FFMC.

So, to me, it was very important that we had Langford Saunders, the president, come to committee just recently to speak on this. And, basically, we had other folks show up—that showed up—you know, people from Matheson Island, Norway House fishermen's 'comissial' fishers area four—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Well, everybody's wide awake now, but maybe in 10 minutes you won't be.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I guess if I had to grieve anything, it would be the way this government has dealt with Bill 30, The Local Vehicles for Hire Act. We had one of the larger groups of presenters to committee last week, and we've saw something here that we haven't seen probably in the whole life of

Manitoba in over 100 years. We saw the government essentially cut off, through either deliberate or just poor planning on the government's behalf, citizens' right to make a presentation on the bill.

Slightly over 100 people were left off the list when all the Government House Leader (Mr. Cullen) had to do last Thursday was simply announce that there would be hearings on Friday, 14 hours on Friday, which he did. He could have simply asked for another 14 hours on Saturday, on Sunday and Monday, which he did not. And he disregarded these people who spent a lot of time here, basically, away from their jobs, and did not hear from them.

Now, what should he be doing right now? What should the government be doing right now? We have report stage amendments. We have three report stage amendments on this Bill 30, and he knows that he should have been—called those report stage amendments for last Thursday. He could have done it today or he could do it tomorrow. But why won't he do it? He won't do it because the report stage amendments are all debatable, and he does not want—the government does not want any debate in this House. They want to run out the clock and talk about a floor-crossing Bill 40, which didn't meet any criteria in the spring for any deadlines, so it wasn't a specified bill. And they want to talk about their Bill 40, but they want to eliminate any discussion on the report stage amendments.

So, as a result, my prediction is—and prove me wrong—but my prediction is that at 4 o'clock tomorrow, the Speaker will simply shut down all debate at that time and proceed to report stage amendments. And we will have absolutely no discussion on these three report stage amendments, just like we had no consultation with the taxi industry on Bill 30 in the first place.

So that is how this government is operating. They're totally abusing the spirit of the rules. The rules were not designed to do what they've been doing consistently since the end of the election. And, you know, these—I—you know, I hope that they see the light and vote in favour of these amendments. One is to provide safety standards under Bill 30 so that when the responsibility is transferred over to the City, there will be a requirement that anyone operating—such as Uber or any other company that gets involved—will have to have a level playing field, which the Premier (Mr. Pallister) promised. He promised on several occasions. It was—witnesses pointed this out at the hearings, and now he's

reneging on his promise, it appears, because the bill came in without any safety standards. And we—our report stage amendment calls for shields, calls for cameras, called for strobe lights, called for a panic button, calls for criminal record checks, child abuse registry checks, 35 hours of training, and more conditions than that. And this government, you know, is basically avoiding any discussion here in the Legislature on this important amendment.

Also, the area of compensation. We have two report stage amendments on that. They are avoiding any debate on these two amendments. One calls for a method of compensation to people that are about to lose—because of what the government has done—lose up to \$400,000, even \$500,000, the people that bought cab licences.

So, you know, this is an atrocious way, and I say only a government with 40 members that thinks it's going to be here for a long time would act this way, although the polls are saying something else. But obviously they don't—they're not paying much attention to those.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to also grieve the fact that this government is shutting down three of our six emergency wards in the city, and the next one to close will be the Concordia ER in March, by the end of March. And we're hoping that we can convince the government to change its mind on that. Matter of fact, they did that back in 1995. And, you know, as we speak, the postal workers are trudging through the snow and they're delivering a leaflet from my office which, you know, talks about Concordia Hospital.

* (15:50)

And I want to quote from the leaflet, if I might. It says, you know, where will you go for emergency care when the Concordia Hospital ER is closed in March 2018—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On—the Acting Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Acting Government House Leader): I believe that the sign which is being held by the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) could be construed as a prop. It is

highly unusual to claim to be reading from notes when the underside of the alleged notes you are claiming to read from are signs which are strangely being referenced by the member at the same time that he speaks about said signs. So I would like you please to call the member on a point of order. That is a prop no matter how he wishes to disguise it as mere notes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The acting Opposition House Leader, on the same point of order.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Deputy Official Opposition House Leader): I do wish to address this particular point of order from the member opposite. I do believe that there may have been some confusion. Maybe it was the acting House leader on the government side maybe wasn't paying attention, although I would encourage him to listen very closely to the words of the member from Elmwood—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Okay, get on with your—the honourable member for—acting House leader, if you can get on—opposition House leader, get on your point of order, here.

That—go ahead, the honourable member for—acting House leader—Opposition House Leader.

The member for Concordia.

The honourable member for Concordia.
[interjection]

No, it's not on.

The honourable member for Concordia. Still not on?

We might have some 'techno-difficulties'.

It's on. It was on, yes. Get ready, the—no what? Nothing's on?

Okay, the—nothing on. Okay. Just one sec.

The honourable member for Concordia.

