



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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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
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>	Spruce Woods	
<i>Vacant</i>	Transcona	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory, that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated.

And just before we begin today, I'd like to remind all members, if you've got notes or cell phones on your desk to please keep them away from the microphones. Even if you have stacks of books piled too close to the microphone, it causes feedback, which makes it hard for the folks in Hansard to hear what's going on. So they would appreciate that, and so would I.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 225—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities)**

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I move, seconded by the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv), that Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

MLA Lamoureux: It is my pleasure to introduce Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities). The bill recognizes

Manitoba students' right to read and will improve Manitoba's literacy rates and better identify students who may struggle with learning disabilities.

In short, the bill requires students in grades K to 3 to be screened twice per year using assessment tools approved by the minister.

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

Bill 221—The Wildlife Amendment Act

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): I move, seconded by the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt), that Bill 221, The Wildlife Amendment Act, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Wowchuk: I rise today as a proud hunter and conservationist to introduce a bill that targets those who break the law and threaten Manitoba's protected wildlife species.

Bill 221 proposes to increase statutory fines for the illegal killing of protected species in our province. Strengthening these penalties will send a clear message to poachers that we take the conservation of our wildlife seriously in Manitoba.

It will also bring our penalties in line with those in other western provinces. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and to join me in educating Manitobans about responsible hunting practices and protecting the wildlife we hold dear to our heritage and our shared way of life.

Thank you.

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

Bill 222—The Criminal Trespassers Act and Amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Piwniuk) that Bill 222, The Criminal Trespassers Act and Amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Johnson: The Criminal Trespassers Act and Amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act will

make changes to the law governing civil claims for damages made by trespassers against occupiers of premises.

The act aims to protect property occupiers from civil liability for injuries or death of individuals ages 12 and older who trespass with the intent to commit a crime. Occupiers may still be held liable for their actions are willful or grossly disproportionate, so i.e., you can't have any booby traps on your property.

The act amends The Limitations Act to pause the limitation period for claims against occupiers until any related criminal charges are resolved.

The act extends the limited duty of care provisions to all individuals age 12 or older who enter the premises without permission; and the legislative changes will align Manitoba's approaches with other provinces such as Alberta, which have implemented similar measures to protect property owners from liability involving criminal trespassing.

This bill balances the right of property owners while preventing and denouncing vigilant attacks like actions.

And, Mr. Speaker, if you offer me a little bit of latitude, I wish to wish Denise Agbrall [*phonetic*] a happy 83rd birthday. She continues to faithfully serve our great Legislature from 269.

The Speaker: Order, please.

I would once again remind members to use the correct pronouns. It's Honourable Speaker, not Mr. Speaker.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Justice First Report

MLA David Pankratz (Chairperson): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the first report of the Standing Committee on Justice.

* (13:40)

The Speaker: Tabling of report.

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Your—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Justice presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on March 25, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 2)** – *The Provincial Court Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour provinciale*
- **Bill (No. 5)** – *The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Impaired Driving Measures) / Loi modifiant le Code de la route (mesures en cas d'infractions de conduite avec facultés affaiblies)*
- **Bill (No. 31)** – *The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act (Various Acts Amended) / Loi sur les instruments de contrôle de biens-fonds visant des épiceries et des supermarchés (modification de diverses lois)*
- **Bill (No. 42)** – *The Buy Canadian Act (Government Purchases Act Amended) / Loi sur l'achat au Canada (modification de la Loi sur les achats du gouvernement)*

Committee Membership

- Mr. BALCAEN
- Mr. GUENTER
- Hon. Min. NAYLOR
- Mr. OXENHAM
- MLA PANKRATZ
- Hon. Mr. WIEBE

Your Committee elected MLA PANKRATZ as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected Mr. OXENHAM as the Vice-Chairperson.

Substitutions received during Committee proceedings:

- Hon. Min. SANDHU for Hon. Mr. WIEBE

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record

- MLA LAMOUREUX

Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following three presentations on **Bill (No. 2)** – The Provincial Court Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour provinciale:*

Susan Dawes, Provincial Judges' Association of Manitoba

David Grant, Private citizen

Cory Hoes, Private citizen

*Your Committee heard the following four presentations on **Bill (No. 5) – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Impaired Driving Measures)** / Loi modifiant le Code de la route (mesures en cas d'infractions de conduite avec facultés affaiblies):*

David Grant, Private citizen

Karen Reimer, Private citizen

Ida Marie Poitras, Private citizen

Garth Steek, Private citizen

Written Submissions

*Your Committee received the following one written submission on **Bill (No. 5) – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Impaired Driving Measures)** / Loi modifiant le Code de la route (mesures en cas d'infractions de conduite avec facultés affaiblies):*

Tanya Hansen Pratt, MADD Canada

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 2) – The Provincial Court Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour provinciale**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 5) – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Impaired Driving Measures) / Loi modifiant le Code de la route (mesures en cas d'infractions de conduite avec facultés affaiblies)**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill with the following amendments:

THAT Clause 7(3) of the Bill be amended in the proposed subsection 264(1.2.3) by adding "unrelated" after "two".

THAT Clause 8 of the Bill be amended in the proposed subsection 264.1(2) by adding "unrelated" after "two".

- **Bill (No. 31) – The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act (Various Acts Amended) / Loi sur les instruments de contrôle de biens-fonds visant des épiceries et des supermarchés (modification de diverses lois)**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 42) – The Buy Canadian Act (Government Purchases Act Amended) / Loi sur l'achat au Canada (modification de la Loi sur les achats du gouvernement)**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

MLA Pankratz: Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for McPhillips (MLA Devgan), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

(Continued)

Bill 222–The Criminal Trespassers Act and Amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act

(Continued)

The Speaker: We just have to go back a step, because the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson) carried on a little after his introduction. We neglected—as in I neglected—to see if it's the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion.

So is it the pleasure of the House to adopt The Criminal Trespassers Act and Amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act?

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

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: In accordance with section 28.1 of The Auditor General Act, I'm tabling the following Auditor General's reports: Preparing Incarcerating Individuals for Transition from Custody and Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

National Procurement Month

Hon. Mintu Sandhu (Minister of Public Service Delivery): I rise today to highlight a key aspect of our economy and public service: procurement. March is National Procurement Month, a time to recognize the importance of what we buy, how we buy it and the procurement professionals who ensure fairness and transparency for both the vendors we work with and the taxpayers we serve. It's an opportunity to acknowledge the vital contributions of procurement professionals across the Manitoba government, the broader public sector and beyond.

This month serves as a reminder of our critical procurement plays in the effective functioning of our government and the advancement of our economy. Procurement is much more than simply acquiring goods and services; it is a powerful driver of economy growth. Whether it is securing materials for infra-

structure development or acquiring services to deliver essential public services, procurement is fundamental to government operations.

Here in Manitoba, we treat procurement as policy in action. This is how we uphold our commitments to climate action, support diverse-owned businesses, advance truth and reconciliation and build resilient supply chains that do not rely on any single trade partner.

Honourable Speaker, we recognize procurement month; it is important to address the challenges we are facing due to recent actions by the US Trump administration. In response to these economic pressures, our government introduced Bill 42, The Buy Canadian Act, which prioritizes the procurement of Canadian-made goods and services. This is a crucial step in supporting local businesses and strengthening our economy in the face of external pressures.

