



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

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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authority of
The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike, Hon.	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	Ind.
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Transcona	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

The Speaker: Introduction of bills? Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Indigenous Women in Fashion

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equity): In the past year, Aaliyah Tait, Madison Moore and Ocean Bruyere walked the runways of Paris and New York Fashion Weeks, showcasing beautiful ribbon skirts by the talented Ally Sutherland and other Indigenous designers.

This past July, Jessica McKenzie won the Miss Indigenous Canada 2024 title with Ocean winning the public speaking award.

Also in July, Ashley Callingbull shattered barriers by becoming the first Indigenous woman crowned Miss Universe Canada.

Tamara Fontaine and Gina Boubard are both preparing to compete in this year's Miss Indigenous Canada 2025.

Alongside textile designer Naiomi Glasses and model Quannah ChasingHorse, all of these Indigenous women are making history in fashion.

The fashion world has been exclusionary, centring on a narrow definition of beauty that erases Indigenous presence. These trailblazing Indigenous women are decolonizing industries who long dictated harmful beauty standards, standards directly impacting how Indigenous women are seen, valued and even how violence is enacted against us.

These amazing Indigenous women are reclaiming space everywhere. Representation isn't just about visibility; it's about power, safety and change.

To you, matriarchs, you are sacred, powerful, brave and, of course, so very beautiful. Your achievements are groundbreaking, shaping the future of Indigenous fashion globally, igniting change and advancing meaningful representation.

I am so incredibly proud of you, and I invite my colleagues to help celebrate these amazing matriarchs today.

Swansfleet Alliance

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain): Honourable Speaker, one of the greatest privileges we have in this Chamber is being able to elevate the accomplishments of constituents and ensure they get the recognition that they deserve.

In 1976, three brothers started farming seed potatoes and now the Jonk family endeavour, Swansfleet Alliance, provides not only seed but also processing as well. Brothers Tim, Vince and Steve Jonk, alongside their next generation Russell, Andrew and Samantha. And the—last fall they were recognized by Simplot for their incredible work with both the 2023 award for the small volume, in this case small being up to 200,000 hundredweight—as well as the triple crown award for sustainability and innovation.

With three generations running the operation and as many as 50 employees during their growing season, this is truly a family-run operation near the beautiful community of Bruxelles in the heart of Turtle Mountain. We are reminded that this is where cutting-edge innovation and environmental initiatives come from, not from rules and legislation but from committed farm families that are trying to improve not just results, but—and yields—but the land itself. This is even more true for potato farming as it has greater demand on water which can be limited at times, especially during drought.

I encourage all colleagues and everyone watching along to read up on the Jonks that have done to deserve this recognition. Well done and well deserved.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Abiodun Adetu

Mr. Tyler Blashko (Lagimodière): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to recognize Abiodun Adetu, a passionate advocate for community development, African culture and volunteerism. I met Abiodun at a Nigerian convention years ago and her drive was evident immediately. She has dedicated herself to creating spaces that celebrate diversity and economic empowerment.

She is active with the Sage Creek Residents' Association where she fosters neighbourhood engagement and advocates for local initiatives. She is also the social secretary for Nigerian Association of Manitoba Inc. She co-ordinates many events and works with the NAMI team, representing the needs of the local Nigerian community. Her commitment to healthy communities is reflected in her service on the Winnipeg Committee for Safety.

Abiodun's passion for African culture is central to her work. She is the brains behind Kara Magazine, a publication dedicated to showcasing the beauty of African heritage through the voices of young Africans in the diaspora.

It's also her leadership behind Naija Market Day, a ground-breaking initiative that promotes African entrepreneurship and cultural exchange. I was able to attend the first market last summer, where dozens of vendors, artisans, bakers and musicians were present, sharing their gifts. It was a Nigerian event, so of course there was spontaneous dancing. This event was so successful that in 2025 she is bringing it to multiple cities including here in Winnipeg, Brandon, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Brampton and Hamilton.

In a show of solidarity, she is also lending her gifts to the community south of the border in Minnesota. Under her direction, Naija Market Day has grown into one of the largest African market events in North America, fostering business growth and community bonding.

In this moment, when forces are trying to divide people, she is a force for connection and bridge building. Her work is innovative while being rooted in tradition and is always done with love and laughter.

Abiodun joins us in the gallery with guests, and I would like their names added to Hansard.

Thank you, Abiodun, for your many contributions to our province, your support for the local community and the generosity with which you share your gifts and culture.

Seyi Adetu, Bunmi Aregbe Sola, Rev. Wilson Akinwale, Taiwo Aromasodu, Frank Capasso, Jumoke Omotoso

Canada-US Trade Relationship

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): For 10 years I had the pleasure as serving as the co-chair of the Midwest Canada-US relations committee.

During that time I served with three US co-chairs: Senator Ed Charbonneau of Indiana, former Ohio

Speaker Robert Cupp and Michigan Representative Amos O'Neil.

While there were often areas of disagreement, I never doubted that my co-chairs or other members of the committee valued Canada as partners and friends.

Today, many Canadians are questioning that relationship. They're frustrated. Many are angry. And they rightfully want us to stand united, for both the sovereignty and the dignity of our great nation.

Yet I still believe that the vast majority of Americans, for them, Canada is seen as an ally and a friend and a valued partner. And I also believe that many of them are concerned and confused by the stance that President Donald Trump has towards Canada. I believe this because many of them have told me just that.

While Canadians stand united, we must also remember that many US citizens and elected representatives know that Canada is a valued partner and a trusted ally and we need to continue to reach out to them and engage with them. And we can remind them of what a former US President told the American people in a radio address 37 years ago.

That President said: Protectionism is being used by some American politicians as a cheap form of nationalism. Our peaceful trading partners are not our enemies. They are our allies. We should be wary of the demagogues who are ready to declare a trade war against our friends, weakening our economy, our national security and the entire free world.

President Ronald Reagan's words were as true then as they are today, and I would implore the current administration to follow the words of former president Ronald Reagan.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Festival du Voyageur

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): En ce Mois de la Francophonie mondiale, c'est un honneur de célébrer le Festival du Voyageur avec l'équipe présente ici, aujourd'hui.

Cette année, le 56^e Festival du Voyageur a eu lieu encore une fois à Saint-Boniface, ici au Manitoba, au cœur du Canada. Chaque année, les Manitobains attendent avec impatience la semaine du Festival et les festivités associées à la fête. De la bonne nourriture, de la musique à plus n'en finir, des rires, du plaisir et du froid sont toujours au rendez-vous. En tant que Métis francophone, extrêmement fier de mon héritage,

c'est un plaisir chaque année de pouvoir participer au Festival.

Translation

In this International Month of La Francophonie, it is an honour to celebrate the Festival du Voyageur with the team here today.

This year, the 56th Festival du Voyageur took place once again in St. Boniface, here in Manitoba, in the heart of Canada. Every year, Manitobans look forward to Festival week and the festivities associated with the celebration. Good food, endless music, laughter, fun and cold are always on the agenda. As a French-speaking Métis, extremely proud of my heritage, it is a pleasure to be able to participate in the Festival every year.

* (13:40)

English

Festival du Voyageur is more than a time for the community to come together and enjoy the cold. It's about celebrating our culture and heritage as Franco-Manitobans while acknowledging the contribution of the Métis and First Nations to our province.

Le Festival du Voyageur est bien plus qu'un moment où la communauté se rassemble pour profiter du froid. Il s'agit de célébrer notre culture et notre patrimoine en tant que Franco-manitobains, tout en reconnaissant les contributions des Métis et des Premières Nations qui ont fait – qui ont contribué à notre province. Les ceintures fléchées sont partout, marque de respect et de fierté pour notre communauté.

Cette année, le Festival était rempli d'artistes talentueux et de personnes formidables. On pouvait y trouver 150 artistes uniques, certains étant des trésors bien aimés de Winnipeg ou même des superstars internationales. Le Parc du voyageur était plein à craquer avec environ 75 000 participants cette année. Il y avait aussi des sculptures sur glace et sur neige qui pouvaient être admirées en grand nombre au Parc du voyageur.

Merci à toutes les personnes, les bénévoles, aux artistes et aux Voyageurs qui ont rendu le tout possible. Le Festival du Voyageur est un moment important pour notre province, et c'est un honneur pour nous de continuer à vous accueillir chaque année à Saint-Boniface. J'ai hâte à l'année prochaine.

Et tous ceux qui sont de bonne humeur, donnez-moi un gros « Hé Ho! ».

Translation

The Festival du Voyageur is much more than a time when the community comes together to enjoy the cold. It is about celebrating our culture and heritage as Franco-Manitobans, while recognizing the contributions of the Métis and First Nations, who have contributed to our province. The sash belts are everywhere, a mark of respect and pride for our community.

This year, the Festival was full of talented artists and wonderful people. There were 150 unique artists, some of them beloved treasures of Winnipeg and others international superstars. Voyageur Park was packed with around 75,000 participants this year. There were also a large number of ice and snow sculptures to admire in Voyageur Park.

Thank you to everyone—all the volunteers, artists and Voyageurs who made it all possible. The Festival du Voyageur is an important moment for our province, and it is an honour for us to continue to welcome you every year in St. Boniface. I cannot wait for next year.

And to everyone in a good mood, please give me a big "Hé Ho!"

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Before we proceed to oral questions, there's some guests I'd like to introduce.

We have seated in the public gallery from Windsor Park Collegiate Co-op Education 24 students under the direction of Raeanne Donaldson. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Southdale, the honourable Minister for Advanced Education and Training (MLA Cable).

Further, we have seated in the public gallery from Fairholme school 20 grade 9 students under the direction of Evelyn Maendel. The group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. King).

And on behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you all here today.

And now it is time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Interprovincial Trade Barriers Request to Eliminate

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Canada's political and economic future has been thrown a wrench due to the on- and off-again Trump tariffs. We must Trump-proof our economy. We had success with the New West Partnership, a

trade deal aimed at creating an open market of more than 11 million people, with a combined economy worth more than \$750 billion.

The NDP refused to promote internal trade in the Selinger years and voted against free trade within Canada.

My question to the Premier today is: What, specifically, has he done to remove internal trade barriers here in Manitoba and in Canada?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Well, I want to assure the member opposite that all the actions I've taken have been during the period of 2023 to 2025, which is when we need to Trump-proof our economy to protect your jobs.

Members opposite, of course, are living in the past. Let's just remember this one fact about them: They haven't won an election in 30 years without Brian Pallister, and they still can't say his name, just like they can't say Donald Trump's name.

Each and every day, they come here and they try to cozy up to the very person that is threatening our economy. We won't let them do that. Each and every day, we come here to stand up for our steel industry, to stand up for our ag industry, to stand up for our manufacturers and to stand up for you, the great people in every single corner of this beautiful province of Manitoba.

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

Mr. Ewasko: It really showed that the lack of self-confidence yesterday quite shone through to not only the media in the gallery but also the people in the gallery yesterday.

Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston announced legislation to make trade between Nova Scotia and other provinces and territories easier. A bill called the Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act in the Nova Scotia legislature has been tabled. Premier Houston says: This bill will set in legislation that any goods approved in any province or territory can be sold in Nova Scotia without any further testing red tape or foolishness. End quote.

Can the Premier say when can Manitoba businesses and consumers expect a similar bill introduced here in the Manitoba Legislature?

Mr. Kinew: You know, I love Nova Scotia as a province and I have a great relationship with their premier, Tim Houston. And so, naturally, as a result, I've been

talking to Premier Houston about the bill that he's brought forward and had some really good discussions to that end.

However, I want to point out to everybody here in the Chamber and across the country that Manitoba, even after this bill takes effect, will have fewer restrictions than Nova Scotia on interprovincial trade, and what's more, there are no conditions on that. These are across-the-board free trade stances that we take for every single province across the country.

But here's the thing that I respect even more about Tim Houston: unlike the members opposite, Tim Houston is a PC leader who did not resort to trying to divide people in his province. He is somebody who did not try to pick on and bully students in schools in his province.

The members opposite can't say that; they're all rallying around a PC—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Ewasko: I appreciate the Premier giving kudos to Brian Pallister, who came up with the New West Partnership, Honourable Speaker, something that this Premier has not done in the last 17 years in government.

One third of Manitoba businesses purchase goods and services from suppliers in other provinces and territories, plus a quarter of those businesses sell those goods and services to customers in those provinces and territories. The challenges businesses and consumers face are daunting now that the NDP—when the NDP should be promoting internal free trade and labour mobility as part of a pan-Canadian response.

So again, I ask the Premier: When will he be tabling legislation similar to Nova Scotia, or is his party's anti-free-trade position here to stay?

Mr. Kinew: You know, just to catch everybody up who's watching this today, yet another area where the PCs just couldn't get it done.

They're fresh off of being bounced out of government by the good people of Manitoba, and then they come running in here and say, hey, please solve all the terrible things that we did in government. And what's more, why don't you do all the things that we never had the imagination or courage to even think about while we were in government.

Well, here's the good news: we're doing all that and more.