Mr. Wiebe: Mr. Speaker, I see the light.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I take your point that I should get to my point, which I think I'd be happy to do and that is I believe that what the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) was trying to do was to make sure that he quoted from his pamphlet exactly and accurately without any kind of a misstep in quoting that. So I think what he was trying to do is to read from that, and you know, I believe that's what the point of the member's presentation was this afternoon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have to—on the ruling, it is a point of order. You can't display wordings on a sign or a piece of paper in the Chamber, so it is a point of order.

You can't display signs like that. If it's reading notes, he is—needs to cover up the sign. So he has to have something behind that sign so that it doesn't show that.

So if I would ask the member for Elmwood to continue, but putting the—that piece of paper aside and not display it any longer. That's better.

* * *

Mr. Maloway: I'll continue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I—you know, I think it might be in order for me to actually table the leaflet in question so the members can see that I'm simply quoting, you know. My memory's not that good that I—you know.

So I would like to table copies. And so the members will see that it is a leaflet. It is being distributed by the post office as we speak.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Continue with the honourable member for Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: You know, anyone else here who would like a copy of my leaflet is—

An Honourable Member: Autograph.

Mr. Maloway: Certainly I would be willing to autograph one, for sure.

So, you know, the residents of northeast Winnipeg are very upset. The member from Rossmere knows it. It's obviously a sensitive issue with him. But he knows that many, many families who voted for the Conservatives just straight up tell me this, that they want a sign on their lawn, which, of course, is, you know, fairly similar to this, and they—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

I want to remind the *[inaudible]* Elmwood that he has to not hold up the sign. And, if he does continue that, we're going to have to name him, okay.

Mr. Maloway: Well, yes. *[interjection]* Yes, let's get it all clarified. I agree.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We're going to have to warn you again. Like, we don't want to warn you one more time, okay, so I just want to continue—the member from Elmwood, to continue with his grievance.

Mr. Maloway: I'm not just sure how I'm supposed to deal with this because I really do want to quote from the leaflet that is being distributed, you know, and the fact of the matter is that we have a section—and I understand that most of you will not see copies of this leaflet. Perhaps the member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield) will get more than his share of former Conservative voters who are only too willing to tell me that they contacted his office about what the government is doing to northeast Winnipeg and taking away the emergency room at—in the end of March.

Now, let me tell you what a reasonably sensible Conservative government did in 1995. Members may not have been around in those days, they not—may not know this, but in the fall of 1995, the Filmon PCs, they tried to shut Concordia Hospital down overnight—just from, I don't know, 8 o'clock, and so don't be sick between 8 o'clock at night and 8 in the morning, some hours like that—and within two months, they walked it back. But they had Bonnie Mitchelson as an MLA in those days, and Bonnie Mitchelson knew how to find the premier. And Bonnie Mitchelson went and spoke to the premier, unlike any of these members opposite who, you know, obviously don't speak to their Premier (Mr. Pallister)—if they can find him, that is, right? And they got results for the constituents. They would have had the same problems then that they do now had—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Maloway: —they not backed off on the Concordia Hospital overnight closure.

And so there's five months left: do the right thing and keep Concordia ER open.

* (16:00)

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): There are many, many grievances that we could list, but let me just narrow it down to one. And I know my other—the rest of my colleagues have theirs to air, as well.

My particular grievance is that the Pallister government is making life harder for families, especially for families in my constituency.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my constituency, under our watch, we have made available 3,500 units through Manitoba Housing, and that's the public housing, affordable housing. In addition—and being managed by Manitoba Housing, those 3,500—and, in addition, another 3,000 units are being managed by third parties. These are available to everyone, not just to new immigrants or refugees, but to everyone.

Recently, I attended an event at IRCOM two, the new building on Isabel, and IRCOM one and two provided an additional 100 units of housing. Winnipeg Housing, as well, has several units in the Logan constituency, one of which is a high-rise building on Frances Street, another one on Henry, Sargent, McDermot, Sherbrook and Notre Dame.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) promised to move people out of poverty but, instead, he hiked housing costs, privatized services and refused to pay people a living wage. Those thousands of tenants in—thousands of families housed in the housing units—both Manitoba, Winnipeg Housing—are complaining, because \$20 million cut in social housing and no plan for poverty or social inclusion is deeply concerning for them and for us and for the rest of Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the First Minister cut the Rent Assist benefit for over 7,000 families, reducing benefits by up to \$1,200 a year for some. And this was reported by Make Poverty History in June of this year. And, additionally, they added that these cuts will put affordable housing further out of reach for low-income renters in Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Premier—Speaker—I keep on elevating it to deputy—*[interjection]*—one of these days.

He also hiked—the hike of \$720 a year in rental cost may not be much to, you know, rich people like yourself or the rest across the way, but for families on fixed income, for families on minimum—who are minimum-wage earners, for families with small children, for single-parent families, \$720 a year is quite heavy. It's quite so much.