The current economic climate highlights the importance of being mindful not only of the impact our purchasing decisions have, but also of how our commitment to fairness and transparency ensures that the Manitoba government remains a preferred buyer for businesses across Canada and internationally.

Manitoba is bringing public sector organizations together to boost efficiency and value. This approach focused on collaboration, not competition. By using a modern category management approach, Manitoba is moving beyond simple buying. We study markets, understand needs and align procurement with our strategic goals and showcasing the public sector innovation Canada needs.

The Department of Public Service Delivery is home to our Procurement and Supply Chain Division, which sets government-wide procurement policy, collaboration with other broader public sectors to meet shared needs and supports best practices across the public sector through a centre of excellence. We also have a procurement professional in teams across government, including Transportation and Infrastructure, Health, Communications, Engagement and division and many others, who work tirelessly to meet the unique needs of goods, services and construction across government.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank exceptional procurement staff across the government, particularly our team with the Department of Public Service Delivery. Their dedication, professionalism and hard work ensure that our procurement processes

are not only efficient and timely, but also 'intractful'—impactful and aligned with our broader goals.

Today in the gallery, we have with us Paris Frangkoulis, assistant deputy minister from the Procurement and Supply Chain Division, along with his team. Honourable Speaker, I also like—I ask all members to join me in recognizing and appreciating the important work they do every day for Manitobans.

Honourable Speaker, I would also like to add the names of my guests to the Hansard.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Munjir Ahmed, Alfred Akuamoah, Shorya Angrish, Ju Auditor, Sikander Billing, Adam Brooke, Paris Frangkoulis, Jim Fraser, Sarabjit Kaur, Kim Kostenlyk, Meytal Lavy, Alena Lukes, Tamanna Punia, Greg Reader, Dhruv Sharma, Shabbir Shawkut, Marlon Watts.

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): It's an honour to celebrate procurement month.

More than ever, it's important that governments buy local and buy Canadian. It was our previous PC government that signed on to the New West trade partnership with our neighbours to the west: Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, strengthening interprovincial ties. And it's important that we continue this work.

Procurement month is also a time to recognize and appreciate the invaluable contributions of procurement professionals across Canada. Procurement professionals are the unsung heroes behind the seamless operation of public services.

Procurement is the backbone of public organizations. It ensures that essential goods and services are acquired efficiently and strategically, allowing organizations to operate smoothly and deliver vital services to the public.

Procurement professionals are responsible for the meticulous planning, negotiation and management of resources that keep organizations running effectively. And because of these hard-working people, health-care facilities remain stocked, schools receive necessary resources and cities continue to grow efficiently.

The role of procurement goes beyond just purchasing; it involves strategic decision making that aligns with long-term organizational goals. Procurement professionals analyze market trends, assess risks and establish procurement plans that promote efficiency and sustainability. Their work ensures that public organizations remain resilient and adaptable to ever-evolving challenges.

Beyond cost savings, procurement professionals focus on maximizing value. Their decisions impact the financial health and operational success of organizations to get the best possible value while maintaining high standards of service and efficiency.

Procurement month is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the impact of procurement professionals. They are the innovators, problem solvers and leaders who empower the future of our cities, institutions and essential services. Their commitment to excellence upholds the highest standards of procurement practices.

And, on behalf of all those who benefit from your work, I extend my sincere gratitude. Thank you for your dedication, expertise and unwavering commitment to efficiency and ethical procurement. Your contributions are invaluable, and today we honour and celebrate you.

Thank you.

* (13:50)

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Order, please.

Prior to moving on, there's some guests in the gallery I'd like to introduce. We have seated in the public gallery, from École Margaret-Underhill, 65 students under the direction of Jordyn White. The group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Transcona.

Further, I'd like to draw attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from the Mining Association of Manitoba Incorporated: Jason Colomb, Stacy Kennedy, Chad Vinkle and Landice Yestrau, who are the guests of the honourable Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, the honourable member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses).

We welcome you here today.

And I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the loge to my right where we have with us today Drew Caldwell, former MLA for Brandon East.

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

* * *

Now, just to make it official, today is a very big day for an esteemed member of our Legislative Assembly family. Denise Abgrall is celebrating her 83rd birthday. Denise has served at the Legislative

Assembly since 1989. Thus, over one third of her life has been spent at the Assembly.

It goes without saying that Denise has seen many changes over the years. And if you leave through the east message room, please wish her a happy birthday.

Happy Birthday was sung.

The Speaker: And for future reference, there's no singing in the Chamber.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Rabbi Yosef Benarroch

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Rabbi Yosef Benarroch, a respected leader in Winnipeg's vibrant Jewish community and a valued contributor to the broader social fabric of our city and province and someone I'm honoured to call my dear friend.

Born in Morocco, Rabbi Benarroch came to Winnipeg as a young child. His family exemplifies the very best of Manitoba: hard working, community minded and deeply committed to building a better future.

Rabbi Benarroch's journey began in Winnipeg's public and Hebrew school systems before he pursued degrees in physical education and teaching at the University of Manitoba. However, his true calling emerged while studying at a religious seminary in Israel where he also met his wife, Elana. Together, they have raised a beautiful family of seven children.

Honourable Speaker, Rabbi Benarroch's warmth, energy and unwavering dedication to others have made him a unifying force within the Jewish community and a cherished friend to many of all faiths. His ability to connect with individuals of all ages, his deep compassion and his tireless work to strengthen our society have left a lasting impact.

His commitment to his congregation has required great personal sacrifice, as he has spent many years away from his family in Israel to serve the community in Winnipeg.

With mixed emotions, I inform this Chamber that Rabbi Benarroch will be retiring as the spiritual leader of Herzlia at the end of June.

I ask members of this Chamber to join me in extending our heartfelt gratitude to Rabbi Benarroch for his lifetime of service and contributions to our community, city and province.

We wish him a well-earned retirement, knowing that he is deeply respected, greatly loved and will be profoundly missed.

He joins us in the gallery today, with members of his family, and I'd like to add their names to Hansard.

Kim Bailey, Al Benarroch, Michael Benarroch, Yosef Benarroch

McKiya Mazur

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Honourable Speaker, I rise this afternoon to bring attention to this House to an inspiring athlete from my constituency who's already attracting attention among television viewers right across Canada.

McKiya Mazur has undertaken what she describes as the most incredible and transformative experience while competing in the CBC reality series Canada's Ultimate Challenge. And now this 22-year-old from Angusville, in the Russell area, is putting her passion and background as a hockey player and triathlete to great use in the TV competition that has challenged her like nothing else before.

On Canada's Ultimate Challenge, McKiya is part of a team with three other athletes, travelling from coast to coast through one gruelling challenge after another in a sort of cross-country obstacle course. Competing against four other teams, she has tested not only her physical conditioning but her mental toughness and skills in teamwork.

And teamwork is what McKiya knows well, having played four seasons of hockey with the St. Francis Xavier University X-Women in Nova Scotia. She now coaches and trains athletes in part through an online business, while using social media to encourage healthy and active living.