And so I want to acknowledge our great Trade Minister, who is leading the charge to break down barriers between the provinces at the same time we're talking about diversification so that our great ag producers can reach other international destinations.

It's all about growing our economy. It's all about bringing Manitoba forward.

We're standing with you while they're standing in the past.

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

Jordan's Principle Funding Concerns

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Again, we see the Premier stand up with a level of arrogance and self-confidence within himself, and he portrays it to all Manitobans. It's all far more words than actual actions, Honourable Speaker.

Jordan's Principle ensures equality and that there are no gaps in publicly funded health, social and education programs for First Nations children. But far too many children are at risk. Jurisdictional squabbles still take centre stage.

It seems that the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) spends more time assigning blame than they do assigning social workers.

Will this Premier put down his elbows, pick up the phone and advise these agencies that these programs will be funded today: yes or no, Honourable Speaker?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): So another day where the PCs come forward and they want to capitulate in the face of the US. It's elbows up, just like the rest of the country on this side of the House.

* (13:50)

Now when it comes to the challenges that Jordan's Principle is facing, these are federal government changes. Our Minister of Families has been doing great work trying to advocate to the federal government.

Now I know that the members opposite are familiar with this because all of them who dragged Brian Pallister, his coattails, on his way into government, they were there when the first motion that I succeeded and had the honour of passing in this very

Chamber was to ensure that Manitoba abided by Jordan's Principle.

On this side of the House, we honour the memory of Jordan River Anderson, and we abide by that principle and we'll keep working with the federal government so that they do the same as well.

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

Mr. Ewasko: Honourable Speaker, on March 8, the MMF stated, and I quote: the issue is a jurisdictional dispute between the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada. While the excuses from our provincial and federal partners continue, the support for our children and families served by our agency stalls and our valued employees lose their jobs.

I table that submission today.

This Premier promised Manitobans he would chart a new, conflict-free path with the federal government. Why is this Premier threatening the long-term health and well-being of at-risk children as he passes the buck yet once again with the feds over funding these programs, Honourable Speaker?

Mr. Kinew: Again, the irony, or perhaps hypocrisy, of the members opposite, trying to stand up on this issue after they campaigned against the families who wanted to have their loved ones brought home from the Prairie Green landfill.

Here's the reality when it comes to supporting kids who are in care from the Métis nation: our minister has increased funding by \$2.4 million to help with these young people, to ensure that they have the supports that they need to reach their full potential.

A subtle rejoinder to the member opposite: Jordan's Principle is about First Nations kids. The Métis kids would not apply to that initiative. But again, it's no surprise that they jumble these issues together because saying that they did not follow a distinction-based approach is probably the nicest thing you could say about their time in office when it came to Indigenous people.

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

Mr. Ewasko: The Premier, during his first few weeks at the helm, noted that governing is hard. Governing is all about decisions: who to fund, what to fund, how much to fund. Honourable Speaker, he can find funds to advertise make-believe tax cuts, his phony rate

freeze and his failures on health. Surely, he can find the funds for at-risk children.

Why is the Premier able to fund—find funds for advertising, but cannot find funds for at-risk kids? Or was this just another topic he was absolutely unaware of?

Mr. Kinew: Honourable Speaker, \$11 million more under the leadership of our Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) for these young people. And you know what? It is true that governing is about choices. They chose to run ads attacking the victims of a serial killer. Manitobans chose to reject them for that terrible decision.

And I would add that it's member—it's Manitobans from all different walks of life. This is former federal Cabinet minister Shelly Glover, and I quote: I was so happy for the victims' families when recoveries were made recently, and thought it's about time the PC Party acknowledges and apologizes. The member for Fort Whyte's (Mr. Khan) public statement disagreeing with that apology was repugnant. Please know that many, many Conservatives disagreed with that campaign debacle, and we continue to be disappointed in any Conservative, like the MLA for Fort Whyte, who pours salt on the wounds of murder victims' families. End quote.

And end your political careers if there's any—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Layoffs at Métis CFS Impact on Youth in Care

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Yesterday, I raised the alarm about what's happening to youth in Métis CFS care as a direct result of the layoffs earlier this month. This morning, I spoke with some front-line workers who shared shocking stories about the devastating impact on the kids they've supported for years.

Children and youth, including some who have aged out of care, rely on these programs for life skills, cultural connection, financial literacy, education and are now losing their support system.

These workers were their lifeline; the only consistent support many of these kids have ever had. Now that this is ripped away from them, how can this government justify standing by while these kids are left without help they desperately need and deserve?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): Again, for a third day in a row, I want to reiterate our government's appreciation and support for those that

are on the front lines, taking care of the most vulnerable Manitobans, our children.

I think it is just sheer audacity for any member opposite to get up in this House, not only once, but day after day, and try to feign some type of care or support for children when these are the same individuals who legislated away the rights of Indigenous children.

The same—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Fontaine: —the same individuals who got up and had a campaign of hate and bullying against trans children; who, I remind folks watching, have still not apologized to those very same children. We don't—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Byram: Let's talk about what's happening, today, here. There are group homes that are going to be shutting down because of these lay-offs and the impact is catastrophic. Emergency shelters are already at capacity. These kids are being bounced between placements with no stability.

The workers who were laid off weren't just administrators; they worked one-on-one with these individuals, every single day. They took these kids to school, they helped them navigate through impossible situations, they taught them about their culture and heritage. These kids depended on these people that helped them. And now, overnight, that is all gone. It's vanished.

This NDP government has a duty to protect these vulnerable children. Kids shouldn't be used as political leverage, Honourable Speaker.

When will this government—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MLA Fontaine: Again, since I've been minister, there's been a 6 per cent increase in annualized funding to the CFS system in the amount of \$33.4 million. That's an additional four—\$11.3-million increase across the CFS system for operations.

What did members opposite do in their seven and a half years of disastrous, uncaring, callous government? Oh, yes, that's right, they never raised the foster care rate, the basic 'maintenant' rates.

Who did? This government.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Agassiz, on a final supplementary question.

Ms. Byram: Family visits are a legal right under The Child and Family Services Act, yet, because of the minister's lay-offs, many of these visits will no longer happen. In Métis CFS alone, there are 90 families who qualify for these family visits, yet the team responsible for ensuring these visits happen has been cut down to seven staff members. That means parents will be denied their visits. It means kids will lose their chance to see their families. This is a direct breach of Manitoba law. The NDP government is failing to uphold its own legislation.

Will the minister take responsibility, step up in-step up and protect these children's rights? Or will they continue to avoid accountability and hide behind excuses?

MLA Fontaine: Honourable Speaker, \$11.3 million across the CFS system for agency operations: that's the commitment that we've stepped up to honour and ensure that those that are on the front lines have the resources that they need to take care of the most vulnerable of our province.

I remind Manitobans and I remind members opposite, that they stood on a campaign that attacked trans children. Like, I don't know what kind of human beings think that it is appropriate to bully and target trans children, some of the most vulnerable in our province. But that's what each and every one of those members did, and they said it with their full chest. And again, the member who is second up—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

* (14:00)

Chinese Tariffs on Canadian Canola Exports Request for Government Plan to Address

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Chris Davison, president of the Canola Council of Canada, said that 100 per cent Chinese tariffs are 'prohibitively' high, and the fallout will be felt across the country. China represents close to \$5 billion in our canola exports.

With this Premier (Mr. Kinew) dithering on his response to the Trump tariffs, we are a political football, and Canada is caught between China and the US in this growing tariff squeeze.

What is this minister doing to stand up for our canola producers today?

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture): Thank you for the question.

There is no doubt the tariff, or the Chinese latest allegations about a 100 per cent tariff on us, is a bit of a challenge. There is no doubt we continue to talk to the canola organization.

As a matter of fact, an hour ago, the Premier was involved in a conversation with Mr. Chris Davison, saying—with the Canola Council—of the importance of moving together in partnership with the federal government and also with other industry leaders that we are very proud—we are very concerned as agriculture is No. 1 staple in our province, and we will continue to work with commodity—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Portage la Prairie, on a supplementary question.

MLA Bereza: We need action from this government to ensure Manitobans and our western canola farmers are not forgotten by Ottawa.

This Premier needs to make our Manitoba case now to get this tariff issue solved with China.

Just a little insight regarding this: The canola market was down the limit today. A 1,500-acre canola farmer—just today, not tomorrow—will have lost \$120,000 today.

The simple question is: What is the Minister of Agriculture doing to protect our agriculture industry and farmers from China and the tariffs that are—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Kostyshyn: Well, you know what? It's kind of ironic for the member opposite from Portage la Prairie chooses to stand up and talk about trade with US and China and everybody else, but yet, unfortunately, the MLA from Fort Whyte is not here today, and we often refer to the fact—

The Speaker: Order, please. Order. Order.

Just to remind the member that saying whether members are present or not is not allowed by the rules.

The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Ewasko) will come to order. When the Speaker is standing and when the Speaker is speaking, he will not be speaking.

Mr. Kostyshyn: My apologies, Honourable Speaker.

So let's get to the important commentary that I was trying to make for.

The member of Fort Whyte made allegations thanking Donald Trump of the 25 per cent tariff. I question also the member from Borderland also kind of sympathizing that maybe Canada should become the 51st state—in US—state in US. I question the teamship, the opportunity of working together with all of Canada—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Portage la Prairie, on a final supplementary question.

MLA Bereza: Honourable Speaker, \$120,000 lost today. Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe said in a statement on Saturday, that the province's canola industry is being put in the line of fire due to tariffs on Chinese EVs.

What is the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) plan to defend Manitoba's canola business? Can you tell us today: yes or no?

Mr. Kostyshyn: I can assure the member opposite and the party opposite: we have a government that represents all people in the province of Manitoba.

As an agriculture producer, I can relate to what the producers are going through, especially just before seeding. But I want to assure members opposite, in the last six months, I have been able to get down to the US Trade Council, meet with representatives of agriculture. I met with a tri-national accord in Washington, as well. Earlier this year I met, in Iowa, I met the state legislators across the country. Also met with Minnesota, commissioner of agriculture—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Violent Crime Incidents Release of Violent Offender

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): The NDP told Manitobans that, quote, we will implement stricter bail measures to keep violent criminals out of our communities; and, quote, there's no need to wait for other levels of government to take action on bail reform.

On March 7, this failed minister released Adam Leszkovics, and I table the Winnipeg Police Service's news release showing the multitude of crimes he's been charged with, and then released back into our community.

Can the minister identify which charge he felt were of so little consequences that this pedophile could be released back into our community? Was it accessing child pornography? The arrangement to commit

a sexual offence against a child? Or the making of child pornography?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The member opposite shows a fundamental misunderstanding of how our justice system works. And, you know, as Attorney General for the province of Manitoba, he knows that it's of course not my role in any way, but also important that I'm not commenting on ongoing cases that are before the courts.

What I will say is, on bail, yesterday we saw an opportunity to meet with families, to hear their pain, to hear their frustration, and to hear from folks directly who have seen the impact of a lack of bail reform at the federal level, and to join with them. And what I thought was a joining with the—all members of this Chamber to make real reform—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Brandon West, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Balcaen: Honourable Speaker, what we saw yesterday was the complete—complete—breakdown of this bail reform that this government has brought in—this failed government.

So a Winnipeg man was recently charged and—with a number of charges after beating an 83-year-old woman out on the streets while she was just heading to get a jug of milk. She suffered internal bleeding and other serious injuries, including a shattered pelvis, and was taken to hospital after this incident. She is expected to undergo a lengthy rehabilitation process.

My question is simple: Why did this minister release this criminal only to viciously attack this lady on her way to—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Wiebe: The real question is, Honourable Speaker, why did the member opposite run for a party that was not only so ineffective on the issue of bail but, in fact, cut important programs that made a real difference? Programs like the electronic monitoring program, the ankle bracelets.

For the member's information, of course, that was cut under the Heather Stefanson government. It was cut specifically by the minister of Justice at the time, Heather Stefanson. And then she had the gall to go out and campaign and say that she was bringing the program back. Well, of course, she never did.

It was our government that reinvested in that program, rebuilt that. And, in fact, went further with a

five-point bail program that brings law enforcement, community and our justice officials together to make a real impact in communities—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Brandon West, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Balcaen: Honourable Speaker, the NDP told Manitobans that they would, quote, bring the hammer down on people who bring drugs into our communities.

The Winnipeg police shared that an individual this Minister of Justice released back into the community was subsequently charged with possession of cocaine, methamphetamines, psilocybin, fentanyl, as well as the possession of a 9-millimetre handgun. This minister must have left his hammer in his other suit pocket.

* (14:10)

If the minister doesn't consider meth, cocaine and fentanyl examples of dangerous drugs in our communities, perhaps he would be willing to share his no-bail drug criteria with this Chamber.

Mr. Wiebe: Honourable Speaker, members opposite have absolutely no credibility when it comes to public safety.

Case in point, Honourable Speaker, they held up an important bill in this Legislature when it came to restricting the sale of machetes into our communities. When we finally passed it, the member opposite said, oh, maybe it's better than nothing. But then he went on to say it was window dressing. And then when it was identified that, well, online sales are a component of this, he said, well, nothing can be done about that.