I have constituents phoning or visiting our constituency office, saying they have found it—they're finding it very, very difficult to make ends meet with the fixed income that they're receiving. And there's even a petition that got circulated protesting the rental increases. So this is a very serious situation faced by my constituents, and this is a grievance that

I would like to air, and I hope—and I know my colleagues agree with me that this is something that should not have been done by the Pallister government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, policy changes that give tenants very few options on where to live is also very disconcerting. Right now, tenants are finding it difficult to find affordable housing and to increase—and they're finding it difficult to find—to be gainfully employed for those who are wanting to find employment, and to add insult to injury, increasing their rent to the tune of at least \$720 a year is way too much for low-income Manitobans. This—Manitobans, low-income Manitobans and anti-poverty advocates have warned that higher housing costs mean families and seniors living before—living below the poverty line will have to scrimp on basic life necessities.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to visit a seniors place in my constituency. I'm very happy to have met two wonderful ladies there as well visiting the area and they happened to be Conservatives, and I'm glad to have met a Conservative in my—in the house—in the seniors housing that I visited. And we had a good chat and we agree on many things, although we disagree on some, and they agree with me that our seniors should be given a good chance at life. After all, they're in their senior years and we do know what will happen in the coming years, so life should not be stressful for seniors.

And what is happening right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these seniors are all anxious because of their rent—*increase in rent that they are facing.* It means for those seniors living before—below the poverty line each and every day would be a delicate balancing act for them. What—where will they—which item will they reduce? Will today will it be on food? Next week will it be on medication that they're taking, and next week will it be on the very little recreation that they engage themselves in, be it attending social functions among seniors, which bring them quite a bit of joy, you know, meeting fellow seniors, having a good time and socializing. Those events could—those visits or attending those events could be reduced if they face this difficulty of spending more additional money for housing.

Josh Brandon of Make Poverty History also stated that any increase in rents or reduction in subsidies is going to mean tenants will have to make impossible choices like cutting back on food or other basic necessities which I have just mentioned.

Truly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it will be very, very difficult—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

* (16:10)

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Thank you for giving me this opportunity to present a grievance before this House this afternoon. It is an important part of the process that we have within this Legislature, and it is an important venue for us to, as an opposition, to bring up issues that are important to our constituents.

And for those that are following along here this afternoon, you may have noticed that there's a bit of a pattern going on amongst members of the opposition, a pattern talking about how life is getting more difficult for the average Manitoban and how this government doesn't seem to care about that experience.

We've said it over and over again, Mr. Speaker, whether it be in question period, whether it be in the speeches that we bring forward in this House, whether it be during this grievance process. We have talked about how people in this province are worried. We've talked about how people have come forward, whether it be health-care workers, whether it be educators, whether it be teachers, whether they have come forward to us and they have said that they are worried that the changes that this government is undertaking are not taking into account the experience that they have in delivering the front-line services that Manitobans count on.

So, when we hear from members of the opposition who stand up one after another after another to deliver a grievance, again, there's a pattern. There's a theme here, Mr. Speaker. There's a real concern among members that this government isn't listening—not just not listening to us, because that's certainly their prerogative, but it is not their prerogative to ignore all those Manitobans who are so very concerned.

Now I had a bit of a struggle, I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, when thinking about this particular grievance because there are so many issues that I could bring forward that I could present a grievance on this afternoon, and certainly I think every member here could say that 10 minutes is nowhere near enough. So unless the House would grant me leave to go on beyond 10 minutes—

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Wiebe: It doesn't sound like I have that leave, Mr. Speaker, so I will just continue and I will try to limit—*[interjection]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wiebe:—my grievance to one particular issue.

And, again, I could have chosen any number of issues that I've heard now from students, from university students, from teachers and educators in this province. As the Education critic for our caucus, I've met with stakeholders and I've certainly learned a lot in the last, I guess, month or more about just some of the challenges that are happening in the education system. But what I—when forced to sort of choose about which grievance, which particular issue I would bring forward here this afternoon, there was no question in my mind that it would be the issue of the closure of the Concordia Hospital and the devastation of health-care services for the residents of northeast Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, this is particularly egregious, not just as the member who represents the hospital and the surrounding community, but for all people in this city who rely on the services that they have come to count on from Concordia Hospital, from the good people that work there, the amazing health-care professionals who give a great service at that hospital and for the history of that hospital that was built out of the community, out of the community that it now resides in, from the Mennonite faith and from the people in the Mennonite community who built that hospital, who brought it to be a symbol of caring in our community, and to see it now devastated is certainly very concerning.

Now, this—the members opposite like to talk about how they went door-to-door on the last election, how they knocked on every single door, and at that point, Mr. Speaker, I would imagine they were listening. They probably were listening to their constituents, their future constituents, the voters, they were probably listening intently when those members said: Keep our services intact, invest in our health-care system, protect health care in our province.

And they probably—the members opposite probably felt pretty comfortable in saying well, you know, I've heard our leader on TV. You know, I haven't talked with him personally. He's—you know,

he's been hard to get a hold of, but he's been out there on TV during the campaign, and he said read my lips, I will not cut front-line services in this province.

That's what he said. He went to every Manitoban. He, in fact, told every backbencher here on the side opposite, he told every future minister, I will not cut front-line services, and Manitobans believed him. They didn't know this guy. They didn't know who they were getting. They just said, well, he's promising me what I want to hear. I'm sure he won't attack our health-care system.