McKiya might yet win Canada's Ultimate Challenge. But she is already a winner in pushing past her limits, empowering female athletes to become the best they can be, and as she has told the Crossroads This Week newspaper, experiencing our beautiful country in such a special way.

On behalf of the residents across the constituency, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating McKiya Mazur who is watching virtually with her family.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Two-Spirit and Trans Day of Visibility

Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park): Honourable Speaker, I stand before you as a proud and joyous transgender man.

Monday, March 31, marks the first Two-Spirit and Transgender Day of Visibility here in Manitoba.

In a world facing alarming rates of violence against trans individuals, especially BIPOC folk, we urgently need peace. All we desire is to live authentically, in peace, without fear of harm for simply being ourselves. Here in Manitoba, gender-diverse individuals can find some comfort knowing that your NDP government stands firmly against any efforts to erase or dehumanize transgender people.

The Two-Spirit and Transgender Day of Visibility Act affirms our existence, recognizing that two-spirit and trans individuals have always been a part of our history. Despite historical attempts to erase us from public life, our existence shines as bright as the stars, and just like those stars, transgender people will continue to shine on well into the future.

In living authentically, trans individuals find joy, a joy that is deeply human and profoundly powerful. This joy is an act of resistance, a declaration that we will not be defined by others' limitations. In our happiness we find peace, and in our peace we find strength.

Honourable Speaker, Manitoba stands as a beacon of hope for diversity. The world watches as trained physicians seek to practise gender-affirming care right here in our province. I'm immensely proud of my team and incredibly proud of our Health Minister.

To any two-spirit and trans individuals watching, especially the young ones, we see you, we love you, we lift you up and you are worthy of being the best version of yourself. You are genuine and you are valid.

Miigwech. Merci. Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Tannis Saunders and Diedrich and Sara Unger

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Normally I'm excited to share the great stories of La Vérendrye, but today I rise following a difficult weekend in my hometown. This past weekend, the community of Vita and surrounding area has seen the loss of three community members within 24 hours, as the result of two tragic car accidents.

* (14:00)

Early Saturday morning, Tannis Saunders, a resident of Sundown, was taken far too soon at age 46 as the result of a single vehicle rollover. Tannis was a daughter, sister, mother, grandmother and friend to many.

Only 24 hours later, tragedy struck again west of Zhoda. Local community members and active farmers, Diedrich and Sara Unger, were tragically taken from their family as a result of a head-on collision. Their adult son survived the accident and was transported to hospital by STARS air ambulance in critical condition, along with the driver of the other vehicle. Diedrich and Sara have been dedicated community members, active farmers, loving grandparents and passionate foster parents.

Out of all this weekend's tragedy, our first responders and specifically the community volunteer firefighters deserve tremendous recognition. These heroic members of our community are true heroes. Not only did they perform an unimaginable task, but these tragic victims in a small town are often friends, neighbours and even family.

I want the families of Tannis and the Ungers, along with all the first responders, to know that the community and myself are here for you. We recognize how difficult these days will be and we are praying for you to find peace and comfort.

Honourable Speaker, I'd like to ask for a moment of silence to recognize the families lost this past weekend.

The Speaker: Is there leave for a moment of silence to recognize the loss the member spoke of? *[Agreed]*

A moment of silence was observed.

Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities Legislation

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Honourable Speaker, earlier this afternoon I had the honour of introducing Bill 225, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities). I wanted to share a bit of background on the bill.

Bill 225 will improve Manitoba's literacy rates by further identifying students who may struggle with learning disabilities.

The bill does this through tangible action by amending The Public Schools Act requiring that students from kindergarten to grade 3 be screened twice a year. These screening assessment tools would, of course, be approved by the minister responsible.

Honourable Speaker, through nearly a year of consultation, this bill was created by those working in our education system. It was created to improve Manitoba's literacy rates by not only informing educators which students are meeting their literacy goals, but also to identify students who may require additional supports.

Currently, Manitoba's 37 school divisions do not have a clear or consistent direction with respect to screening assessments for reading. This bill allows Manitoba to join the many other jurisdictions in Canada who mandate universal screening for all students.

We can learn from our neighbouring province, Ontario, as well as from Alberta and New Brunswick, who have some of the highest literacy rates in the country, and Saskatchewan has recently committed to implementing this, too.

My hope is Manitoba will do the same because this will not only help students thrive with the tools they are required to use to learn to read, but it will also help educators who do what they do best: teach.

In closing, Honourable Speaker, I have an open door to any MLA or minister, of course, who would like to have a bill briefing and I look forward to having this bill brought to second reading.

Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Death of Ashlee Shingoose Condolence to Family

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Today, Honourable Speaker, I'd like to express my heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Ashlee Shingoose and, of course, the community of St. Theresa Point. I want to express my deepest sympathies to her parents, Albert and Theresa, and I know that they must have suffered greatly since their daughter went missing, and with that uncertainty.

I could not imagine losing a child, never mind to a horrendous crime. And I hope this information provided today starts to bring some form of closure to the family and the community. And I ask the Assembly, when you see fit, Honourable Speaker, because I know that we're not able to do this during question period, but to have a moment of silence for the Shingoose family.

And I would like—I do have some questions, but I will stand down to allow the Premier (Mr. Kinew) or others from the NDP caucus to make a statement to the community and to the family.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Certainly, I think all members of this House—certainly our government—extends our condolences to the entire Shingoose family, the community of St. Theresa Point.

And certainly, I do think it's important to recognize and reflect on the fact that many, many Manitobans have been standing with that family for some time. And that family have been tremendous advocates for themselves and their community.

I want to recognize the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine), the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness (Ms. Smith) as being folks who have stood with the family, stood with families not just in recent years and months, but certainly for decades.

And this is a time for all Manitobans to reflect on how we ensure that our province is safer for all women and girls, and certainly do the work of making sure that MMIWG2S is something that we take seriously and address moving forward.

The Speaker: Just before we move on, if we could stop the clock, please.

Is there leave for a moment of silence to honour the memory of Ashlee Shingoose? *[Agreed]*

A moment of silence was observed.

Impaired Driving Law Stricter Penalties for Drivers

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, we can all agree that one impaired driver is one too many.

While many Manitobans have been affected, the family of Jordyn Reimer have made the decision to honour her memory by ensuring that laws change for the better.

During last night's committee hearing, the family noted that if someone uses a gun or a machete during a course of a violent crime, they receive a lifetime ban on possessing such items. A vehicle with an impaired driver behind the wheel is as dangerous as any gun or knife. The Reimers recommended no second chance be given to an impaired driver to kill or injure again.

Will the Premier stand with the Reimer family today and ensure impaired driving consequences are equivalent to the crime?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Honourable Speaker, certainly, our heart goes out to the family—the Reimer family. This is a tragic situation that, of course, we never want to see happen anywhere—we never want to see happen in Manitoba.

I want the House to know that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) has met with the Reimer family multiple times, and the Minister of Justice will continue to meet with the Reimer family and have very important conversations.

In addition to that, now while we recognize there's no single piece of legislation that will solve the issue of impaired driving, legislation has been brought forward that has been supported by MADD Canada and MADD Winnipeg, and that takes an immediate step to address this very important area of concern. And we hope that all members of this House—on that side of the House—will support it.