Well, I beg to differ, Honourable Speaker. We made the change in our legislation, and I table a letter from Amazon who says that they're going to stop the sale of machetes in our province, along with all other retailers in this province. This is progress. This is making our communities safer.

The member opposite needs to stop standing with criminals and get on the—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Roblin. *[interjection]*
Order.

Shared Health and WRHA CEO Dismissals

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): Lanette Siragusa was one of the most qualified health-system leaders in Manitoba. A front-line nurse herself, she dedicated years to training new nurses and improving our health-care system. She was a steady, trusted voice for Manitobans during the pandemic, even administering vaccines on the front line herself. She led the plan that brought investments to hospitals across Manitoba, including St. Boniface, Neepawa, Bethesda and HSC, all projects that the NDP is now shamelessly taking credit for.

But to the NDP, she was nothing more than a scapegoat, discarded when no longer convenient to this Health Minister.

Why did this minister fire a respected, dedicated—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Honourable Speaker, why did that member and every member on that side of the House fire hundreds of nurses from the front lines under the previous PC government?

Honourable Speaker, why did that member and the failed PC government cut and close emergency rooms in our province? Why does that member stand up and pretend she cares about health care for Manitobans when she goes out and door knocks with the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan), who has told Manitobans explicitly that he thinks health care should be privatized.

The member opposite cannot be trusted. The member opposite does not advocate on the side of Manitobans.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Roblin, on a supplementary question.

Mrs. Cook: Mike Nader made over \$414,000 as CEO of WRHA in 2023. Lanette Siragusa made over \$352,000 as CEO of Shared Health. I will table the public sector compensation disclosure documents proving this.

We all know how these public sector contracts work. When executives are fired without cause, they receive a significant severance payout. That means Manitobans could be on the hook for nearly a million dollars in severance just to satisfy the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) political purge.

Exactly how much taxpayer money is the NDP wasting on their potentially politically motivated firings of health-care experts?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I think the question the member opposite should be asking is how much money did it cost Manitobans when they decided to freeze the wages of allied health-care professionals for six years. How much money did it cost Manitobans when they fired the hundreds of nurses who provided care at the bedside, which resulted in exorbitant amounts of mandated overtime hours?

That member has less than zero credibility on health care, and now she's going out—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Asagwara: —and door knocking with the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan), telling Manitobans that if they had the chance, they would privatize health care, fire nurses and destroy our health-care system.

I'll take no lessons from that member.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Roblin, on a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Cook: Neither of the audits that this government spent taxpayer dollars on recommended firing the CEOs of Shared Health or the WRHA. In fact, the audit of Shared Health points out that Lanette Siragusa helped bring forward a strategic plan for the organization, one that the audit points out that this NDP government chose to delay to, quote, align with new values.

So let's be clear: The NDP needed someone to blame for their own failures and now taxpayers are likely footing a million-dollar bill for it. That's money that could have gone to hiring health-care workers, opening hospital beds or funding surgeries.

How does this minister justify wasting public dollars on their scapegoating political decisions?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, the firing that Manitobans should really be proud of is when they fired the former PC government right out of office in the 2023 election.

And as a result of that sound decision made by Manitobans, our government is hiring net record numbers of health-care workers to the front lines of our health-care system. Collective bargaining agreements that were frozen for two terms are being fairly negotiated under our administration.

All the while, while this good work is being done to improve care at the bedside, that member goes out

to the doorsteps of Manitobans and tells them that if it were up to her and the member for Fort Whyte, they would privatize health care and we would all become Americans.

I'll say it again, Honourable Speaker, we'll take no lessons from that member or any member on that side of the House.

Métis, Michif CFS Agencies Impact of Possible Strike Action

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Honourable Speaker, according to recent media, the Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union, MGEU, has issued a two-week strike notice on behalf of Métis, Michif and southeast children—child and family service agencies. These agencies make up 500 union members, including administrative staff, social services, family support and youth-care workers.

If a tentative agreement is not reached, the strike date is set for March 25.

Will this government commit to making an agreement to ensure supports for children are not affected by a potential strike?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): I thank my colleague for the important question.

Our government has put an additional \$11.3 million into the CFS system for agency operations. I think that all of us can agree that we hope that folks will get to the table and have those good discussions and do what is in the best interest of Manitoba children and families.

Our government is supported. We have put a significant amount of money into the system on top of that \$11.3 million.

We've also—that allocates to about \$898,000 towards Southeast CFS, as well as—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a supplementary question.

MLA Lamoureux: The staff at Métis, Michif, and Southeast Child and Family Services agencies are trying to ensure children in care are able to stay connected to their families and cultures, despite the limited supports provided by this government.

Many of the workers who will be on strike if a deal is not made are the family support workers who are dedicated to keeping children connected to their families.

Honourable Speaker, what is this government doing to ensure children are being enabled to stay connected to their families and cultures?

MLA Fontaine: I think that that's an excellent question.

As the member knows, on October 1 we proclaimed kinship and customary care agreements, and those agreements are a historical moment for Manitoba and for child welfare. It's a different way for us, as government, for CFS agencies, for authorities, but, more importantly, for families, on how we care for children.

Those are historic agreements that will fundamentally change the way that child welfare is done in Manitoba, and it ensures fundamentally that families have a voice in the care of their children.

We're doing that decolonizing work, and I'm so proud of our team and I'm so proud of—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a final supplementary question.

* (14:20)

MLA Lamoureux: Honourable Speaker, we need to decolonize child welfare here in Manitoba. Because of this government there have been more than 60 critical staff, many of whom are Métis and First Nation, according to MMF, who have been laid off, and now there's a looming strike set for March 25.

Why is this Families Minister defunding programs, including emergency placements and group homes, that are set up to prevent youth from having to stay in hotels?

MLA Fontaine: The member opposite knows that I'm not doing anything in even the slightest way in respect of doing—as I have said time and time again in this Chamber, it is an honour and a sacred responsibility to be the Minister of Families, and I take that responsibility very seriously. That's why we put \$11.3 million of additional annualized funding into the CFS system for agency operations.

We honour those that are on the front lines. I encourage folks to get to the table. We know that agreements are best done at the table collectively, and we encourage everybody to get back to the table.

Canada-Manitoba Child-Care Agreement Extension Announcement

Mrs. Rachelle Schott (Kildonan-River East): Honourable Speaker, our NDP government knows the vital role child care plays for families and for children

to begin their early-childhood learning. We know it is key to a strong economy so folks can return to work while knowing their children are able to learn and develop around their peers and prepare them for education and school.

We also know members opposite don't value this type of work, as evidenced by the member for La Vérendrye's (Mr. Narth) comments just last week in this House.

Can the minister please update the House on the exciting announcement we made with the federal government last week on child care?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): Honourable Speaker, thanks to my colleague for that excellent and very important question.

Child care is so important to families in our province. Folks want accessible and affordable child care available to them close to their homes. That's why our government is proud to partner with the federal government on this crucial and historic announcement just last week. This agreement extends the federal child-care program another five years until 2031. Great news, Honourable Speaker.

This agreement includes a 3 per cent escalator, and Manitoba will receive a total of \$1.9 billion over the length of this agreement.

And we're going to meet the needs of Manitoba families. Our government is here to work with—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Student Learning Outcomes Reduction Concerns

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): Recently, data from the last couple of years was published in terms of test results for our K-to-12 school system, and we've seen a stark decline in math outcomes as well as francophone learning outcomes.

Can the minister comment on the government's plan to stop the falling numbers of learning outcomes and start increasing those outcomes for Manitoba students again?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): It gives me great pleasure to rise in this House to answer the first question from my critic as the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning. And I'd be remiss if I didn't take just a brief moment to extend a sincere thank you to the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Kinew), to

our team and to all of Manitobans for entrusting me in this role. I take it very seriously.

I'd also like to just take a brief moment to acknowledge the previous Minister of Education, the late and the great Nello Altomare. It is an honour to pick up the torch that Nello carried in this House and to continue on that great work. I look forward to answering the question in the next answer. Thank you.

The Speaker: The time for question period has expired.

PETITIONS

Little Mountain Park

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I wish to present the following petition.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The Manitoba Highways department has expressed a desire to have the CentrePort Canada Way to Chief Peguis Trail extension developed to follow Klimpke Road with a termination point on the CentrePort Canada Way.

(2) The proposed path would eliminate a portion of Little Mountain Park, which abuts Klimpke Road, private residences and neighbouring Little Mountain Sportsplex.

(3) Although located in the RM of Rosser, Little Mountain Park is one of Winnipeg's valuable green spaces, located within the Perimeter Highway boundary, and is the only significant green space in the north-western sector of the city.

(4) Little Mountain Park has been providing recreational opportunities and natural habitat for local wildlife since it was established in 1965. It contains a tall grass prairie ecosystem on ecologically sensitive land, complete with flora and fauna, and is a destination for tourists from all over.

(5) The impact of the growing industrial port and the resultant redirected traffic through this area would not only disrupt access to nearby Sportsplex and golf course with an additional heavy traffic, but would also pose environmental threats, and disrupt local wildlife in the nearby Little Mountain Park.

(6) The Province of Manitoba has a stated responsibility to protect the environment and green spaces for the benefit of all Manitobans with policies and legislation that support economic development, investment, trade and natural resources and the conservation of species and ecosystems to conserve these precious resources for future generations.

(7) The encroachment of the proposed highway must be considered a threat to the Little Mountain Park designed ecosystem—designated ecosystem.

(8) An earlier proposal utilized a different route that followed the existing old Sturgeon Road footprint, Little Mountain Park and the Sportsplex, while providing suitable access to the industrial area with a termination point between Mollard Road and Jefferson Avenue.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to recognize Little Mountain Park as an at-risk ecosystem and as a potential ecosystem preservation zone.

(2) To urge the provincial government to recognize the impact of the proposed route on Little Mountain Park, The Players Course, the neighbouring Little Mountain Sportsplex and the citizens and tourists who use and visit them; and

(3) To urge the provincial government to seek an alternate route that would avoid the area while still providing adequate ingress and egress to the CentrePort Canada Way, which such as the old Sturgeon Road route, and avoid expropriating land unnecessarily.

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

MRI for Portage Regional Health Facility

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition:

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Portage regional hospital—facility, sorry—is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from an added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

(2) An MRI machine is a non-invasive medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and computerized generated radio waves to create detailed images of organs and tissues in the human body. It is used for disease detection, diagnosis and treatment monitoring.

(3) Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on Highway No. 1 in Southern Health/Santé Sud Health Authority. Currently, there is only one machine in the RHA.

(4) An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will reduce transportation costs for patients as well as reduce the burden on stretcher services and ambulance use. It will bring care closer to home and reduce wait times for the MRI scans across the province.

(5) Located around Portage la Prairie are the Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay and Long Plain First Nations reserves. Indigenous people in Canada disproportionately face barriers in access to services and medical care. An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will bring care closer to their home communities and provide greater access to diagnostic testing.

(6) Located in close proximity to the new Portage regional health facility is Southport airport. This aerodrome has a runway length that is more than adequate to support medical air ambulance services. This would provide the opportunity to transport patients by air from remote communities to access MRI imaging services.

* (14:30)

(7) The average wait time for Manitobans to receive an MRI scan is currently six to eight months. Having an MRI machine in the Portage regional health facility will help reduce these wait times for patients and provide better care sooner.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and placement of an MRI machine in the Portage regional health facility in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

This is signed by Teresa Reichert, Vicki Wright, Garry Wright and many, many more.

Provincial Trunk Highway 34

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I wish to present the following petition.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Provincial Trunk Highway 34, PTH 34, is a two-lane provincial primary highway that runs from the US border where it meets with ND 20 to PTH 16 at the town of Gladstone.

PTH 34 runs north-south in the south-central region of the province. It is the main highway for the towns of Crystal City, Pilot Mound and Holland,

serving as a main corridor for semi-trailers, farm equipment, daily drivers and local school bus routes.

(3) A new bridge is currently being constructed over the Assiniboine River at PTH 34, north of Holland, in the RM of Victoria. The bridge serves as an important north-south link over the Assiniboine River between the Trans-Canada Highway and PTH 2.

(4) The deterioration of PTH 34 has raised major concerns due to its narrow shoulders and numerous deep potholes that pose serious safety risks considering farmers often need to use the highway to transport heavy equipment.

(5) Construction of a new bridge in accordance—current design codes and the RTAC standard, located on PTH 34 crossing the Assiniboine River, will support trade and commerce and improve public safety in the area, and also accommodate flood events on the Assiniboine River.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to address the conditions of Provincial Trunk Highway 34, making necessary upgrades to RTAC standard and to resurface the road once the new bridge has been completed.

This petition has been signed by Daryl Jones, Keith Jaeger and Ruth Dueck and many, many more Manitobans.

Phoenix School

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I wish to present the following petition, and the background to this petition is as follows:

Phoenix School, a kindergarten to grade 5 school located in Headingley, has experienced consistent enrolment growth over the last several years. Enrolment is expected to reach 275 students in the next two years.