And, well, I've got to say, you know, we've heard the line, the fear-mongers. We've heard it that—we've heard that aspersion cast upon the opposition that we're just picking these ideas out of the air, and there's no way that this could possibly happen. And so, again, the members opposite probably felt confident when they knocked on every door and they said, we won't cut your front-line services.

Well, I would imagine that no one was more surprised than the members opposite. I was certainly surprised, but the members opposite were so surprised when their Premier (Mr. Pallister) came out and said, guess what, we've got this report and, well, I'm not going to—we're not going to implement everything from this report. But, you know, the things that talk about cutting in this report, the things that suggest that we could save some money by removing some services, those are the things that we are going to implement from this report. And don't worry about the other report that we've commissioned. We won't tell anybody what's in that one. We're going to keep that hidden, but we're going to implement the things in this report that call for cuts.

Now even at that point I would imagine the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma), the member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski), the member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield), they probably felt confident because I'm sure they dug right into the Peachey report and they saw in there that Dr. Peachey had not recommended Concordia to be closed. And, in fact, what he talked about how it was so important to go to the clinical governance, to talk about how those services could be protected, to talk about the community hospital model and to make sure that services remain, and there was a complete package of services in health care for those communities.

I'm sorry, I forgot the member for River East (Mrs. Cox) because I'm sure she was also reading that report with close attention.

Now, the members read this report. They said, there's no way that the Premier's coming after our hospital, and I have to say, Mr. Speaker, in talking with people at the hospital, they felt confident and I don't know if they got that confidence from talking to their MLAs. Maybe their MLA said, don't worry, we will not cut front-line services even at that point, maybe they said that, but the people at the hospital said, no way. We are a great hospital who provides an important service and there's nothing else in this community. There's no way that the Premier would shut down an ACCESS centre, would cancel a personal-care home project, would shut down the home team, would close down ACCESS centres and QuickCare clinics. There's no way that that would all be shut down, and then the Premier would come in and shut down a hospital.

Now, I see my time is getting short, but I did want to mention, you know, the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) stole my material because he talked about Bonnie Mitchelson. I have a lot of respect for Bonnie Mitchelson. I talked to her when this happened. I said, Bonnie, you were there when they tried to do this the last time, and she looked across the way, she looks at the members opposite and she says, where are these members now? Where are these members now? Why aren't they standing up for their hospital?

Now I understand they're backbenchers. They want to get into Cabinet. They're maybe a little afraid because the Premier runs the show here in this province. Well, you know what? It's not too late—it's not too late. You are going to be going—the members opposite—sorry—Mr. Speaker, are going to be going door to door—over the next two years, they're going to be knocking on those doors, and how are they going to answer that voter? How are they going to answer to their constituents? Are they going to say, I didn't do anything. I sat there, I let the Premier do everything. I didn't raise one word in caucus. I didn't raise one word in Cabinet.

*(16:20)

Is that what the members opposite are going to say to their constituents and to the voters? Or they have one chance—one chance, Mr. Speaker, to stand up for the people of northeast Winnipeg, to stand up for their constituents and to stand up to this Premier

who wants to cut our health-care system, to say, no, we want Concordia Hospital to stay open.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time is up.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): I start off by quoting something from the Free Press. It is a cryptoquote that I solved while spending time listening to some of the answers from some of the ministers.

My—I was reading up on Hansard, and I found that most of the questions that were directed towards the ministers were never answered. And it's a grievance that I must raise in this House because I perceive that to be something that does not really conform to the duty of the ministers. I cannot tell them how to answer the questions, but at least there should be an attempt on the part of government to answer questions, especially when they are relatively important.

Now, the cryptoquote is: a man practises the art of adventure when he heroically faces up to life. And, as I celebrated my 71st birthday yesterday, my thoughts were more about the length of time that I have spent in this Chamber. It is from October the 4th, 2011 when I got elected. It's been 2,225 days. And it seems like yesterday, because nothing is done in this Chamber. Nothing is done in this Chamber.

I'll say that again: nothing is done in this Chamber.

And the question that begs to be asked is why? Why do we have to be here when all we do is obfuscate, deflect, and try not to solve the problems of our province? By imposing the agenda that the honourable Premier (Mr. Pallister) has got for himself—which is save money—I felt that maybe my role in this House has been pretty useless, and I'm just trying to point out the fact that in this Chamber, I feel sorry for not doing anything.

And my point is actually something that punctures the veil of powerlessness, hopelessness, and old-style politics. The old-style politics is very virulent. I'll say that again: old-style politics is virulent, contagious. The hyper-partisanship that has occurred, I would say, from both sides of the House, but more so from the policies that were injected into the mainstream, is something that has taken a life of its own. The cuts that are being made by this government has not really helped those who lost their jobs. It has been 2,225 days, but then those days, I felt, are just wasted.

And I am very sorry if somebody takes offense in what I'm saying, but the first thing that I thought I could do when I first got elected was have an impact on the lives of so many who are poor in Weston and Brooklands and Tyndall Park. And I was wrong. I was wrong, because when you come to this Chamber, you feel that you have that power because you were sent by the voters of your constituency. And when the Treasury Board allocated money for Tyndall Park Community Centre, I really felt elated and happy that, wow, I still could make a difference.