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

Mr. Ewasko: It is interesting that the Deputy Premier brings up the piece of legislation because it just took a few seconds last night for the Minister of Justice to dismiss the Reimer family's suggested amendments.

He cannot be bothered to take any of their suggestions back to the department and have them review it for potential implementation. The minister put a lot of words on the record last night condemning impaired drivers and their dangerous behaviour.

* (14:10)

What he did not do was accept any suggestion that his bill could be improved. In fact, the only amendment that the minister voted in favour were correcting minor typos, Honourable Speaker. Yes to fixing a typo, not to real consequences.

Instead of introducing new impaired drivers bill every session, as the minister said he will, can the Premier (Mr. Kinew) direct his minister to fix the legislation today?

MLA Asagwara: As I stated previously, Honourable Speaker, we—on this side of the House we recognize that no single piece of legislation is going to fundamentally fix the issue of impaired driving, but there are steps that we can take to move things in the right direction.

Bill 5 is a piece of legislation that was developed in partnership with MADD Canada, has the support of the president of MADD Winnipeg. And to correct something that the member opposite put on the record, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) has done a lot of work, working, getting legal advice and expertise to help inform what is a durable approach in terms of legislation. I think that's a really important point to understand.

I'd encourage the member opposite to not politicize this. Let's take a step in the right direction on behalf of all Manitobans and certainly on behalf of the Reimer family.

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

Eascan Automation Layoffs Due to US Tariffs

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): So then have the Deputy Premier stand in their place today, accept the amendments and move forward, at least with them to the department and bring back some recommendations.

Honourable Speaker, the Premier talks about Trump-proofing the economy, and he talks about how he's respecting—or, protecting jobs. Unfortunately for one Winnipeg-based robotics company, all the NDP talk about preparing for Trump since 2023 hasn't altered the fact that 23 employees are now without a job. Twenty-three families have lost a good-paying job, and 23 families are going to have a more difficult time meeting their financial choices as how they navigate through the new economy.

One third of robotics and custom machine manufacturers, entire workforce laid off, and not a peep from their local MLA for Wolseley. The local NDP MLA has not made a single statement or reference to this company or its workers.

Why has the NDP failed Eascan Automation and its employees, Honourable Speaker?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Honourable Speaker, our government has taken real action to ensure that we can respond to the tariffs brought forward by Donald Trump and the US administration. On that side of the House, they've taken a very concerning approach. They have members in their caucus who have thanked Donald Trump for the tariffs. They have members in their caucus who want Manitobans to become Americans.

On that side of the House, while they're thanking Donald Trump, on this side of the House we introduced a '25-26 budget led by our Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) that builds our economy better: \$3.7 billion to create jobs and to stand up infrastructure that's going to benefit Manitobans, and we're going to keep doing that work of Trump-proofing our economy.

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

Mr. Ewasko: Honourable Speaker, this minister continues to stand up, day in and day out, and makes excuses for the lack of their effort to actually improve anything in this great province of ours. The NDP's budget promised to, and I quote, bring more manufacturing jobs to Manitoba, end quote. The reality is the NDP can't even keep the current jobs in Manitoba; never mind bring new ones to us.

Eascan is just the tip of the Trump tariff iceberg. So much for supporting Manitoba small businesses. The 90-day tax deferral is more of a snake oil salesmen's solution. The Premier said he is, and I quote, engaged daily with industries that are navigating tariffs, end quote.

Why is the Premier—was he made aware of—Eascan Automation was laying off one third of its workforce due to the ongoing trade war?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, our government is focused on making our province as strong as it can be, and Trump-proofing our economy, which is why just yesterday, the Premier, the minister of business, mining, jobs and trades and the minister of natural resources were in Lynn Lake, announcing that we are standing up a gold mine, something that is going to create 450 to 600 well-paying jobs.

Our government has invested in NFI, more jobs in Manitoba, supporting a good local business. Our government is taking real steps to make sure we can respond to Trump's tariffs.

On that side of the House, they cut the economy, they damaged the health-care system—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Ewasko: Honourable Speaker, there they go again, taking credit where credit is definitely not due over there.

The budget says the NDP say, and I—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: —quote: responding to tariffs with supports for impacted businesses and workers. End quote.

One-third reduction in manufacturing jobs are gone. Honourable Speaker, 23 very high-paid, good jobs are now gone.

The Premier (Mr. Kinew) won't even rise in his place today, despite decades of legislative tradition, to even defend his own budget, Honourable Speaker.

The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure (MLA Naylor) won't rise in their place to address the layoffs in their own backyard.

Can anybody—can anyone, Honourable Speaker, on that side of the House, offer real action for Eascan Automation and its staff, or do they even see the financial struggle Manitobans are facing now that the NDP gave themselves \$15,000 increase to their front bench?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, that member has zero credibility. That member on that side of the House wants to take credit for jobs that we are making real today in Manitoba—600 jobs in Lynn Lake.

And, Honourable Speaker, I know that member opposite knows our government is doing a great job because he was at the announcement we made in Lac du Bonnet where we're building the personal-care home he refused to build for two terms of a failed PC government.

So we'll take no lessons from that member. We are building in our province. We are fixing the damage they did to health care, and we're creating great Manitoba jobs for Manitobans.

On that side of the House, they can continue to thank Trump. We're Trump-proofing our economy.

Provincial Deficit Balanced Budget Concerns

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Speaker, this Minister of Finance is collecting a billion more in taxes and revenues, \$82 million more in personal income taxes on the backs of Manitoba families, \$182 million more in education property taxes on homeowners, which is on top of the double-digit school division tax increases that Manitobans are facing.

Yet, he's still planning to run up to a \$1.9-billion deficit. Even TD and RBC economists have questioned this minister's revenue outlook.

So I ask the minister: What happens when his wishful revenue projections don't come true? How high will the deficit actually go?

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): Honourable Speaker, while the members opposite were arguing internally about whether they support Trump, whether they don't support Trump, whether they support the tariffs, whether they don't, what was this team doing? We were building a budget that is going to see the biggest capital construction plan in this province's history.

We know that now is the time to be Trump-proofing our economy. That's why that plan's going to see us building 11 schools, something members opposite never took care of, ensuring we had schools for our kids where we needed them.

We're going to be building three new PCHs, something they never touched in their time. In fact, we're building one in the backyard of their interim leader. And, of course, we're finally going to build energy infrastructure, something they didn't do for seven and a half years—not one single megawatt.

They took us backwards. We're moving us ahead. We're—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Midland, on a supplementary question.

Mrs. Stone: Had this minister actually moved forward and built the schools a year ago, like the PCs had planned and had announced, then those schools would have caused a lot—mess—less—[*interjection*]

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stone: —from their capital budget.

How is this minister going to return to balance? Is he going to raise taxes, or is he going to cut spending? [*interjection*]

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stone: Last week's budget makes it clear he has no plan to ever return to balance and all he is going to do is raise taxes on Manitoba families and grow the deficit.

The minister is spending \$2.3 billion on interest payments, all going to Wall Street and Bay Street lenders. So this minister's spending; debt, deficits and interest payments are growing.