Because the school is now over capacity, the school division has had to install portable classrooms on site as of fall 2024.

For several consecutive years, the top capital priority of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division has been the renovation and expansion of Phoenix School.

In 2022, the Phoenix School expansion and renovation project was approved to proceed to the design phase. The project included, among other amenities, a new gymnasium, two new classrooms, a multi-purpose room and room for 74 child-care spaces.

In June 2024, the school division received notice from the provincial government that the project has been deferred. There is no guarantee if, or when, the project will move forward.

There are currently hundreds of children on a wait-list for child care in Headingley. The daycare operator in Phoenix School has been told that they will continue to have space within the school for the 2024-2025 school year only, that further expansion of child-care space within the school is not possible and that space may be reduced moving forward due to the shortage of classrooms. If new space is not constructed as planned, many families may be left without child care.

It is critical that the expansion and renovation of Phoenix School proceed as planned in order to support the needs of students, teachers and families in the growing community of Headingley.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to proceed with the planned renovation and expansion of Phoenix School without further delay.

And this petition is signed by Lisa Wichmann, Hailey Seidlitz, Jordan Oakley and many, many other Manitobans.

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The federal government has mandated a consumption-based carbon tax, with the stated goal of financially pressuring Canadians to make decisions to reduce their carbon emissions.

(2) Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with a high-efficiency furnace, the carbon tax is costing the average family over \$200 annually, even more for those with older furnaces.

(3) Home heating in Manitoba is not a choice or a decision for Manitobans to make; it is a necessity of life, with an average of almost 200 days below 0°C annually.

(4) The federal government has selectively removed the carbon tax off home heating oil in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, but has indicated they have no

intention to provide the same relief to Manitobans heating their homes.

(5) Manitoba Hydro indicates that natural gas heating is one of the most affordable options available to Manitobans, and it can be cost prohibitive for households to replace their heating source.

(6) Premiers across Canada, including in the Atlantic provinces that benefit from this decision, have collectively sent a letter to the federal government, calling on it to extend the carbon tax exemption to all forms of home heating, with the exception of Manitoba.

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

(8) Provincial leadership in other jurisdictions have already committed to removing the federal carbon tax from home heating bills.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to remove the federal carbon tax on home heating bills for all Manitobans to provide them much-needed relief.

Honourable Speaker, this petition is signed by Gary MacLeod, Jill Klapprat, Scott Klapprat and many, many more great Manitobans.

Green Valley School Expansion

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The residents of La Vérendrye and other areas around Manitoba are extremely frustrated and concerned by the provincial government's decision to cancel the school expansion project for Green Valley School in Grunthal.

(2) In 2021, the PC provincial government committed funding to expand Green Valley School for a new gymnasium and classrooms.

* (14:40)

(3) The school is so crowded that three mobile classrooms were added to alleviate overcrowding in the classrooms.

(4) In order for construction to begin, the school removed all three portable classrooms, leaving Green Valley in a further critical state of overcrowding.

(5) As a result of overcrowding, parents are choosing to home-school their children due to safety concerns and the challenges associated with overcrowding.

(6) The current Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning have said they are committed to investing in education.

(7) The concerns of residents of La Vérendrye and the surrounding area are being ignored by the provincial government.

(8) The lack of space in the school is affecting the quality of education and extracurricular activities for students.

(9) The minister and Premier have a duty to respond to the educational needs of children and youth identified by rural communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to immediately bring back the three portable classrooms to help alleviate the stress and overcrowding classrooms, and

(2) To urge the provincial government to reinstate the expansion project for Green Valley School.

This petition has been signed by Laurie Dyck, Megan Frechette, Deena Marynowski and many, many other Manitobans.

Teaching Certification

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Ensuring that teachers have a robust background in the subjects they teach is essential for maintaining high-quality education and fostering well-rounded learning experiences for all Manitoba students.

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area 'experteets' required for teacher certification.

(3) These amendments eliminated all subject-area requirements for teacher certification, including major and minable-teachable subjects and subject-specific requirements for early- and middle-years streams.

(4) Specifically, the amendments removed senior years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor, early- and middle-years credit requirements in an approved teachable major and minor, and early- and middle-years credit requirements for specific subjects, including math, physical or biological science, English or French, and history and/or geography.

(5) Key stakeholders, such as parents, post-secondary educators outside the faculties of education, and business partners were not consulted about the changes.

(6) The removal of subject-specific requirements undermines the educational quality in Manitoba schools by permitting teachers to enter the classroom without sufficient training in core academic areas, thereby compromising the education that Manitoba students receive.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualification Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early- and middle-years requirements which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas, and

(2) To urge the provincial government to address teacher shortages through alternative measures that uphold rigorous subject-area standards, which are critical for providing quality education to all Manitoba students.

This petition has been signed by Mahak Pawar, Amanjot Kaur, Aayushi Bhardwaj and many other fine Manitobans.

The Speaker: Order, please.

I just want to remind members that when they're reading petitions, they have to read the first three names on the petition. They can't pick and choose which names they choose to read.

The honourable member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth), I understand that you didn't read the first three names. That's clearly what the rules say, so please follow the rules in the future.

Thank you.

Any other petitions?

Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

The Speaker: First off, I have a leave request for the House. On October 2, 2024 the House agreed to adopt a process for the consideration of reports from the Ethics Commissioner. It was agreed that these provisions would remain in effect until the end of the second session of the 43rd Legislature.

This process has included provisions governing the debate on ethics report motions. Due to a drafting oversight, these debate provisions did not include an inclusive way to govern debate rotation when an ethics complaint involves an independent member either as the complainant or the subject. This oversight can be addressed with an amendment to the agreement.

Accordingly, is there leave to amend the debate provisions in the ethics report motion process replacing the original debate rotation with the following: All members may speak to the motion in the following sequence: first, the subject of the complaint or a member of their party, followed by the complainant or a member of their party, followed by a rotation between speakers from each recognized party, followed by an independent member, followed by any members wishing to speak repeating this rotation.

Is there leave? [*Agreed*]

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): For House business this afternoon, could you please call debate on the ethics report motion regarding the honourable member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), followed by resuming debate on the government resolution Manitoba is Stronger Standing Together Against Donald Trump's Tariff Tax and Threats.

The Speaker: It has been announced that the House business for this afternoon will follow—will be as follows: debate on the ethics report motion regarding the honourable member for Fort Rouge, followed by resuming debate on the government resolution Manitoba is Stronger Standing Together Against Donald Trump's Tariff Tax and Threats.

ETHICS REPORT MOTIONS

The Speaker: So, following that then, before we begin the debate on the ethics report motion today, I will remind

members of the process for consideration of these motions as agreed to by the House on October 2, 2024, and amended on March 11, 2025:

(1) The debate on an ethics report motion shall be limited to one sitting day;

(2) The House shall not adjourn until all members have had an opportunity to speak to the motion. When there are no further speakers in the debate, the Speaker will put the question;

(3) An ethics report motion cannot be amended;

(4) The Speaker shall read the motion to the House to open the floor for debate;

(5) During debate on an ethics report motion no member shall speak longer than 10 minutes;

(6) All members may speak to the motion in the following sequence: first, the subject of the complaint, or a member of their party; followed by the complainant, or a member of their party; followed by a rotation between speakers from each recognized party; followed by an independent member; followed by any members wishing to speak repeating this rotation.

Before reading the motion to open debate, I will read into the record the recommendation contained in the report from the Ethics Commissioner regarding the honourable First Minister dated February 19, 2025.

* (14:50)

On page 16 of that report, the Ethics Commissioner wrote: For the reasons given above, I conclude that the Premier has not breached The Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act, as alleged by the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliw).

The motion before the House is: That the Legislative Assembly accept the report of the Ethics Commissioner regarding the honourable member for Fort Rouge, dated February 19, 2025, and approve the recommendation contained therein.

The floor is now open for debate.

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): I'm pleased to put a couple of words on the record in respect of the member for Fort Garry's frivolous attempt at an attack against the Premier.

It's unfortunate that the member for Fort Garry is so obsessed with the Premier, and he knows more than anybody in this Chamber, where he's sitting now opposite. Folks don't know the Premier, but the member for Fort Garry would know that the Premier, you know,

does what he is allowed to do. He doesn't stray from what he's not allowed to do. He takes his role incredibly serious as a legislator, as a leader, and certainly as the Premier. So, obviously, the Ethics Commissioner has also confirmed what we know to be true on this side of the aisle here.

I'm not going to spend a lot of time on the member's arguments, because, quite honestly, we're all uninspired by them. I just will read a couple of things from the Ethics Commissioner, and then I want to get on to something else.

So the Ethics Commissioner's—some of his conclusions, and I quote: Well, the MLA for Fort Garry provides no evidence to support an allegation that the Premier (Mr. Kinew) has breached this section. There is no basis for this allegation. This allegation is therefore unfounded. The Premier has acted in accordance with the conditions set out in my letter of November 2, 2023, and has therefore not contravened Section 11 or 12 of the Act.

Again, and I quote: This allegation is therefore unfounded, and the Premier has acted in accordance.

It is, throughout this ethics report, confirmed by the Ethics Commissioner that the Premier did not breach any—or contraventions of any of the sections. But the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv) just couldn't help himself. He had to get up and waste everybody's time, including the Ethics Commissioner's time, bringing forward a fictitious, erroneous complaint against the Premier.

But what he did have time to do, and let me be explicitly clear: I will never forgive the member for Fort Garry for this, and I've been waiting to share what the member for Fort Garry did. At the opportunity, at the Throne Speech, the member for Fort Garry timed his speech so that he knew he was going to take time away from the Premier.

And when I approached the member for Fort Garry to ask him to, you know, take a couple of minutes, and explained to him that our dear colleague Nello was dying, and asked him to allow the Premier time to be able to say his last words to our colleague, the—shame on you. Shame on you.

The member for Fort Garry's—

The Speaker: Order, please.

I'd ask the member to keep her comments relevant to the motion before us.

MLA Fontaine: Miigwech for that direction.

And similarly to the member for Fort Garry bringing forward a fictitious, erroneous complaint, the member has to feed his ego, and one of the ways in which he does it is to stand up in this House when he has the opportunity, put fictitious complaints on the record and also take time from the Premier, because he hates the Premier so much that he couldn't even allow the Premier to respond in a good way to our beloved colleague.

Even though I approached the member for Fort Garry in a good and humble way, and asked him to allow the Premier to have final words, he knew that Nello was watching live, but his ego is so big and so thwarted, that he put himself first to stand up in this House, when he has all kinds of opportunities to hear himself talk in this Chamber.

An Honourable Member: Relevance.

MLA Fontaine: It is relevant. It is proving over and over again that the member for Fort Garry—

The Speaker: Order.

I would once again remind the member to keep her comments relevant to the motion before us.

MLA Fontaine: The member for Fort Garry has proven time and time and time again in this Chamber his loathing for the Premier because he wasn't chosen to sit in Cabinet. And we know why, and he shows every single day why he wasn't chosen.

And in that hate and in that loathing and in that wanting to stroke his own ego and hear his own voice, he gave the Premier seven minutes. Seven minutes in this Chamber to honour our beloved colleague. And it is indicative of the way that the member for Fort Garry acts within this Chamber and in his role as an MLA.

So instead of spending time fighting for his constituents, he wastes the Ethics Commissioner's time and money and all of our time; we could be sitting here talking about the threat to Canada, the threat to Manitoba economy by talking about the Trump tariffs, but, no, we have to sit in here and we have to talk about what the member for Fort Garry has done, yet again, fuelled entirely by his hate for the Premier.

So, let me just say this: I will never forgive the member for Fort Garry for what he did. It is noted what he did, he did not allow the Premier to say his final goodbyes in this Chamber, on Nello.

Now, I know members—

The Speaker: Order, please.

I would ask members opposite to please quit trying to tell the Speaker how to do the Speaker's job.

And I would remind the member, yet again, to keep her comments relevant to the ethics motion before us.

MLA Fontaine: I know members opposite are in support of the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliw) because, again, their egos are operating right now. They want to hear themselves talk within these-Chamber.

But again, you know, they should take some lessons from the honourable Nello Altomare. He was a good man, he was a kind man, he was a generous man, he was a humble man. And, again, the same hate and loathing that the member for Fort Garry has for the Premier (Mr. Kinew) fuelled this fictitious, erroneous Ethics Commissioner complaint, of which, let me just state again for the record, the member was wrong. He was simply wrong.

He's so clouded by his hate for the Premier, he can't even make rational decisions. He can't even make rational decisions to allow the Premier, when he knows that Nello was watching. When he knew that Nello was on his deathbed. He couldn't even sit down, hush his ego and allow the Premier to say his final words to the member—or for—to Nello.

Shameful. I will never forgive you for that.

Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry): This report is not a vindication of the Premier. The Premier's actions were wrong. They were wrong yesterday, they're wrong today and they're going to be wrong tomorrow.