Apparently, when the Treasury Board reconvened with another member, with another government, all of that allocated money was gone. It was reviewed. And the way that I see this is that the hyper-partisanship, even in the spending patterns of this government, is that most of those that got hit real hard were constituencies where the member elected is not from the Progressive Conservative.

Concordia's getting hit real hard. River Heights, also getting hard by the closure of Misericordia urgent care. Seven Oaks, getting real hard hit. And my people from Tyndall Park, we usually go to the Health Sciences Centre, and if you took a look at the number of patients that are being treated, it has not changed. And the waiting times, they really haven't changed.

And it's amazing that we keep on saying that, well, it has improved during the last three weeks. Wake up. It has not. I won't call it an intentional falsehood; I would not say that. I think we are being told what we wanted to hear, but take a closer look. People are hurting. People are bleeding. People are getting hurt, and you better believe it; they'll remember this.

Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for St. Boniface, on a grievance.

* (16:30)

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): Merci beaucoup. Aujourd'hui, je me présente devant vous pour exprimer mon appréhension face à la restructuration du Bureau de l'éducation française et, en particulier, concernant son poste de sous-ministre adjoint qui est maintenant détenu par un unilingue anglophone ayant déjà de nombreuses autres responsabilités.

Cette transition a déjà suscité plusieurs réactions négatives dans la communauté, étant donné les répercussions directes et symboliques qu'elle pourrait

avoir sur la communauté franco-manitobaine et sa qualité d'éducation, et la Francophonie plus généralement.

D'un point de vue historique, l'éducation a toujours été au cœur du mouvement des droits linguistiques. En effet, l'accès à l'éducation française est une source de fierté et une nécessité pour un grand nombre de personnes, et a été l'objet de plusieurs manifestations et contestations au cours des années. Je vous rappelle qu'en 1916, le français était aboli dans les écoles publiques manitobaines, obligeant les Francophones à enseigner en clandestinité. C'était le début d'une période de noirceur au Manitoba français, qui avait duré bien trop longtemps. En 1970, avec l'adoption de la loi 113, le français était enfin reconnu comme langue d'enseignement sur un pied d'égalité avec l'anglais au niveau provincial. Le Bureau de l'éducation française était ensuite établi en 1974 pour gérer les programmes scolaires et agir comme conseiller auprès du ministre pour toute école de langue française. Plusieurs débats et avancements linguistiques ont suivi, dont l'entrée en vigueur de la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés en 1982, et la décision de la Cour suprême en 1990 de reconnaître le droit des communautés minoritaires de la langue officielle de gérer leurs propres écoles. En 1994, la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine avait enfin vu le jour, avec l'institution de 20 écoles pionnières. Il va sans dire que la lutte pour l'éducation française était longue et ardue. Il est important donc de valoriser les efforts des gens qui se sont battus pour les droits linguistiques, et éviter de faire un recul dans l'histoire, tel que l'on semble faire par l'élimination d'une autorité francophone au Bureau de l'éducation française.

C'est un pas qui inquiète énormément de gens dans la communauté quant à l'avenir de l'éducation, alors qu'il semble indiquer une dépriorisation du fait français au Manitoba, et une détérioration potentielle du Bureau de l'éducation française, semblable à celle qu'a connue la Direction de l'éducation française en Saskatchewan en 2011. Raymond Hébert, Ronald Duhamel, Guy Roy, Raymond Théberge, Jean-Vianney Auclair—ce sont tous des gens tenus en haute estime, qui ont bien servi la communauté en tant que sous-ministres adjoints au Bureau de l'éducation française. Il est important que le domaine d'éducation française ait une section bureaucratique comme le Bureau de l'éducation française, où on permet à un groupe de leaders et d'éducateurs professionnels conscients des enjeux de l'éducation

en milieu minoritaire, de consacrer son temps au développement de programmes d'apprentissage et à la promotion de l'éducation française. Il serait ironique qu'on réduise l'efficacité du Bureau de l'éducation française en ce jour où il n'y a jamais eu autant d'élèves en immersion, où on a une loi 5 conçue justement pour promouvoir l'épanouissement de la Francophonie au Manitoba.

En fin de compte, il est essentiel qu'on reconnaisse l'importance d'appuyer les besoins de la Francophonie, pour qu'elle puisse continuer à s'épanouir et à vivre confortablement dans tous ses aspects. C'est pour cela que je demande aux responsables de réviser cette décision et défendre les intérêts de la Francophonie manitobaine, dans toute la mesure du possible.

Translation

Thank you. I come before you today to express my concern about the restructuring of the Bureau de la éducation française and, in particular, its assistant deputy minister position, which is now being filled by a unilingual anglophone who already has many other responsibilities.

This transition has already given rise to a number of negative reactions in the community due to the direct and symbolic repercussions it could have on the Franco-Manitoban community and the quality of its education, and on the francophone community in general.