What is this minister's plan to return to balance? Is he going to cut, or is he going to raise taxes?

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, this is coming from a party that left Manitoba with a \$2-billion hole that we need to climb out of. That's their record.

What's our record? We saw with our last report we cut that deficit by one third in this fiscal, and we're committed to that path to balance, because you know what, Honourable Speaker? On this side of the House, we know something about responsible budgeting, about fiscal sustainability. On that side of the House they left Manitobans a giant hole to climb out of.

* (14:20)

We're doing the work. We're committed to investing in health care and affordability while we balance the budget because that's what Manitobans sent us here to do. They took us backwards; we're moving us ahead.

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

Mrs. Stone: Honourable Speaker, the hypocrisy and misinformation that this minister continues to put on the record. Three-hundred-and-forty-million-dollar surplus is what the former PC government left.

Clearly, this Minister of Finance has no plans to ever return to balance. This budget is so bad, it actually included two deficits.

So I give the minister the opportunity to explain: How is he going to balance the Province's books? Will it be cutting? Will it be increasing taxes on Manitoba families?

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, one of the worst things that we saw from the members opposite during the election was that they hid the state of fiscal affairs for our province. And they did that for a very clear reason. It's because they wanted to get back into office.

We know what they did. They hid the fiscal situation to pretend to Manitobans that we were in a better position than when we were actually were. That tracks with that party. There's never transparency; there's never accountability.

On this side of the House, what can Manitobans count on? A party that's going to continue investing in health care, affordability, education while we ensure fiscal responsibility. That's what we're going to deliver, and that's why Manitobans sent us here, and that's why they sent them packing.

Compliance with Bail Conditions Penalties for Surety Breaches

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Honourable Speaker, individuals continue to offend while out on release conditions. The Kellie Verwey tragedy is the most recent occurrence of this failure of this justice system. Sureties play a crucial role in the justice system by guaranteeing that an accused individual complies with the release conditions. It is important to understand the scope of their involvement.

Honourable Speaker, will this minister provide data on how many accused individuals released on the strength of a surety have breached their conditions in the past year? Let's fix this bail reform now.

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I thank the member opposite for the question.

And it's important to remind this House that under the leadership of our Premier (Mr. Kinew) and of our Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe)—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Schmidt: —that we—our government has acted and we have implemented the National Police Federation's recommendations on bail reform.

Under the leadership of our Premier, he joined premiers across Canada, calling on the federal government to act. And we are taking—unlike members opposite, who would prefer to peddle in division, on this side of the House we are happy to work with our partners. We are working with the National Police Federation; we will work with the federal government, and we are taking action on bail reform here in Manitoba.

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

MLA Bereza: When an accused person breaches their release conditions, the surety is held responsible for failing to ensure compliance and may themselves face legal consequences.

The public must have confidence that sureties are being held accountable.

What consequences does a surety face if the accused breaches release conditions, including failing to attend court, violating terms of release or not residing at the designated address? Let's fix this bail reform here now.

MLA Schmidt: I'm very proud to stand, again, with our Premier (Mr. Kinew) and with our Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) and update the House on some of the incredible work that they have been leading on when it comes to bail reform and when it comes to public safety here in Manitoba. Public safety, which is something under the leadership of the previous failed PC government we saw get worse than ever before.

So, here in Manitoba, under the leadership of our Minister of Justice we brought back the ankle monitoring system—the ankle monitoring system that the PC government cancelled that led to less oversight on people out in our community. So when the member opposite gets up here and feigns that he has some interest in protecting Manitobans, he needs to look to his left—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Bereza: Honourary Speaker, a strongly worded letter is not going to change anything. Forfeiture courts is an important mechanism for enforcing accountability. When a surety fails to meet their obligations, the court may require the surety to pay any sums that they promised to pay if the accused breaches their release conditions. However, questions remained about how often this tool is actually used to hold sureties responsible.

I'm being heckled about somebody's death, across the way.

When will this government do something to fix this poorly—bail reform in this province today?

MLA Schmidt: I find it—thank you, Honourable Speaker. I find it very concerning that the member opposite would denigrate the actions of our Premier standing alongside every other premier in this country and writing a letter to our federal government to work with our federal government, something that the members opposite obviously know nothing about.

During their time in office, they would have rather picked fights with the federal government, refused to work with the federal government. The members opposite did absolutely nothing on bail reform, and they dare to stand up in this House and criticize the incredible work under the leadership of our Premier and our Minister of Justice. I will take absolutely no lessons from the member opposite.

On this side of the House, we are with team Canada—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Health-Care Listening Tour Health Worker Feedback

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): The NDP has hyped up its listening tour in throne speeches, budgets and at least five separate news releases. Unfortunately, front-line workers are pretty public about the fact that this tour hasn't done anything for them.

Earlier this month, the president of MAHCP told media that despite the listening tour, quote: it doesn't seem anyone is being heard.

And the Manitoba Nurses Union's white paper, released earlier this year, said regarding the tour, that, quote: these strategies have largely been ineffective.

After months of promoting this tour as the solution to health care in Manitoba, why do front-line workers say their concerns are still being ignored?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Honourable Speaker, it doesn't surprise me at all that that member stands up and devalues listening. It doesn't surprise me at all that members on that side of the House don't think it's important to go to the front lines and listen to people who provide care at the bedside of Manitobans.

They still don't get it. Manitobans sent them to that side of the House because of the way they mistreated health-care workers, and they're still saying that listening to health-care workers is a mistake.

The member for Roblin needs to get on board and understand that listening to experts and working with them is how we make health care better, and it's what our government will continue to do.

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

Mrs. Cook: Freedom of information documents, which I table, reveal that the NDP government charged taxpayers almost \$10,000 for professional video and film production on the listening tour. This means hours and hours of footage exist somewhere on the minister's hard drive, yet Manitobans, and especially the health-care workers who were supposedly being consulted, have yet to see any of it.

So if the government truly values transparency and respects the input of the front lines, will they commit today to releasing this footage? Or is the real reason they're keeping it locked away the fact that this proves that the tour was nothing more than a PR stunt, not an attempt to meaningfully listen to front-line health-care workers.

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I dare to say that this line of questioning is beneath the member opposite.

Our government making the effort to go out to the front lines and listen to health-care workers and then take steps like adding over 260 beds to our health-care system, adding 1,255 net-new health-care workers, adding millions of dollars to improving capacity on the front lines, those ideas come directly from the health-care workers we listen to.

Honourable Speaker, what do they spend money on for advertising? Huge billboards that attack the victims of a serial killer, bus benches that target trans kids. I don't think we should listen to how they want to talk to Manitobans.

On this side, we'll continue to do it—

* (14:30)

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mrs. Cook: With nearly \$10,000 worth of footage collected from these events, the NDP should have had no trouble compiling a comprehensive and detailed report on what they heard from health-care workers. Yet despite all this material, the government only released a vague five-point summary of their findings in the backgrounder to a news release.

Even worse, freedom of information documents that I'll table now reveal that the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) office produced zero documents related to the listening tour; not a single briefing note, internal report or, what we heard, document was created.