He received a hall pass from the Ethics Commissioner, which is very different than saying that his actions were actually correct. Without the hall pass, he would be in contravention of the act. This act applies not only to the Premier, but it also would apply to the Leader of the Opposition. The only saving grace for the Premier was that this law didn't come into effect until the election in October of 2023. If the law was in effect, he had violated the law.

* (15:00)

The Premier knew he was going to win; he had been leading in the polls for two years. The entire election, he was leading in the polls by a massive margin. There was absolutely no surprise or doubt that he was going to be the Premier of Manitoba.

So what does he do, knowing full well that this law comes in at the time of election? He submits three

books to his publisher just prior to that event. Knowing full well that if the law was in place, that was illegal.

Then the election happens, he becomes Premier—no surprise—he then meets with the Ethics Commissioner and the Ethics Commissioner writes him a hall pass; who says explicitly in the report that this is not appropriate, we can't have this, but given the circumstances that you—prior to the election—submitted these things, we are going to accept your argument that you have now no control over the publishing of these books and we will give you a hall pass.

The question for this Chamber is: Why didn't the Premier do that prior to the election? Why didn't he get permission prior to the election to submit the books?

Because that law applies to the Leader of the Opposition. He didn't do that because the answer is clear: The Ethics Commissioner—given how the act is written—would have had to say no to him; that he would not have been allowed to submit those books for publication.

So we accept, for argument's sake, that, okay, he submits them just before the election, he has no control when they'll actually get released. But then they don't get released. A full year now passes and the argument that he is no longer in control of when the publisher publishes that book is completely empty. He now has control over his own books and his contract, and could have cancelled them at any point of time and chose not to.

So he was in control of that situation, he could have cancelled that contract, he could have prevented that book from being published. And the whole issue here is that it gives him an unfair advantage; that he is using his status as a premier in order to sell books and make more money. That's why the act prevents this from happening.

So the Premier says well, your hall pass to me says I can't promote it, and that's—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wasyliw: —true. But everybody else is promoting it and everybody else is using the Premier's name to make money. And when they make money, he makes money, which again means that he's enriched while as premier selling these books, even if he doesn't do anything active.

So that defeats the whole purpose of the act and the law.

So—but here's the thing, Honourable Speaker: he doesn't need an Ethics Commissioner to do the right thing. He could have—even though he had a hall pass—went to his publisher and say, cancel this contract, don't publish the books, I don't want to receive any money—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Wasyliv: —while I'm a premier. He didn't do that.

And he still can do that today, and I urge him to do that today. Because the issue becomes, the public trusts in politicians, and if they think that politicians are making additional money off of their position, this is going to affect the public's trust and confidence in their leadership.

So the Premier (Mr. Kinew) has shown no evidence, at any point, that he didn't have control of publishing these books or that he couldn't dial that back and actually cancel these contracts at any time. So he can do the right thing.

The question is, why isn't he? Why isn't he publicly declaring that he will not publish any more books at his time at office and that he will not keep any of the proceeds of the book that he currently has on the market?

And, of course, they've been radio silent about that. So, Honourable Speaker, the fact of the matter is, this conduct is prohibited by the act. It is wrong. The Commissioner says it's wrong, and it's only because of the unique details of this circumstance that it's been allowed to happen.

The Premier could do the right thing. The Premier could show what he's made of and fix this and declare that he is not going to benefit financially from these books.

Why isn't he doing that? Why is he using the hall pass, and what message does that send to Manitobans when he's basically, you know, not following the spirit of the law but he's certainly embracing the letter of the law? And that, certainly, is in nobody's interest. [interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wasyliv: And with that brief comment, those are my remarks.

The Speaker: There are no other speakers?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: So the question before the House is that the Legislative Assembly accept the report of the Ethics Commissioner regarding the honourable member for Fort Rouge, dated February 19, 2025, and approve the recommendation contained therein.

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

DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT RESOLUTIONS

Manitoba is Stronger Standing Together Against Donald Trump's Tariff Tax and Threats

The Speaker: As previously announced, then, we will now resume debate on the government resolution,

WHEREAS the tariffs by U.S. President Donald Trump threaten Canada's sovereignty and economic security; and

WHEREAS Manitoba is a powerhouse of clean hydro-electricity, critical minerals, and brilliant, hard-working people who drive innovation and prosperity; and

WHEREAS Manitobans look out for each other as it is the Manitoba way; and

WHEREAS now more than ever, the people of this province need to stick together, stand up for each other, and take decisive action to fight for Manitoban jobs, industries and resources; and

WHEREAS Manitobans are stronger standing together; and

WHEREAS Manitobans love Canada; and

WHEREAS Canada will never become the 51st state.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba stands united in the defence of the province, its workers, its industries against President Donald Trump's tariff tax and threats, which threaten Canada's sovereignty and economic security, standing in the honourable name of the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care (MLA Asagwara).

Is there leave for it to stand in that minister's name?

An Honourable Member: No.

The Speaker: The minister then loses their spot in the debate.

The floor is now open for the next speaker.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): If we look back at the first term of President Trump, we find that then-President Trump had an issue with the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA. So he

began the renegotiating and came up with a new deal called the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA. And that was basically concluded and signed off July 1, 2020.

Leading up to that, on January 29, 2020, direct quote from President Trump: The USMCA is the largest, fairest, most balanced and modern trade agreement ever achieved. There's never been anything like it.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

The quote actually goes on further and talks more about the agreement, but the USMCA, in President Trump's own words, was the best trade agreement ever.

If you go forward to current history and you look at the post-November re-election of President Trump, in December of 2024, President Trump indicated that new tariffs would be instituted against Canada due to the border between Canada and the US not being patrolled properly. In fact, he said it had to do with individuals coming across the border illegally and fentanyl.

So it wasn't that the trade agreement was a problem, which is actually his trade agreement from his first term, but rather what the issue was, was fentanyl coming over, evidently in huge amounts, and he put forward a notion that it had to do with people coming across the border illegally.

The Government of Canada, under then-Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, committed to approximately \$1.3 billion; that was the response. It would be a border plan with new choppers, technology and personnel.

* (15:10)

Now, all fairness, that commitment had also been made under the first term of President Trump and hadn't fully been lived up to. But this time, there was clear signs, there was equipment that was put forward, personnel was brought forward and the indications that the Government of Canada was taking this serious, the complaint was being dealt with. And President Trump then said he would delay for a month to see exactly how the new measures would roll out.

So that, then, would be in February of this year; President Trump agreed to delay any tariffs, seeing as his concerns had been met.

Yet today, we are in a trade war with the US President who's imposing tariffs on Canada. Again,

the USMCA is President Trump's trade deal. It is his agreement, in his own words, the best ever.

So the President's concerns regarding the border and drugs being smuggled across was one step, and then when that was met, he then put out that Canada had a trade surplus of \$200 million. If you look at the real numbers, it's between 60 and 80 million dollars; there's some dispute over that.

If you take oil and gas out of that, because oil and gas is truly a one-way deal, the United States actually has a surplus with Canada, not Canada with the United States, if you take oil and gas out of it.

So you can just see how the line in the sand, if you will, shifts.

I would suggest to Manitobans and Canadians that there's a book that Donald Trump wrote called *The Art of the Deal*, and the book has been mistitled. The book should actually read more that it's the art of the fight, and then comes the *Art of the Deal*. I believe that Canada is currently in the art of the fight, and that's what we are facing right now.

We've had a lot of very good advice coming not just to Manitoba, but going to Canadians, our leadership there. We had Prime Minister Harper weigh in on his four-point plan, and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. Prime Minister Harper talked about various steps, what needs to be done, very much pro-Canadian. If we were to synthesize down what Prime Minister Harper was saying is, be united and be strong.

On the weekend, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien spoke, I might add at 90 years old, and if you look at his comments on tariffs, his main message was, be united, be strong. In fact, Prime Minister Chrétien went so far as to give some very good historical examples of when he negotiated with the Americans; he had some very good anecdotal information, and both Prime Minister Harper and Prime Minister Chrétien dealt with a lot of trade issues with various administrations.

I digress for a moment; when Prime Minister Chrétien kind of lifted his head from his notes and he said to the cameras: from one old guy to another old guy, stop this nonsense. I thought that was very poignant. It was very quintessential Jean Chrétien and a good message.

So in both instances, we have two leaders, and I'm sure the other former prime ministers would also weigh in, and whether it's Paul Martin, Joe Clark, Kim Campbell, they would all basically say the same thing,

that what we need to do is be united and be strong, because we are right now in the middle of what I believe is the art of the fight.

Prime minister-President Trump has made it his mark to take on any of his opponents, anybody who deals against him and crush them. He has a negotiating style, or art of the fight, where he wants to get to the point where he has his opponents down and he has them vanquished. Then he moves from the art of the fight to the art of the deal, and I would suggest to this current—our current Premier (Mr. Kinew) and our current government, if we already are concerned and are troubled by the art of the fight, this, where we are right now, we should be increasingly concerned and increasingly—scared is probably not the right word, but mindful of what the art of the deal is going to be.

I believe that President Trump has some idea of what he wants to ask for in a trade negotiation. We hope that, seeing as the way the markets go, that perhaps he backs down a little bit. I doubt that's going to happen. But what he asks for is going to be, I believe, incredibly troubling, very bad for our economy and very bad for our province.

So my last few comments, I would like to direct my comments to our Premier (Mr. Kinew) and our government. We do have a tendency as politicians to get into the question period style of the way we deal with each other. And to a degree, that's healthy. You need good competition. You need to be able to challenge each other on ideas—question period—but Harry Enns used to say is in a British parliamentary system, it's our civil war; it's where we go at each other.

But there are times when we really do have to come together. My argument to this Premier and this government would be that this is probably one of these times where we should put a fence around this issue. I believe this issue is going to get worse, not better, okay? Always want to hope for the best, but we have to plan for the worst.

I would suggest that the—well, we're more Canadian than you—I'm concerned when I see people being taken out of context, things being taken and words moved around to make it sound like somebody is not on side. I would say I'm—it's troubling that when you hear individuals like Prime Minister Harper and Prime Minister Chrétien saying, above all, we need to be unified and we need to be strong. Perhaps on this issue, we as legislators in the province of Manitoba should put a fence around this issue and suggest that we leave this beyond politics. Still fight on health care, the budget, education issues. There's a lot of

issues where we can fight each other on and not on this one.

I would say to all my colleagues here today, if you believe that the Donald Trump White House doesn't watch what's going on in the provinces and in Ottawa, you're mistaken. Donald Trump loves to see where the weaknesses are in his opponents; also, where the strengths are. But more importantly, he loves to see where the weaknesses are, and if we as a province and all the other provinces show that we are divided, that for Donald Trump is weakness.

I have a suggestion for this Premier and for this government: perhaps it's time for the leadership of the NDP government and the Conservative opposition and—I was going to say and the Liberals, but I'd have to say Liberal, that we get together. Perhaps we would call on individual statesmen like Gary—premier—former premier Gary Filmon, former premier Gary Doer, and perhaps we should get advice from them. They've negotiated under various prime ministers and presidents in the United States. In the case of Premier Gary Doer, he was in the United States, so he understands how it works.

Perhaps we should get together as leaders of the NDP government, leaders of the Progressive Conservative government, even the lone Liberal, and come together on this issue. This has the ability to cripple the province of Manitoba and damage our country, and if we listen to those who are giving us advice, who are willing to go out and give solid advice, what we are looking for is statesmen, stateswomen who then pull us together. We have to be united on this.

*(15:20)

And we do come together. We did the other day on a crime resolution, and when it comes to this, which is so important to what we do as a province, what we export into the United States, whether that's a good thing or bad thing in the long run, that's up to debate. But, currently, the majority of what we produce here in Manitoba goes across to the United States, and I believe it calls for us to get together. My suggestion is, again, leadership of the NDP, the Conservatives and Liberals get together, put a fence around this issue. Perhaps we call in some former premiers, and they could give us some really good advice on how to go forward.

But my suggestion is that while we are still in the art of the fight and Donald Trump starts to transition to the art of the deal, we might be horrified at what he all asks for, and I don't think we should start second-

guessing what he plans or what he isn't going to plan; we should prepare ourselves for the worst even when we're still hoping for the best.

And the only way we are going to take on an individual who first crushes his opponents, and then when he's got them crushed, then he starts to negotiate with them from a position of strength on his side and a position of weakness on his opponent's side, the way we're going to do that is from the advice we've had from former prime ministers is that we have to do it from a position of unified and a position of strength.

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): It's a great pleasure to have an opportunity to speak on the very, very important topic of US tariffs.

And I know this is top of mind for many Canadians, many businesses and many businesses centred right here in Manitoba who primarily export to the States. We know that across Manitoba there's an average—well, approximately 70, 72 per cent of all exports that leave Manitoba go down to the United States. They are our largest trading partner and have been for many, many, many years. And so it's important relationship and important understanding.

And because it's so important our government has taken it very seriously. We've understood that this trading relationship is critical to our economic success. So early on in our mandate, right from the beginning, we understood how to foster and try to understand this trading relationship. Our very first trade mission was down to Washington, DC, to try to have better relationships with folks in the American administration.