From a historical standpoint, education has always been at the heart of the movement for language rights. In fact, for a great many people, access to French education is a source of pride and a necessity, and it has been the focus of many protests and challenges over the years. I would remind you that, in 1916, French was abolished in Manitoba public schools, and francophones were forced to teach in secrecy. It was the start of a dark period in French Manitoba that lasted far too long. With the adoption of Bill 113 in 1970, French was finally recognized as a language of instruction on an equal footing with English throughout the province. The Bureau de la éducation française was established in 1974 to manage the school programs and advise the Minister with respect to French schools. There followed a number of debates and advances on the linguistic front, including the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 and the Supreme Court decision in 1990 that recognized the right of minority official language communities to run their own schools. In 1994, the Division scolaire franco-manitobain was

finally created, with 20 pioneer schools. Needless to say, the struggle for French education was long and arduous. It is therefore important to value the effort of all the people who fought for language rights, and avoid taking a step back in history, as we seem to be doing by eliminating a Francophone authority in the Bureau de la éducation française.

It is a step that is very worrisome to a lot of people in the French community as it seems to indicate a deprioritization of the French fact in Manitoba, and a possible deterioration of the Bureau de la éducation française like that which happened to the Direction de l'éducation française in Saskatchewan in 2011. Raymond Hébert, Raymond Duhamel, Guy Roy, Raymond Théberge, Jean-Vianney Auclair—these are all highly esteemed people who have served the community well as assistant deputy ministers at the Bureau de la éducation française. It is important for the area of French education to have a French bureaucracy like the Bureau de l'éducation française, where a group of professional educators and leaders aware of the issues involved in education in a minority setting are able to spend their time developing learning programs and promoting French education. It would be ironic for us to reduce the effectiveness of the Bureau de la éducation française now, when there have never been so many students in French immersion and we have passed Bill 5, which was designed precisely to promote the enhancement of the francophone community in Manitoba.

In the end, it is essential that we recognize the importance of supporting the needs of the francophone community so that it may continue to flourish and live comfortably in every aspect. This is why I am asking the people in charge to revisit this decision and to defend the interests of the francophone community to the fullest extent possible.

English

As I was saying, it's a real shame that we've lost the deputy minister—the assistant deputy minister responsible for Francophone education in the province of Manitoba. It's the first step back after many years of progress in this province for the growth of French language education, whether it's en français cent pour cent [*one hundred per cent in French*], whether it's in immersion programs, whether it's in basic French, whether it's in having the only university, the Université de Saint-Boniface, en français dans l'ouest du Canada [*that teaches in French in Western Canada*—whether it's in our only

French university in western Canada. And I have to say that it's been a cause of great concern in the community.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

And it's rooted in the history of the issue of French as a language of instruction in our schools. It goes back to the very earliest days where confessional schools were protected in The Manitoba Act brought forward by Louis Riel's provisional government when he negotiated the entry of Manitoba into the Confederation of Canada. And it was in 1916 that French language was abolished as a language of instruction in our public schools. And it took until 1970 for the language of French to be returned to an equal footing with English as a language of instruction in our schools with the adoption of Loi 113 [*Bill 113*]. And it was only in 1974, not that long ago in terms of history, that the French language bureau was set up with the first assistant deputy minister responsible for French language services in Manitoba, with a direct report to the deputy minister and the ability to speak directly to the minister on francophone education in the province of Manitoba.

And so the loss of this position to a capable individual, but who—an individual who has many other responsibilities in government, seems like a 'depriorization', a step back, a reduction in the role of French language education and the importance of it in this province. And we can only hope that it doesn't follow what we've seen in Saskatchewan where the French language bureau was abolished entirely and moved into other departments in the year 2011. That would be a tremendous setback in the province of Manitoba for what is, at this moment, ironically, one of the most popular programs in the province.

French immersion is growing as a language of instruction in the schools. French immersion schools have waiting lists for people to get into them. La Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, the French school division in Manitoba, has seen a growth in numbers every single year and continues to have growth in numbers. So we have more people studying and learning in French than any time in the history of the province of Manitoba, and we are training teachers. And there's a shortage of good, quality teachers that can teach properly in the French language in Manitoba.

And, at this time, when we need to be putting an emphasis on the career opportunities for young people to go into instruction in French, to go into

French education in Manitoba, we're taking away the assistant deputy minister of education. It seems like a retrograde step; a step that doesn't recognize the leadership contributions of the first assistant deputy minister, Raymond Hébert, of Ron Duhamel, who was also assistant deputy minister, who went on to become a deputy minister and, later on, to become a Member of Parliament, of Guy Roy, who was there for over 20 years providing leadership on these important questions to French language education in Manitoba, who was then followed by Raymond Théberge, who now today is the president of the University of Moncton; and, finally, by Jean-Vianney Auclair, who gave many years of excellent service, and was on the very cusp of completing his Ph.D. and then able to come back and provide even more services in Manitoba for expanding French language education.