How can the Premier stand before Manitobans and claim to have listened to front-line health-care workers when their own office has absolutely nothing to show for it?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, one of the first things I heard when we started our listening tour was that they never saw a member of the previous failed PC government in their hospitals. They didn't get a visit from the Health minister, they didn't get a visit from a premier, they didn't get a visit from any member on that side of the House.

What we've been able to do as a government in just under 18 months, by listening to the front lines, is

to do the work of fixing the historic damage done by that member and members on that side of the House.

Budget 2025 invests 1.2 additional billion dollars to shrinking health care; \$770 million to respect the workers they disrespected for seven and a half years. We're going to keep doing that work, because that's what we're hearing from the front lines when we go and see them: to keep showing up.

On that side of the House—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Impaired Driving Causing Death or Bodily Harm Individuals Charged More Than Once

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Last night at committee we heard from Manitobans about Bill 5, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act. Presentations were impassioned and heartfelt and anyone who has lost a loved one to impaired driving knows the pain.

Karen Reimer, in memory of her daughter Jordyn, has become a tireless advocate for reform. The format of the committee did not allow Mrs. Reimer to have an opportunity to ask the minister a question about the effectiveness of this legislation. So, on behalf of her, I'm asking the minister if he can share with this House how many Manitoban drivers were charged with two counts of impaired, causing bodily harm or impaired, causing injury during the last decade.

The Speaker: The honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning.

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Thank you, Honourable Speaker, and I would like to take a moment to add my voice to that of the Premier and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) and our whole team and the member opposite, who has spoken on this issue many times, and extend my own personal heartfelt condolences to the Reimer family.

And the member opposite and I do agree on one thing, and that is how incredible and how much respect we have for the family of the Reimers and the way that they have taken this terrible, unfortunate tragedy and turned it into something that the community can really rally around. And we are going to work with them to ensure that what happened to Jordyn Reimer never happens again here in Manitoba.

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

Impaired Driving Legislation Effectiveness of Bill 5

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Honourable Speaker, it's shocking that the minister is unable to answer even the most basic question about his own signature bill.

The answer to Ms. Reimer's question would give Manitobans an idea about the effectiveness of Bill 5, about whether it will have a real impact or it's simply window dressing. Surely, the minister must know the answer.

Why won't he share with Manitobans? Will it—will Bill 5 impact 500 people, zero? We don't know.

The Speaker: The honourable Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care. No, sorry—the honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning.

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Thank you, Honourable Speaker. And I find it quite unfortunate that the member opposite would take the opportunity to call Bill 5 window dressing. We don't believe that any Manitobans would agree with them and would call this significant step that we have taken window dressing.

This is a step that we have worked, in collaboration with the sector, including MADD Canada and including MADD Winnipeg. We have worked with them to develop this bill and we have their support. And I will read for the House a quote from the national president of MADD Canada: We recognize that there is no one single piece of legislation that will solve impaired driving and we welcome the government taking steps to—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Impaired Driving Charges Increased Penalties When Minors Present

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Honourable Speaker, the shutters absolutely closed on the Reimer family last night. While this minister and his colleagues rejected every sentiment put forward to strengthen this bill, I remain optimistic that common sense will prevail and not politics.

In 2009, with all-party support, the government banned smoking in a motor vehicle if a child was

present, a reasonable action that protects children and ensures there are consequences.

A reasonable amendment that was put forward on Bill 5 would impose consequences if an individual is charged with impaired driving when a minor is present. Children strapped in a car seat don't have a choice, and we can make a difference today.

Will the minister now tell Manitobans that drinking and driving with children present is not only wrong but illegal—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The Honourable Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning.

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney General): As the Minister of Justice has said before, and as is recognized by MADD Canada, there is not one panacea, there's not one silver bullet that we can do as government to solve this—the problem of impaired driving.

But this is an important step, and it's one that we've taken in collaboration with the experts at MADD Canada. And it's one that our Minister of Justice has met with the Reimer family on, will continue to meet with the Reimer family on, met with them just yesterday at committee and after committee.

We know that there is nothing that we can do to bring back Jordyn Reimer. And if we could, Honourable Speaker, we would. Bill 5 is an important and excellent step, and the members opposite should get on board.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Vaccine for Shingles Absence in Budget 2025

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful and debilitating rash that can occur anywhere on your body. It typically looks like a single stripe of blisters and nearly one in three Canadians develop shingles in their lifetime. This proportion increases after 50 years of age. The virus comes from the infection that causes chicken pox and can remain dormant for many years in a person.

Why has this government not included the Shingrix vaccine, a cost-effective and preventative health-care measure in the 2025 budget?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I thank the member for that really important question and I want to reassure the member that our government is taking a look at additional vaccines. We know that there are folks, seniors in particular, who are advocating for a whole host of vaccines to be added to our formulary and to be more accessible via Pharmacare or otherwise.

Our government has taken real steps to strengthen our formulary, strengthen access to pharmaceuticals. And we'll keep doing that work and certainly we'll continue to look at shingles as being an option that we move forward.

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

Pharmacare Coverage

MLA Lamoureux: Honourable Speaker, a study in 2019 found that vaccination against shingles in Canada is an intervention that is cost-effective. In fact, the national vaccine recommendations include that all adults 50 and older should receive two doses. Each dose of the vaccine costs approximately \$150, and this is simply not affordable for many Manitobans.

Will this government commit to provide coverage for the shingles vaccine for those who are living below the poverty line or are living on a limited fixed income?

MLA Asagwara: Again, I appreciate the member's advocacy on this issue. We recognize as a government the importance of vaccines being available to the public.

I'm going to take this moment to actually, Honourable Speaker, to encourage folks to get vaccines that are available, specifically around flu and influenza.

We know that there's challenges for folks in terms of misinformation that's out there. Measles vaccine is a really important one that we want to see families use and access for their little ones, for their kids.

And so I just think it's really important for folks to work with their primary care providers to make decisions that best meet their needs.

But certainly we encourage folks to get vaccinated, especially young kids, get the measles vaccine and other vaccines as per the advice of your doctor or nurse practitioner.

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

Cost to Treat vs. Prevention Costs

MLA Lamoureux: I'd like to thank the minister for their comments and advocacy.

Over the years, my constituents have continued to push for the accessibility and affordability of the shingles shot. This is a conversation I have had on multiple occasions with our minister.

* (14:40)

Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Yukon are all examples of jurisdictions in Canada that already provide the vaccine free of cost. In Canada, the average cost to our health-care system for being hospitalized for shingles is around \$12,038 for roughly 14 days.

Does the government feel that this money could be better used on the side of prevention?

MLA Asagwara: I really appreciate that point raised by the member.

Our government takes prevention very seriously. We've made investments, and in this '25-26 budget: \$1.2 billion added to health care, \$770 million added to funding remuneration, compensation, wages for health-care workers.

And one of the most important things we can do to take a preventative approach is to make sure we have the people in our health-care system, in our communities to deliver that preventative care, which is why our government is making those investments.

I recognize there's a long way for us to go. We're talking about cleaning up the mess and fixing the damage of the failed PC government before us. But our government is doing that work and we're going to continue to lean into taking preventative approaches for Manitobans of all ages, but certainly, our seniors.