And so we had very productive meetings and took a delegation of—a cross-section of business leaders, from agriculture, people in the large and small businesses to folks in the critical mineral and mining sector here in Manitoba and brought them over to advocate for the interests and the business interests of all Manitoba. And I think that was very productive. When we heard from many of those stakeholders that us being in Washington made a difference. We heard from stakeholders after the fact that said that Manitoba's presence is out there and is back on the map. And I think that is significant to know that our interests are being known and heard and understand and felt by some of those trading partners.

And I think that's one of the first points I want to make, honourable Deputy Speaker, is that I think it's, you know, very important for us to have a presence there in Washington, and I think it's a huge mistake of

the former PC government to have closed that Washington office, closed that Washington trade office, fired that trade representative. That's a huge mistake. It set us back in our relationship with our largest trading partner, set us back compared to our other jurisdictions across the country, like Saskatchewan, like Alberta, like BC and Ontario and Quebec, who have trade representatives.

We—while we—while the former government, the former failed government, chose to pull back their interests and insulate themselves, other jurisdictions were going out and making trade deals, having better trade relationships and furthering their economies while the former failed government made the opposite direction and took our province backward. We're correcting that mistake.

We've announced that we have—that we are going to be reopening a trade office in Washington to further the interests of Manitoba's businesses, Manitoba's exporters; to ensure that we have and continue to have an ability to advocate on behalf of those exporting companies, and know that we'll have a presence there, that our voice will be at the table.

This is something that we recognize very early on in our mandate as being a critical aspect of what we do as government and how we move our economy forward.

And it's also, honourable Deputy Speaker, something we've heard directly from the business community. It's something that they advocated for as well. And I think it fell on deaf ears in the former failed government, but we listened and we're taking action to bringing back that trade office in Washington, DC, and we're very happy about that.

Now, Honourable Speaker, I think it's also very important for us to understand some of the motives behind these tariffs that Donald Trump and the White House appear to be bringing in.

Now we understand the tariffs as a tax on exports from Canada going into the United States, that are paid by American businesses who are purchasing those goods from Canadians. And one of the motivations we've heard directly from Donald Trump—President Trump—is that the motivation is to help to improve and increase some of the manufacturing capacity in the United States of America. Manufacturing is a key aspect of the tariff plan as it comes directly from what Donald Trump has said.

Now the—I understand that course of action, that line of thinking, and we also understand here or have

early—understood very early on the importance of having manufacturing capacity here in Canada and here in Manitoba. So that has been a very strong focus of ours, is how do we increase our manufacturing capacity and how do we make sure that we improve the outlooks for Manitobans who want to work in the manufacturing sector?

And so you've seen already—Manitobans have seen already—the strong actions we want to take and we have taken to increase our manufacturing capacity.

Already in this year, we've already helped to support the NFI Group and their All-Canadian Build project. This means that they are moving manufacturing resources from the United States and putting them right here in Manitoba, in Winnipeg, to employ more Canadians, more Manitobans, to do the manufacturing work that's going to set us up for success in the future.

That's how we support our manufacturing sector here without the need of tariffs, doing it by working together, by investing in Manitoba businesses so that they can succeed. And when they succeed, we all succeed.

We also make strong and strategic investments in another important sector in Manitoba: aerospace. We've invested into the StandardAero project. That means that more Manitobans are going to be helping to make and build aircraft and rebuild aircraft using their skills, training them up, using their talent, knowledge and making sure that they have the experience to be best in class. To manufacture some of the very high-tech equipment and manufacturing products that are going to enable them to have the business, the tools they need to succeed. And also giving Manitobans the skills for success in their career, and at the same time, giving them family-supporting jobs.

This is the benefit of having manufacturing right here in our jurisdiction, right here in Manitoba, and we're very proud of those actions that we've taken. Very proud of the fact that we're getting more Manitobans to work, with more good jobs.

Now, honourable Deputy Speaker, we understand that these tariff threats is still hanging over our heads by the White House and by President Trump. And we know that when we conquer, when we—and only way to conquer these serious challenges is by doing so together—together.

Manitobans are not facing this challenge alone; we're facing them as a country, all provinces and territories. And so we join other provinces and territories

and the federal government in taking a unified and united approach with dealing with this tariff threat.

We—and we have, our government, led by the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and I have had played a role in being in those conversations with federal and territorial and provincial ministers in discussing how we, with a united front, combat and respond to the tariffs.

* (15:30)

First, I'll point to the fact that we've been working in a very serious and concerted effort on our approach to internal trade. And internal trade: we're doing some very serious work, very ambitious work. I think something that we haven't seen the united front in many, many years.

And so, on that effort, we're very happy to continue to work towards improving and continuing to be a leader on that front. As members across the aisle and Manitobans would know, we are a leader in terms of our approach to free trade and having the least amount of exceptions to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement.

Now, what that means, that we want to continue to improve our efforts on labour mobility. We want to continue to improve our ability to get goods across the border and have products move across coast to coast to coast. It means that we want to reduce the number of exceptions. It means that we want to have some mutual understanding and agreements with other jurisdictions. It also means that, ultimately, we want to get more Manitobans to work and have our economy reach its highest and fullest potential. This is what we seek to do as our government.

And the reason we seek to do that is so that we know we can protect ourselves from this tariff threat. That's our motivation, an urgent motivation, but we understand there are benefits to Canadians from all walks of life, as we work together. There are benefits in Canadians in the tech sector, in the aerospace sector, in the transportation sector, in the critical minerals sector, in the agricultural sector. And that's one of the reasons why we stay squarely focused on how do we improve their lives and their economic status? By ensuring that we do so with a single voice, with a concerted effort.

So I'd like to thank our Premier for taking the leadership role and being a voice of reason and calm and integrity on that federal table, ensuring that Manitobans are going to be voices—Manitobans' voices are going to be heard. And I'm glad for that.

I also want to touch on a very urgent threat that we're seeing now, is the threat of tariffs on steel and aluminum products. And we know that we have Gerdau steel here in Selkirk, which is a main manufacturer here in Manitoba. And so I've spoken with Vin and with other folks from Gerdau and we know the impact that it potentially could have here.

And so my message to them is, very seriously know that your provincial government has your back. And I want to ensure those folks that we're going to be continuing to work with you. The conversations have already begun, and will—conversations will continue, to understand how we can support that sector as it—as the threat of tariffs and the reality of tariffs unfolds in the steel and in aluminum sector.

I also know that, you know, this issue has been faced by that sector already. In the past, Donald Trump has put on tariffs on steel for Canadian manufacturers in the past. And so we know that you've been through this before. And that gives us—confident that you will tackle this again. And you'll not only tackle this, you'll maintain work force and you'll become stronger through this again. And so we are fully optimistic that we'll be able to weather any economic storm and that we'll do so by working together.

I also want to say that when it comes to tariffs, we also understand the US tariff is a real threat, but also, we know that tariffs are coming from other places around the world too. Mainly the tariffs from China, posed on canola and pork producers. Now this is a real impact to our agricultural system. And so our government takes this seriously as well. And we continue to work with folks from the Canadian canola council and making sure that we connect with canola growers here in Manitoba, as well as the pork association and making sure that we hear their voices and we can continue to advocate to them.

And so our message is very clear: that in the face of these tariffs, we're asking the federal government to make sure that they are there to support these producers who are going to be impacted by tariffs.

We continue—happy to be working with the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kostyshyn) on these files and ensuring that Manitoba's producers' voices are heard, and the industry's voices are heard. And finding ways to diversify our canola markets into new markets, new segments, within our country. And finding ways to provide support for the—that industry, that might be facing the challenge due these additional tariffs that may be put

on. But at the same time continuing to advocate for more supports for those who are directly impacted and asking for those supports and advocating for those supports to the federal government on behalf of producers here at home.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I also want to mention the very important issue around critical minerals. And as we heard the, you know, rhetoric and the talk directly come from Donald Trump when it comes to the tariffs and the 25 per cent tariff on goods, 10 per cent tariff on energy, which includes critical minerals, I think it talks a little bit about how his administration thinks of tariffs, and the aspects of its impact on the United States economy.

And it's very significant that President Trump highlighted energy as a lower tariff level, at 10 per cent. And I think that's notable because it signals an area where the American President knows that they are vulnerable, and it also signals an area where Canada is strong when it comes to our energy resources, when it comes to our critical mineral and mining resources.

You know, we're very happy to have a wealth of critical minerals here in Manitoba, and in fact some of the best geology anywhere in the country. You know, from southwest Manitoba, with potential helium and potash and lithium deposits; and southeast Manitoba as well, with lithium and cesium and a variety of other minerals; to northern Manitoba and the world-renowned nickel belt, to the gold, to zinc and copper.

These are minerals that the world needs. These are minerals that Manitoba has. And so that's why we take a very serious and concerted effort to make sure that we're doing right by having the right approach to accessing those minerals.

And so that critical mineral strategy that I was happy to present on behalf of our government last fall enables us to do that in the right way, but doing so in a way that respects environmental standards; by doing so in a way that works in collaboration with First Nations and the MMF; that works to put Manitobans to work, and increase and enhance our work force; to do so in a way that works for the business community by speeding up and shortening their length of time to accessing permits and other requirements to get projects off the ground; and ultimately grows and benefits our economy.

On top of that, honourable Deputy Speaker, we want to add in additional avenues to benefit from those mining in minerals before it leaves our jurisdic-

tion. That means, how do we add more processing capacity? How do we increase the shipping capacity and put more Manitobans to work for every critical mineral, every mineral that is explored and is mined here in Manitoba? This is our goal.

And this is significant leverage in our discussion, in our trade discussions with the United States, because they know the importance of the critical minerals that exist here in Canada and specifically in Manitoba, but also because it enables us to use that as leverage for those discussions. And having that leverage is going to be critically important as we go into the renegotiation of CUSMA.

And as that process unfolds over the next year, year and a half, we know that we need to be a strong, united jurisdiction, using our advantages to lead us in that negotiation, our advantages like our energy sector, like our critical minerals; but also understanding that one of our greatest advantages is our unity, our unity as a country.

And so I couldn't be more proud to see that Canadian flag out in front of the Manitoba Legislature. I couldn't be more proud to have a team that is united around standing up for Manitobans and standing up for Canadians, and a team that is proud to get our elbows up when we need to; a team that is proud, honourable Deputy Speaker, to ensure that we fight for Canadians, we fight for Manitobans and we fight to protect our jobs here each and every day.

And as we continue to advocate for Manitobans' good jobs, whether that's at the federal level or at the international level, we will keep up that fight and we'll keep protecting jobs here each and every day for Manitobans, and I'm proud to do that work alongside all of my colleagues here.

Thank you very much, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): It's a pleasure to put a few words on the record this afternoon regarding this government motion—not a pleasure in terms of the topic that we have to discuss. I don't think any of us a year ago could have imagined the situation that we find ourselves in when it comes to the relationship between our two countries.

* (15:40)

I've often heard it said in this House, from members of all sides of the House regardless of political parties, about the strength of our relationship when it comes to our American neighbours, and I think we all have believed that and valued that for many years, and

I don't think it's ever really been an issue, honourable Deputy Speaker.

I mentioned in my private member's statement earlier today that I had the opportunity—up until the summer of last year—at a meeting in Columbus, Ohio, where I stepped down from the position of co-chair of the Canada-US Midwest relations committee, which is part of the Council of State Governments, served on that committee for about 10 years with three different co-chairs—American co-chairs—and always found that a valuable experience.

Not that there wasn't disagreements; there were often disagreements, country-of-origin labelling being one that comes to mind quickly, where we ended up going to the national CSG to push for a resolution—that passed—that was against the country-of-origin labelling, and we were able to come to, with the help of many Midwestern states—a common front to bring to the US administration at the national level at that time.

And as I mentioned, I don't think, even in those disagreements or disputes, that I ever felt from the committee members—and it's a fairly large committee made up of representatives from the Midwestern states, about 13 to 14 states and then two or three of the Midwestern provinces—ever felt that the relationship was in jeopardy. There was always respect between committee members; there was always a recognition that the dispute that we were having at the time wouldn't in any way imperil the relationship long term.

And yet here we are, where Canadians are booing the national anthem at sporting events. Canadians feel anger; Canadians feel disappointment. I think Americans largely feel confusion about how it is that we got to this point. Many of them don't understand the impact of the tariffs, and most of them don't understand the comments from President Donald Trump in regards to Canada becoming the 51st state.

Of course, as that started off, many Canadians and Americans, I think, wrote that off as a joke; that it wasn't serious; that it's just something that the President said because he sometimes says a lot of things that people can't understand and don't seem to be particularly serious.

But as time went on, it became clearer that there was some seriousness behind his comments. The reference to—and I don't spend a lot of time in this House defending Prime Minister—I don't think he's resigned today, so I think he's still the Prime Minister—Justin Trudeau—but the comments by President Trump

referring to Prime Minister Trudeau as the governor of Canada were insulting. They're wrong and they are not becoming of the leader of the free world.