Mr.—Madam Speaker, I say to you today this retrograde step of eliminating this position, penny wise and pound foolish, a slap in the face and an insult to all those people that have dedicated their lives to advancing the cause of French language education in Manitoba, and something that should be reversed by this government at the earliest opportunity to the benefit of all Manitobans, whether they're in French language education, whether they're taking basic education, whether they're studying immersion education, whether they want to go on and study in French at the university level—post-secondary level, or the community college level. All of these opportunities could suffer from a lack of attention at this important time when French language education has never been more popular in Manitoba. It's a reversal that we think should be corrected at the earliest opportunity by the minister of education as well as the Treasury Board and the Premier (Mr. Pallister) who was the critic for French language education while he was in opposition.

We need to reverse this as soon as possible to the benefit of all Manitobans, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much.

*(16:40)

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): It's my pleasure to rise for my first time bringing forth a grievance on behalf of my constituents in Point Douglas and many Manitobans.

I bring forth lots of grievances, the first being housing. We know that housing, you know, having good, safe, affordable housing, is a social

determinant of how well people do. And what we see right now is an increase and putting people in unsafe conditions. We just heard today on CBC there's people that are squatting out behind the Tim Hortons by McDonald's off of Sherbrook Street. Why are they doing that? Because there's not enough housing.

This government says that they've created 141 new units in Point Douglas, but yet people do not have a place to live in Point Douglas. We just saw this young man, 48 years old, wasn't done his life, lost it in a house fire because there wasn't enough housing. He had to live in a rooming house, and this is putting people at—in unsafe positions because of this government's lack of comprehensive plan on housing to address people not being on the streets.

We know that, you know, raising rents by 3 per cent is putting families in difficult decisions, places where they have to decide whether they're going to keep their lights on or whether they're going to put food on the table. Many of these families have children, and I urge this government to not raise these social rents by 3 per cent and put these children, feeling hungry where schools have to feed them—they're feeding them food from Winnipeg Harvest. How shameful is that, that our government can't help these children have a nutritious meal in schools because they can't afford to be sending food with their kids because of the rent increases.

They've also cut other programs that families benefit from. In my constituency alone, many of the social organizations are scared to speak out because they don't want their funding agreements gone. Many of them are multi-year funding agreements. They don't know if the next year they're going to have funding to be able to help these families, to be able to help seniors and to be able to support kids and families. That's how scared people are. Organizations are feeling so scared of this government because they're not listening, they're out of touch, they don't care. And these are people right in my constituency.

I grew up in a single-parent home with a—in poverty, on welfare. I saw people rising out of these places of poverty, but I now see them backsliding with this new government. I see people having no hope or little hope. I see people putting themselves on the street to feed their families because this government is not listening to their needs. They are not helping by raising the rents. They're not helping by cutting Rent Assist. Many of these families rely on Rent Assist, and they've cut it. So as much as

\$48 a month, that could mean, you know, a child having lunch for a week versus going to school hungry or having to eat from the food bank.

When I look at, you know, how do we get out of poverty? Well, we get out of poverty by education. We get out of poverty by increasing 'mimumin' wage, giving child care to families, spaces. You know, this government signed a bilateral agreement with the federal government. We've seen no action on that. Families are still waiting. As much as 5,000 families have risen on this waiting list because of this government's lack of action on this bilateral agreement. Fifteen million dollars they have. They can put 500 families—500 children in daycare. They can build some more daycare spaces. They've paused so many daycare places that were building—that families were relying on. Now families are waiting—having to wait up to 15 months to get their kids into daycare. Most employers only allow you one year. So if I have no place to put my child into daycare, that means I can't go to work. That means I don't have a job. That means I can't feed my children. How do I pay my rent?

This government is making wrong decisions. They're impacting Manitobans. They're impacting my constituents. When we look at poverty—well, 'mimumin' wage: three nickels. Three nickels, that's \$6 a year—or, \$6 a week. Wow, \$6 a week. This government is really listening to the needs of Manitobans. That's why we see people out on the street, because of people—because of this government's lack of response to listening to Manitobans.

You know, they like to make changes, but they don't like to listen to the actual facts in what's creating the hardships for Manitobans.

And I think next election, we'll certainly see that. We see that in the polls now, what—the effects that it's having. Many constituents that lived in my riding, for instance. I was in a by-election. So many Tories came to me and put a sign up—put a sign up. I have a grandparent who's affected by this because they are cutting health care, health care that's affecting our aging population, those that have worked the hardest to make sure that we have a better life, and they're taking that all away.

When we look at the women's centres, the Point Douglas women's centre—

Madam Speaker: Order.

I'm hoping I don't have to go further and recognize people individually, but we're heading into that territory, because a number of times today, we've already had to address people about the heckling and the lack of respect that is being shown in debate.

And I'm not—I'm taking those admonishments I've been giving very seriously because we have to do a better job here, and the heckling is not in any way showing the kind of respect that needs to be shown here. It's fine to have passionate debate, and that's what this should be about, but it's also that passionate debate has to be very respectful. And also, the heckling really does get in the way of a good, solid, passionate debate where we can stand up for democracy in this province.

So I would urge caution. I don't want to have to do that anymore today. This is, I think, the third, fourth time I've had to stand, and I don't think that's appropriate for the Speaker to have to do that that many times in one day. It is speaking to something that is happening in here that I don't think any of us really want to see or our constituents want to hear.