Prescription Birth Control Program Number of Manitobans that Accessed

MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo): On this side of the House, we know that reproductive health care is health care, that birth control is health care.

We also know the members opposite in the PC caucus don't agree. But despite PC leadership candidates' attempts to stigmatize and shame women for accessing this health care, our NDP government will always stand up for the reproductive rights and freedoms.

Can the Minister of Health please update the House on the success of this program and remind us why it is so important?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Honourable Speaker, I am so proud to say that since we launched our program in October, 32,000 Manitobans have accessed free birth control in our province.

Our government is committed to reproductive rights and freedoms and I'm so excited that Budget 2025 expands our coverage to include Plan B. And, of course, it was just earlier this month that PC leadership candidates said that all this program does is encourage, and I quote, poor women to be more sexually active, end quote.

Honourable Speaker, the real question is, why has no one on the PC side of the House condemned those shameful remarks? Why has the member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook), who sat by at that debate silently, said nothing to condemn those remarks? Who on that side of the House is going to join—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

**Premier's Travel on Charter Flight
Request for Independent Inquiry**

Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry): Honourable Speaker, it's not the crime; it's the cover-up.

We're seeing this with the Premier (Mr. Kinew) violating the Conflict of Interest Act, not once but twice, by accepting flights on the Bomber plane, an organization that receives provincial funding.

CBC looked into this story in September 2024. The Premier's office refused to release their records. The ombudsman had to warn the Premier that he's breaking the law. This was followed by a quote from CBC: Weeks of staffers providing inaccurate and contradictory information regarding the Premier's expenses, arguing the story wasn't worth reporting.

This then led to the Premier violating the law again in November 2024. That's three violations of Manitoba law by this Premier.

Will the Premier commit to an independent inquiry into this very sordid affair?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney General): It's unfortunate that the member for Fort Garry continues on his witch hunt and his obsession, trying to besmirch the great reputation of our Premier, a Premier who is today, Honourable Speaker, more popular than ever.

Honourable Speaker, I don't know if the member from Fort Garry has seen the most recent polls, but the

NDP's stock is rising under the leadership of our incredible Premier.

The only one who's in a conflict of interest here, Honourable Speaker, is the member for Fort Garry. And I can't wait to get into why in the—in my next answer.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Garry, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Wasyliw: When CBC began their investigation into the Premier's conflict of interest, it's clear the Premier's story didn't add up.

Online disclosures for November 2023 indicated he expensed his hotel for the Grey Cup. It was taken off the website only last week, over a year after the fact. Now, he says he's paid for it.

If you have expensed that hotel stay and then pay for it, why would you do that? That makes no sense. The Premier declined to answer questions. He refused to provide an invoice he paid to the Bombers. He even refused—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wasyliw: —to answer whether he consulted with the Manitoba Ethics Commissioner. We know he didn't.

Will the Premier order an independent inquiry so Manitobans can learn the truth?

MLA Schmidt: Here on this side of the House, including—we stand with our Premier on team Blue Bombers. We also stand with our Premier on team Canada. On this side of the House, there is no question.

The member for Fort Garry is in a—again, I mentioned, a conflict of interest. Who does the member for Fort Garry stand with? Does he stand with team Canada? I don't think so, Honourable Speaker. On his social media, the member for Fort Garry called the Canada flag outside thirsty. Shame on him; he thinks that pride is thirsty? Not even his buddy—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Schmidt: —not even his buddy, the member from Steinbach, would agree with him. They like to sit over there and buddy up.

Does the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) also think that patriotism—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Schmidt: —is thirsty?

The Speaker: The time for question period has expired, thankfully.

PETITIONS

New Neepawa Health Centre

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. *[interjection]*

Honourable Speaker, it's a great afternoon. Health Minister might even want to listen to this one.

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

The honourable member has the floor. He can pick up where he left off and stick to what's on the paper.

Mr. Ewasko: As follows:

(1) Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventative services plan, construction for the new Neepawa Health Centre is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of a CT scanner.

(2) The new hospital is being built east of Neepawa, on the north side of the Yellow Quill highway, PTH 16. It will be nearly double the size of the existing hospital and will better serve patients from this broader, western Manitoba geographic area.

(3) CT scanners are standard equipment that combine X-ray images from several angles to create detailed, three-dimensional models of structures inside the body. They perform critical diagnostic procedures that support the diagnoses and treatment of a wide range of injuries and diseases, and the new equipment will be able to complete these important scans faster and with sharper and clearer images.

The average—(4) The average wait-times for Manitobans to receive a CT scan is currently seven weeks, and there are over 14,000 patients on the wait-list to receive the diagnostic imaging procedure.

(5) The new CT scanner will reduce these wait-times as it would decrease the need for patients to travel long distances, sometimes involving overnight stays, to access the care they need.

(6) The new scanner will reduce pressure on emergency response services, who would no longer have to transport these patients, opening up appointments in other communities and allowing more people to get the care they need sooner.

(7) A CT scanner in the Neepawa Health Centre will enable further treatment and diagnoses to take place in community, reducing wait-times for patients in surrounding areas and reducing the burden of travel to other facilities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and placement of a CT scanner machine in the Neepawa Health Centre in Neepawa, Manitoba.

This petition, Honourable Speaker, is signed by Kimberly Yerex, Lacey Comptay *[phonetic]*, Marion Lebedynski and many more fine Manitobans.

* (14:50)

Thank you.

Death of Jordyn Reimer—Judicial Review Request

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) On May 1, 2022, Jordyn Reimer, 24 years of age, was killed by an impaired driver while she was acting as a designated driver.

(2) There are two people legally culpable for her death: the impaired driver and the accomplice. The driver was charged, but the second criminal, the accomplice, has not been held accountable.

(3) A concerned citizen took the keys from the impaired driver earlier in the evening to ensure he could not drive impaired. The accomplice retrieved the keys from this citizen under false pretenses and knowingly provided the impaired driver with access to the vehicle.

(4) The Winnipeg Police Service, WPS, their investigation provided adequate evidence to meet the charging standards and recommended charges be laid against the accomplice. The Crown prosecutors declined to prosecute the accomplice.

(5) The family of Jordyn Reimer has called for the prosecution of the accomplice and that the decision to not prosecute be reviewed independently.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

(6) As recent as 2022, there is precedent to refer criminal files of decisions to not proceed with prosecution to extra-provincial departments of justice for review. This was done with the Peter Nygård file,

which ultimately led to a reversal in the decision not to prosecute, and charges were laid.

(7) An out-of-province review is supported by MADD Canada, MADD Manitoba and by Manitobans.

(8) The family has exhausted every avenue within the existing system, and, in the absence of a prescribed process when a disagreement exists on charging standards, the only option is to request an independent out-of-province review.

(9) In December 2024, the WPS reported an alarming number of impaired drivers in the holiday Check Stop program. Extending criminal culpability beyond the driver to those who engage in overt actions to facilitate impaired driving will save lives.

(10) Manitobans deserve to have confidence in the provincial government and justice systems to make decisions that achieve true justice for victims and their families.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to order an out-of-province review of the prosecutor's decision to not prosecute the accomplice in the death of Jordyn Reimer.