And so this crosses party lines; it's not a partisan issue. This is about the dignity and the sovereignty of Canada, and we've seen now, over the last number of weeks, a surge in Canadian pride—not that that pride had never been there—but sometimes it takes the threat by others for that surge of pride to take place, and we have seen that.

The—and this was mentioned by my colleague from Springfield—the rationale early on for the tariffs by the Trump administration was regarding fentanyl and border security, and I noted that the current government, the Premier (Mr. Kinew), responded to that by putting conservation officers on the border. Not particularly, I think, a great long-term solution, but I agree with him in one sense: he said at that time, what is the harm of strengthening our border? Even if the rationale of fentanyl crossing from Canada into the US is not true in terms of a large quantity, what is the harm of strengthening our border?

And I actually agreed with that comment from the Premier (Mr. Kinew). There is no harm in strengthening the US-Canadian border from either illegal crossings or the drug trade. Even if using conservation officers isn't a great long-term solution, the actual motivation for doing so wasn't wrong.

Problem, of course, is that it was never, seemingly, the actual issue. And, of course, Trump administration has changed the rationale for the tariff now several times since then and vacillated between it being an issue of a trade imbalance with the Americans to an issue of the border. And nobody actually knows, really, what the reason is at this particular time, but I doubt highly that it's specifically focused around the border.

So Canadians are frustrated and Canadians are angry. My comments around my statement today were more about ensuring that that anger doesn't focus specifically on Americans. Quite apart from the White House or officials in the White House, that anger is probably quite justifiable. But Americans, generally, I think, don't feel that Canada is a threat. I think they value the relationship with Canadians.

One of the things I've heard from those who've been talking to Americans in the last month or two is that often we would go down to the US and they would sometimes make fun of us because Canadians

would always say sorry about everything. That's our nature; we say sorry about everything.

I've heard from a lot of people who've been talking to Americans, some have been travelling to the States, who've said that, almost universally, Americans will say to them, we're sorry. We're sorry for what you're hearing from our President.

And it wasn't focused so much on the tariffs, because I don't think most Americans quite understand the whole tariff issue; it was regarding the issue of the 51st state. I think Americans see that is disrespectful to Canadians. And I also think that there are governors and state representatives who feel that way.

Now, members of this House on both sides might wish that they would speak up more and might say more. Governor of Tennessee, I think, did speak up, and we've heard some governors speak up on—mostly representing Democrats, but there have been some Republicans too who have expressed concern.

We wish that they would speak up more. We all know, for political reasons, maybe why they aren't speaking up more, but I also think that that's a relatively time-limited thing, that we often talk about the Americans being in a perpetual election cycle. And let's not forget that the midterm elections will be next fall, so that is probably about 18 months away, and that means within just a few months, probably the fall of this year, those who are coming up for midterm re-election will start to look at the issues that are happening in their constituencies, and they might be more emboldened to speak out about the tariffs, which are hurting the stock market, which are not long-term beneficial for either country.

And I noticed when I quoted Ronald Reagan earlier today, even my friends on the opposite side reluctantly clapped. I think they were conflicted because they believed with the quote—[interjection]—yes, the Attorney General (Mr. Wiebe) acknowledges he agreed with the quote that Reagan was saying, but it was coming from Reagan, so it was tough. But I did appreciate that they acknowledged that, whatever they think of the American President—I, of course, like Ronald Reagan; they don't have to—but they agreed with the sentiment.

Of course, Reagan said that at the time when he was negotiating the free trade agreement with Brian Mulroney, the former Prime Minister of Canada, and he was defending the free trade agreement in America, because there were Americans who didn't believe that they should have a free trade agreement with us, and

Reagan was passionately and eloquently speaking about the importance of that free trade agreement.

So I believe strongly that most Americans value our relationship, and even as we go through this dispute for however long it lasts, I don't think that we should point the blame at the average American, who I still believe values the Canadian relationship and that that will sustain itself beyond this particular dispute.

I would also say, and now—so now I've defended Justin Trudeau; I've spoken about Ronald Reagan, and now I'm going to defend Gary Doer. So I've—now I'm going to cover all political spectrums here. And Gary Doer, when he was the premier of the province—*[interjection]*—yes. When people are wondering why I'm back here—well, they're going to find out now.

The—Gary Doer, when he was premier of this House, was very good at establishing relationships with governors in US states. It's one of the reasons, of course, he became the ambassador to the United States, because Stephen Harper, the Prime Minister at the time, saw that he was good at that.

And he still, I think, maintains those relationships, but his motto—and I don't know if he ever said it quite this strongly—but watching Gary Doer act as a premier, I think what his—what he was—his motto would have been is: engage, engage, engage. Always engage with those—particularly at the subnational level, those governors who are in those states that you're trading with, those governors who have influence in the White House, those who might be coming up for midterm elections, those who are in the Senate, those who are in the Congress, both at the state and the national level, and engage, engage, engage, because you never know when those relationships are going to become important.

So there are some now, I'm sure, who would say, stop engagement. Now, those who don't—who are deciding not to travel to the United States, I certainly understand that. Those who are deciding to buy Canadian, that's always a good thing. I think it's—we should always be talking about buying Canadian regardless, and long after this dispute is over, let's talk about buying Canadian.

* (15:50)

But I do think it's important for us, as elected officials, to continue to engage with our American counterparts, even if we feel frustrated, even if we feel they're not speaking out enough on our behalf, even if we feel that we're not getting the results that we want or that the message isn't getting to the people that it

needs to get to. Isolationism isn't going to work for the United States and it's not going to work for Canada either. And officials need to continue to engage with those American officials to try to come to a resolution on this issue.

So absolutely, Gary Doer's motto of engage, engage, engage with the American officials was the right one, and I think he proved that it was successful in a number of things and I think we need to continue to emulate that. And I would say that to all members of this House, not just to those who are in government.

And, finally, we need to continue to look for—not only other markets, and that's been described—it's been a failing of governments, successive federal governments to not do enough to ensure that we could get products to the market, other markets, and that means pipelines, yes, and that means getting minerals and other resources out of the ground, yes, and finding other markets, and maybe that means ensuring that places like Churchill or maybe Port Nelson have the ability to be more commercially viable, yes, absolutely. Because if you don't use the North, you lose it.

And a large part of this dispute, a large part of President Trump's desire to acquire Greenland, for example, or perhaps to have Canadian—Canada become part of the 51st state, is about controlling the Arctic.

No question that Russia, who's often talked about wanting to stake claim to the Arctic, continues to want to do that. And they're building icebreakers at a significant pace, but China, who now has one of the—perhaps the largest navy in the world, is also building icebreakers, and has declared itself to be a quasi-Arctic nation. China.

So perhaps the government—if the US government's concern about the Arctic is not necessarily unfounded, and that issue is one maybe that successive Canadian governments haven't taken enough steps to address. And, yes, we need to look as Manitobans in developing the Port of Churchill, potentially Port Nelson, to get economic activity going. Perhaps it's a strategic location, logistics location

As well as the federal government needs to ensure that the further northern sectors have both commerce, but also military strategic alliances as well. And that is maybe something that we can discuss and have agreements with America about protecting our Arctic. Because it used to be that that border for Canada was the most secure, because it was essentially—you couldn't navigate it.

Now that's not true. With countries like China and Russia building icebreakers and trying to stake claim to the Arctic, we see more and more that that is a vulnerable border for Canada. And we do need to take steps to secure the Arctic, to ensure that our sovereignty there is guided as well.

So I will conclude, because I know—I think we do want this motion to pass and to show that there's unanimity in the House when it comes to the tariffs that Donald Trump is looking to put in place in Canada. And I want to hear from my other colleagues as well, I know, who have great expertise on this.

But I remain very confident in the relationship between Canada and the US. The decade that I spent engaging with Americans in the Midwest gave me the impression—and more than an impression—an indelible belief, that Americans who are living in Minnesota, in North Dakota, in South Dakota, and in Kansas and in Iowa: that they truly do value the relationship that we have. There are family relationships, there are sporting relationships, there are, of course, economic relationships, there are cultural relationships. And I believe that those will outlast the disputes that we are having now and today, with the current administration. And we need to remember that. Because we don't want to lose that long-term relationship over what I hope will be a relatively short-term dispute.

So I would encourage all members to continue in the ways that they can to reach out to their friends, their contemporaries politically, in the United States: Democrats, Republicans, independents, doesn't matter. Reach out to them, continue to engage with them, remind them of the value of our relationship, to remind them of Ronald Reagan's words.

Even though it might hurt the Attorney General (Mr. Wiebe) to do that, for this one time, he can do that. If I can say good things about or defend Justin Trudeau and say good things about Gary Doer, he can quote Ronald Reagan, because it's important that all of us come together at this moment to defend the dignity and the sovereignty of our great nation.

Thank you very much, honourable Deputy Speaker.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): I'm really pleased to be able to stand up and just put a few words on the record for this important motion—resolution.

It has been an incredibly challenging time here in Canada, obviously, and I want to thank the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) for some of his words, just regarding unity and bringing people together. I know we were both on that Midwest relations com-

mittee together, and it's an important opportunity for people from across party lines to work together and talk about how we can move forward in a good way for the people that we serve.

And, certainly, that gave me the opportunity, as well, to meet with a number of folks who are from different political stripes from down south this past summer in Columbus, and it was an important opportunity, just to get different perspectives and ideas on where things are at.

And I would say that some of the relationships that I developed there have continued on, and there's a fair bit of confusion and upset around these tariffs and the strain that it's put on our relationship with our neighbours down south.

You know, I would also just speak as the special envoy for military affairs. Our shared history with the US, you know, we've stood shoulder to shoulder on battlefields with the Americans for more than a century. And in two world wars, we fought side by side: Normandy, Vimy Ridge, in liberations of the Netherlands. In Korea, we held the line at Kapyong with our American friends and allies. And we stood together in Afghanistan, as well, where Canadians paid the ultimate price as part of a NATO-led mission.

You know, we've been working with the US on a number of issues, and we have worked to fight against terrorism and build stability worldwide together. And, we have—you know, we've also been part of coalitions in the fight against ISIS, to provide air and training supports, and participated in NATO missions in Bosnia, in Kosovo, in Libya. And perhaps more notably, we've been partners in the defence of North America itself through NORAD, at 1 CAD here in Winnipeg, actually, which is the long-standing binational military agreement, and since 1958, NORAD has been a cornerstone of our collective security, you know, and we've defended this continent from threats together when a crisis unfolds in North American airspace. And that list—it goes on and on: we've bled together; we have built together and we've defended one another in times of war and crisis.

And so it's with an understanding and an appreciation of that shared history that I also say that Canadians will stand strong against threats being made by Donald Trump. You know, we won't be bullied; we will not allow the economic coercion that is going on right now to dictate our future. And we have been allies and partners, but that doesn't mean we will ever let ourselves be pushed around.

And that's why our government is moving swiftly to protect Manitoba jobs, businesses, industries from the impact of these tariffs. We are working in close co-ordination with our federal counterparts to push back against these trade barriers, ensuring that Manitoba's voice is also heard in Ottawa and in Washington, and certainly, our Premier (Mr. Kinew) has been a strong voice as part of the team of premiers who have gone to Washington to speak on this specific issue and standing together.

You know, we're already engaging directly with businesses and industry leaders who are most affected because we understand that Manitoba's economy is built on trade. And we are supporting our agriculture sector, which has long been a target of US protectionism, and working with manufacturers to safeguard supply chains that stretch across the border.

You know, we're looking at ways to strengthen made-in-Manitoba solutions so that our industries are less vulnerable to external pressures. We're also reinforcing our trade relationships beyond the United States, because while the US is our largest trading partner, they are not our only one.

* (16:00)

You know, I will say, though, I do want to make an important point, because this is all about standing together, and it's not often that I see such blatant hypocrisy in this space as last week, when members opposite truly outdid themselves in this regard. You know, they brought forward a matter of urgent public importance regarding Trump's tariffs; they stood in this Chamber to feign outrage and pretended to be the loudest voices, but let's be clear: this was not necessarily about defending Manitoba's workers or economy. I think this was about political expediency, to be quite frank, about trying to distract from the fact that their own party is compromised on this issue.

So just weeks ago, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan), a leadership hopeful, thanked Donald Trump for these tariffs. And when he was pushed on it, he stood up and he doubled down, and then he actually suggested that the foreign interference, the pressure politically, to have a Prime Minister removed, was a good thing, and was grateful for that.

And I think the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) actually spoke directly to the importance of why this should not be a partisan issue.

MLA Diljeet Brar, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

If somebody is interfering with our government or changing the way that we proceed politically, that's

an infringement on our democracy here in Canada. And that obviously was something—it was a misstep, obviously, by the MLA for Fort Whyte. But instead of apologizing, he doubled down again, which is absolutely befuddling to me and deeply troubling, to be honest. It's befuddling, but it's also troubling.