So I would ask for everybody's consideration.

Mrs. Smith: Miigwech, Madam Speaker, I appreciate that. As someone new coming into the House, you know, that was a former teacher that—I was actually pulled aback by the behaviour in this House. And, you know, I think that we are the models for Manitobans, and we have kids often in our chambers here watching, and we need to lead by example. So I often think of that as—you know, we are the ones that children are looking to, so we need to model that behaviour.

As I was saying, you know, when we're putting families at risk, and we're putting money over safety, and we're putting money over the health of Manitobans, it's making it harder for families. When I look at people in my own community that are having to struggle with their housing situations, their daycare situations, being able to go to a hospital—you know, I live in the constituency where Seven Oaks is the closest hospital to us. We now see that being turned into an urgent-care.

My constituents are telling me that they're afraid that they're going to die on the way to the hospital. They don't even know which hospital to go to. And I see the ads that are on the TV saying, like, go here, go there, go there, but we heard that people are

confused. They don't know where to go because this government has created confusion within the system.

So you know, we implore them not to make these fast and—decisions that are affecting so many people on so many levels.

As I was getting back to 'mimumum' wage, you know, three nickels, 15 cents, that's not going to help pull families out of poverty. Families don't wake up and want to be in those positions, but unfortunately, we know that education is the way out of those—out of poverty. And when we take away tuition rebates, when we increase tuition, it makes it harder for people to get out of poverty.

* (16:50)

You know, our children are our future and often—you know, I was an adult learner so I went back to school when I was 23, and I can tell you I already had two children and I was already supporting a family. So, for me to have to go and pay for tuition on top of supporting my family, let alone now this government's, you know, raised it 5 per cent plus inflation and taken away, you know, my tax rebate. This is helping Manitobans to stay in Manitoba and that's why it was created. So what our government is saying right now is like we don't care where you go get jobs. You can leave our city and go get jobs somewhere else our province.

We've invested in the people of Manitoba and we want to keep investing in the people of Manitoba and we want Manitobans to stay here because we had a quality education. This government is continuing to digress every system that's put in place to support and take—and help take care of Manitobans.

When we look at our, you know, our daycare centres, like I said, they've risen 5,000 since this government has taken effect. That's 5,000 families who are sitting at home waiting for their child to get into daycare so that they can return back to work so that they know their child in a—is in a safe place that's going to provide quality care, and they can go to work and know that their children are taken care of, and—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, on House business, I would like to

announce that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet, if necessary, tomorrow, November 7th, at 6 p.m., to continue consideration of Bill 34, The Medical Assistance in Dying (Protection for Health Professionals and Others) Act.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet, if necessary, tomorrow, November 7th, at 6 p.m., to continue consideration of Bill 34, The Medical Assistance in Dying (Protection for Health Professionals and Others) Act.

Mr. Cullen: On House business, could you call Bill 35, the agriculture producers' organizational funding amendment act?

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will now consider second reading of Bill 35, The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Amendment Act.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 35—The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Amendment Act

Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Agriculture): I move that Bill 35, the agriculture producers' funding amendment act be now read a second time and referred to committee of this House.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Agriculture, seconded by the honourable Minister for Crown Services, that Bill 35, The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Amendment Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Mr. Eichler: I do want to put a few things on the record in regards to Bill 35, and I know the Opposition Leader and my critic have both been very supportive meeting with the Keystone Agricultural Producers and are very much in favour of supporting this legislation according to the conversation that we have shared.

And this is the reform of funding the system of the general farm organization representing Manitoba farmers, Keystone Agricultural Producers. Their current membership system caused significant administration burden for KAP, farmers and purchasers because over- and under-collection of membership fees. Every time a farmer pays a less amount than a membership fee, KAP is currently

required refund the entire amount. Further, the legislation is not clear that purchases should not be collected more than the annual membership fee. To fix overall collection and legislation will clarify that purchasers of agricultural products and will not collect more than an annual membership fee per cap.

This bill facilitates improved communication between KAP and farmers by collecting email addresses, membership numbers, more accurate contact and membership information which will mean fewer overpayments and more refund cheques go right to the address.

I know that this will make a significant savings for the Keystone ag producers. By passing this legislation this session—will save the KAP organization a minimum of \$23,000.

So I look forward to debate on this particular bill, and I move it in forward into committee.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Questions

Madam Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member in the following sequence: First question by the official opposition critic or designate; subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties; subsequent questions asked by each independent member, and remaining questions asked by any opposition members. And no questions or answers shall exceed 45 seconds.

There being no questions, is the House ready—*[interjection]*—oh, pardon me. As there are no further questions to be asked, the floor is open for debate.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 35, The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Amendment Act.

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

I declare the motion carried.

House Business

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): I would like to announce the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Food will meet tomorrow, November 7th, at 6 p.m., to consider Bill 35.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Food will meet tomorrow November 7th, at 6 p.m., to consider—continue, or pardon me—to consider Bill 35, The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Amendment Act.

Madam Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, November 6, 2017

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