You know, I don't want to take too much more time here. I just wanted to point out how deeply disappointed I was that a member in this Chamber would stand up and put those things on the record and then double down on them. And I would hope that he would have the opportunity to reflect on what he said and how damaging that can be for unity here in Manitoba.

You know, and I will just say that I was out walking around in Bridgwater, in my constituency of Waverley, a couple of weeks ago. I ended up having a conversation with—and I'll say a long-time member of the Conservative Party. And it was a great opportunity for us to talk just about unity in general, and how he was incredibly proud right now, even though he has voted Conservative in the past, to have a strong leader like Premier—the Premier (Mr. Kinew) that we have here in Manitoba, standing up for Manitobans and bringing people together.

Yes, we talked about patriotism. We actually had a great conversation. We had a great conversation about nationalism versus patriotism, the importance of that and how nationalism is actually kind of gotten us into this mess, coming from the States. How patriotism is such an important thing, that we respect and love our country, but then we also question mistakes and push forward and become better by working together. And that doesn't mean that you have to go after other countries, put other people down outside of your own.

So what I can say today is that Manitobans can trust that, on this side of the Chamber, we will continue to take that team Canada approach, united against Trump's tariffs and this trade war that has been unfortunately brought upon us, in spite of that incredible shared history that we have with the United States.

Thank you.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain): I just want to put a few words on the record when it comes to this resolution regarding tariffs and standing firm together to look at Donald Trump's tariffs as a big issue here right now and in the world.

And the fact is we're not the only ones. We have—we see Mexico, see China now. And the fact is, you

know, I've been a financial planner back in the day since I was—since early 1990s. I remember some of the books I read over the years was about globalization, and the importance of—as the economy, how it actually evolves, and the importance that—you know, globalization is so important this day and age now.

And I also look at the policies that Donald Trump is looking at is about his immigration. And the fact is, what he wants to see by doing these tariffs—and even my colleague from Steinbach said about Ronald Reagan. I remember Ronald Reagan; I posted it on my—on Facebook about how he said that tariffs were not great. They were terrible because the fact is, it makes competition, no competition in your country; you become complacent. And as with this whole globalization, it made every country, every company in the world, very competitive.

And this is where the comment that Ronald Reagan had indicated back in the day when he was in—President in the 1980s, and I've—it resonated with me that the importance of globalization.

And it's so complicated when it comes to parts, especially for cars. We probably see parts all over the world being manufactured for—to assemble into a car, and the back—the factor here is that car could be moving back and forth between borders.

Does that mean that every time a part gets put on a vehicle and it goes to another—to the other country, does that mean 25 per cent each time it crosses? So this can be a big impact: as much as it's 25 per cent, it could be even greater than that; it could be close to 50 per cent, maybe 75 per cent, depending how many parts are integrated into our globalization economy. And so this is really concerning to me.

When he looks at policies when it comes to immigration, he wants more manufacturing to be happening in the United States. But my biggest concern about that is that it's an aging population, just like Japan. Japan found out back in the 1980s they didn't have a baby boom generation like North America had after the war; they actually had a depopulation.

And when I read a book called—recommend everybody to read this book—it's *Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Talks about how Lexus, the car: in Tokyo, when it gets manufactured in Japan, that none of the part—none of the vehicle assembly is actually touched by humans; it's all robotic.

And back in the 1980s, it's Japan that really needed the robotics because the fact is they didn't have a workforce that they needed to make sure that the

manufacturing—ramped it up. And what they had to do is they had to look at other countries to export their goods and services. Like, now, in North America, a lot of our vehicles are Japanese. It includes Toyota, it includes—actually, I found out that Subaru is made—is partly owned by Toyota—Honda, you know. So there's so many car manufacturers that are Japanese-made.

And the fact is now that the concern that I have is that, with the United States, who's going to do a lot of that work when it comes to aging population, especially if they stop immigration like they're talking about? That is a big impact. And I think when our—when we had in the past, we had a very good immigration policy.

The Speaker in the Chair

We basically knew that we get the best of the best to come to this country to actually—is that Canadian dream. And the proud that we have as Canadians is that my grandparents came from—were all immigrants from England and Ukraine. And the fact is it's important that we keep our young generations, young population to work in those factories as manufacturing.

And what I also see in the United States, more and more people are getting educated—post-secondary education. Actually, Canada has one of the highest post educations in the world right now. We're No. 1 and No. 2 when I saw different lists. And it's the opportunity here that with—even with the United States, more young people are getting the new information-age jobs. They don't want to go back to work in factories.

And so the fact is, how the whole globalization evolved was that when there was manufacturing to be done, it went to areas where there was actually a need, a desire, to actually work in a factory. And we're even seeing it in China; it's actually evolving as a advanced economy too, which we're finding that more and more manufacturing is going inland where's there's probably more cheaper labour, which is not always a good thing either. But that is why how this whole globalization had worked.

If they put tariffs on there, it's, again, it's going to make it less competitive for Americans, and I think it's going to be detrimental to North America's economy. I believe now, like we had—we missed the opportunity here with the Trudeau government when they cancelled the Energy East Pipeline.

And the interesting thing is that east energy pipeline would've been done probably by now, shipping oil—cheaper oil—from Alberta, to Quebec, so that we get a better price for our oil. Instead of going down to the

US and discounted, we could've been sending it to Quebec and the Maritimes for refinery, but instead we—the Trudeau government—I don't know whether you've had their policy—is that how many ships had come from the Middle East, and what about the carbon footprint to bring all that oil into eastern Canada?

But we also could've had the opportunity where we had the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. That oil could've been shipped to Europe—the needs. And we missed on our opportunity and that could've been an opportunity that—less reliance on the US and more reliance on Europe at this point in time.

* (16:10)

So we had a lot of missteps here and when it came that. And, you know, remember, again, when it came to 9/11, when all the—I remember that day so well. I think everybody knows that day so well when air-planes had to have started flying into airports and they shut down the whole air traffic, and many of the international flights that were coming from Europe actually landed in Gander, Newfoundland. And now there's a play; there's stories about that, how we were so welcoming for—to Americans, and now they basically saw that story as so important. And, again, there was a play that was created based on that storyline.

And the other opportunities that we had too was that I had the opportunity to, as a legislature, been to the Midwest many times, created relationships. I remember being in the Speaker's office working with the Speaker at the time, Myrna Driedger, as a Deputy Speaker, and I would go to the Council of State Governments, and my very first Council of State Governments was in Virginia, and it was in the—important of this council state government. And Williamsburg, Virginia, it's very historical place to have a conference. I remember at Christmastime, Americans, they were dressed up in traditional 1700 outfits, and basically that's called Williamsburg, and that's how it was one of the first civilizations in North America, in the US, from European—came to Williamsburg at that point.

And I remember going to the conference, and one of the—that was in 2016, just after the first time Trump got elected. And then what happened was we—the discussion that was at that conference was how we're supposed to work together with the US states as provinces better because we're not quite sure what the policy that Trump administration was going to put

forward. And we talked—they actually wanted to rewrite the NAFTA agreement at that time.

And so this is why it's so important that the second time, I guess, Trump 2.0, I was—had—the opportunity to be at the Council of State Governments in New Orleans this past December, and I remember the same concern was if Trump got in the administration, how is it going to change? And that was when the tariffs were first talked about, and had the opportunity to meet with many American legislatures there, too, to talk about how this can really impact our states, our provinces, and how we have to work together as, more importantly, as legislatures to build that relationship and continue that relationship.

Again, a majority of the Americans do not look at Canada as the enemy, do not want us to be the 51st state. I had the opportunity going down to Florida with my family for many, many years, and we actually got to know people that actually—I call our neighbours our American mom and dad because we had such a great relationship with them. And even them as being Republicans they say that, you know, we're not quite sure, of all the 300 million people that we have in north—in the United States, we had to pick this leader.

So a lot of Americans are questioning Donald Trump's intent and the concern that they have too because I think it's going to hurt us all. When it comes to uncertainty, being from the investment world, markets do not like uncertainty. And this creates a lot of uncertainty when it comes to moving forward on this. And I worry about my—about where—what direction we're really going, and we were such allies to the Americans, and my biggest concern is now is that the Americans were there for to support my grandfather's homeland of Ukraine, and now that it's almost like Trump is taking sides of Russia and we're actually—the way he's talking, we could be the Ukraine. And that's the concern that I have right now, is that what is his intent is, what is his end game with Canada? Is he going to try to cripple us economically that we come to our knees?

I think the opportunity here, now, is to show that Manitoba's open for business, and I think that this opportunity with this NDP government is that they dismantle the economic Committee of Cabinet. It's great to go out and talk about your province and you come and do business, but when you do actions like, basically, create a whole bunch of labour laws that are going to hurt when it comes to investment in this province—the message that was sent in the last budget

by the NDP government was to join a union and become a middle class.

Well, when that message was put out there by investors who want to do business in this—where we were actually attracting in our government, they have very big concerns there.

When all of a sudden, disruption of uncertainty of unions and where that is going, the concerns for a lot of businesses outside of the country who want to do investment here, or even, you know, up—even companies that are actually doing business here, when they feel that there's—the environment's not there to do business, well, they're going to go elsewhere.

I got a company—and that's why it's so important for me to come up today, because I—my represent—I represent Turtle Mountain, which actually takes up two-thirds of the province that borders to the US. And I have a lot of constituents, a lot of businesspeople, a lot of manufacturers, who send a lot of their products down to the US. And the fact is, they're concerned right now, is with the border crossing times that are reduced now to get the product over. Now with the new tariffs of 25 per cent, now we're talking about 50 per cent. We don't know what's going to be tomorrow, if it's going to be reduced.

The uncertainty is not good there, and it's not good for when you want to grow your business and you want to plan for your business. When you have uncertainty, and no matter how big you are, if you're a small business or you're a big corporation, like Apple, the uncertainty is there.

And when it comes to car manufacturers, just like I said in the beginning of my speech, the uncertainty is there. They're going to roll back what they invest. They're concerned, and when companies start—stop investing, people get concerned. If people are fear, consumer spending makes up two thirds of the economy, people stop spending, we can easily go into recession, especially with the uncertainty.

So I just want to put these few words to say how important it is that we don't need—we need basically, what, how would I put it here? We need predictability. We need to know that if you're in business, you want to know what the environment is; what is the policies that each government is going to create. And that's how you determine how you invest, and if you want to invest more into your company, or you take it out, or you reduce it, or you sell it.

That is going to be the big factor here, of the uncertainty. We need certainty when it comes to the world economy right now. And right now this President is putting a lot of uncertainty there, and a lot of people can be losing their jobs. They could be losing their value of their pensions. This is not good for—what I believe a lot of Americans voted for.

They think that now—they're questioning now why they voted for Trump here right now. They thought that this guy, you know, he would do a lot better than the last 'predministration'. But right now with uncertainty, no one knows where they're going.

So, Honourable Speaker, I'm—that's—I just wanted to put a few words about this resolution and making sure that we all come together to make sure that we stand together when it comes to Trump's tariffs.

Thank you.

The Speaker: If there are no further speakers, is the House ready for the question? [*Agreed*]

The question before the House is:

WHEREAS the tariffs by U.S. President Donald Trump threaten Canada's sovereignty and economic security; and

WHEREAS Manitoba is a powerhouse of clean hydro-electricity, critical minerals, and brilliant, hard-working people who drive innovation and prosperity; and

WHEREAS Manitobans look out for each other as it is the Manitoba way; and

WHEREAS now more than ever, the people of this province need to stick together, stand up for each other, and take decisive action to fight for Manitoban jobs, industries and resources; and

WHEREAS Manitobans are stronger standing together; and

WHEREAS Manitobans love Canada; and

WHEREAS Canada will never become the 51st state.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba stands united in defence of the province, its workers and its industries against President Donald Trump's tariff tax and threats, which threaten Canada's sovereignty and economic security.

Voice Vote

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

The Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

In my opinion, the motion has been accordingly passed.

Recorded Vote

MLA David Pankratz (Deputy Government House Leader): Recorded vote, please.

Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): Recorded vote, please.

The Speaker: A recorded vote has asked for; please call in the members.

* (16:30)

So the question before the House is the motion brought forward by the honourable Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba stands united in defence of the province, its workers and its industries against President Donald Trump's tariff tax and threats, which threaten Canada's sovereignty and economic security.

Division

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

Ayes

Asagwara, Balcaen, Bereza, Blashko, Brar, Bushie, Byram, Cable, Chen, Compton, Cook, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Ewasko, Fontaine, Goertzen, Guenter, Hiebert, Jackson, Kennedy, Khan, Kinew, King, Kostyshyn, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Loisel, Maloway, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Narth, Naylor, Nesbitt, Oxenham, Pankratz, Perchotte, Piwniuk, Redhead, Sala, Sandhu, Schmidt, Schott, Schuler, Simard, Smith, Stone, Wharton, Wiebe, Wowchuk.

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Ayes 52, Nays 0.

The Speaker: I declare the motion accordingly passed.

* * *

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): Is it the will of the House to see it 5—or call it 5 p.m.?

The Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 5 p.m.?
[Agreed]

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

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