This petition is signed by Doug Denning, Colleen Robbins, Eileen Clarke and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Funding for Outlet Channels Project

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) Since 1958, the Province of Manitoba has known about the potential increase in Lake Manitoba water levels due to the operation of the Portage Diversion and the necessity of increasing outflows from Lake Manitoba at these times.

(2) The Province of Manitoba commissioned studies into the control of Lake Manitoba water levels in 1958, 1973, 1978 and 2003, in addition to studies conducted after the devastating 2011 Lake Manitoba floods. In all of these studies, the residents surrounding Lake Manitoba made it known that they were not pleased with the way Lake Manitoba levels were being managed.

The level of Lake Manitoba is regulated between 810-and-a-half and 812-and-a-half feet above sea

level. In 13 of the last 18 years, lake levels has exceeded this range.

In 2011, Lake Manitoba levels reached 817 feet above sea level; on May 31, 2011, record-high water levels combined with northwest wind gusts to nearly 100 kilometres an hour caused levels to approach 820 feet above sea level, which resulted in unprecedented flooding and widespread damage to areas around Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. Previously, lakefront properties found themselves three kilometres offshore.

(5) 2011: over 7,100 people were evacuated due to Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin flooding, including over 4,000 First Nations residents. Many people did not return to their homes until years later.

Flooding on Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin is a well-known and documented occurrence. It has, for generations, cost Manitobans billions of dollars in compensation, lawsuits, lost agriculture productivity, lost economic activity and flood recovery projects, all of which has taken an incalculable social and emotional toll on its victims.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse its decision to cut the funding for the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin out-to-outlet channels project and to immediately take steps to expediate its completion.

This petition was signed by many, many Manitobans.

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) The 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.

(2) 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 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 the necessary upgrades to RTAC standard and to resurface the road once the new bridge has been completed.

This petition has been signed by M. Fehr, C. Zacharias, Abe Zacharias and many more Manitobans.

* (15:00)

Phoenix School

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I wish to present the following petition.

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 going 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 Brandon Barter, Lori Renton, Bruce Brezden and many, many other Manitobans.

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further petitions.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Honourable Speaker, could you please canvass the House for leave to allow me to swap my members' statement scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2025, with one allocated to the official opposition caucus on Thursday, May 22, 2025. For clarity, this would mean that, (1) on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, the official opposition caucus will have three member statements and I will not have one; (2) on Thursday, May 22, 2025, I will have a member statement and the official opposition caucus will have one member statement.

This agreement does not affect the allocation of member statements for the government caucus or the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliw).

The Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to allow the honourable member for Tyndall Park to swap her member statement, scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2025, with one allocated to the official opposition caucus on Thursday, May 22, 2025.

Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

BUDGET DEBATE (Third Day of Debate)

The Deputy Speaker: In accordance with our rules, the House will now resume debate on the budget motion moved by the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala), standing in the name of the honourable member for Tuxedo, who has 15—sorry, 14 minutes remaining.

MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo): Now, last day we—I ended on the cusp of telling a story, and over the past few days, I've had a little bit of time to reflect. And I've decided I'm going to save that story for another day because I want to be mindful of time, and I want to give my colleagues opportunity to also put some words on the record on this great Budget 2025 that we have here.

So moving back to more of the specifics of Budget 2025, there is a couple more things that I do want to highlight about how we're building one Manitoba.

So, again, we're building a strong, Trump-proof economy with \$3.7 billion in capital projects. We're building schools, highways, flood channels and we're building and rebuilding health care.

So we're going to build new ERs, like at the Victoria Hospital and Eriksdale communities. We're going to renovate the Children's Hospital emergency room. We're going to build a health-care centre of excellence in downtown Winnipeg; a new CancerCare Manitoba headquarters; new personal-care homes in Transcona, Lac du Bonnet and Arborg; and a mobile MRI for the North, travelling between Thompson and The Pas, which we know is going to help increase accessibility to folks that live in those areas of the province.

And we're investing in or building capacity in, and we're decreasing barriers for women's health care in Manitoba by continuing the momentum that we started with the announcement of birth control—the free birth control program—in fall 2024. And that program is making Manitoba a leader in reproductive freedom for women and gender-diverse folks here in Manitoba.

I've had many health-care professionals, as well as Tuxedo constituents, tell me how great and how impactful that program has been since it started back in February. I've even had people reach out to me from other provinces saying how excited they are that we're doing that here in Manitoba, and they wish that that was happening in their provinces.

And we're building on that. We're building more access to reproductive freedom by funding to protect safe abortion services at the Women's Health Clinic; funding to include Plan B in our free birth control program; providing a transformative investment in health care for women in menopause and perimenopause, which includes building the Mature Women's Centre at the Victoria Hospital.

Having full body autonomy, no matter your gender, is an essential foundation for every Manitoban. And women and gender-diverse folks—for health care for women and gender-diverse folks—is health care. And our NDP government is a champion for everyone to have accessible, equitable health care, and this Budget 2025 is a testament to our values in action.

So, to close, I do want to thank again the amazing work and leadership of our Minister of Finance and his team. This budget shows that in times of uncertainty, we can double down on educating Manitobans, protecting Manitobans, creating jobs for Manitobans and making life more affordable for Manitobans. And, most especially, caring for Manitobans. Together we are building one Manitoba.

Thank you.

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I'm happy to rise here this afternoon and put a few words on record with respect to the Budget 2025.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I believe that the provincial budget is a true demonstration of what governments are intending to prioritize throughout the coming years, throughout their mandate. It's an opportunity for them to put on paper and put numbers to their commitments to show Manitobans what they are truly taking seriously, and many of these ideas and concerns and issues, they come from election promises. Many of them come from ministers learning their portfolios and seeing what is important for the province of Manitoba.

And I try my best that, when a budget is introduced or a throne speech is made, to start off by recognizing what I believe are good ideas; in this case, within the budget. I think this is important, no matter which party is in government. There are always good things and bad things, things that are forgotten, things that are included in a budget, and I think it's important to recognize the good things that have been included.

So, to start off, a couple of the positive items that were included in Budget 2025 is the stance on the US. I am proud to be part of a province who is taking a strong stance on the US, who is taking a strong stance

against President Trump. We need to stand united on this, honourable Deputy Speaker, and I am very grateful that the government took a strong stance in Budget 2025.

I am also glad they have a plan for tariffs. I think that there is always more that can be done, but it was something that I was watching for with respect to this budget, and they came off—they came out strong out of the gate, and now we would like to see them put actions to their words here in Manitoba.

Another item in the budget that I particularly liked to see was the free entrance to provincial parks. I think this is so important. It's something I've spoken about in the past, here in the House too. We want to encourage Manitobans to go and visit our provincial parks, to go camping, to go hiking, to go swimming. And by making provincial parks free of charge, this enables people; it encourages people to go and use the provincial parks, honourable Deputy Speaker.

* (15:10)

I can talk about how I'm excited that extended coverage came for diabetes and birth control, in partnership with the national Pharmacare program. It's a wonderful program. I'm glad to see that the province is getting on board with it and pursuing it further. There are more things that we should be adding to the extended coverage, and I'll get more into that shortly, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Lastly, I am glad to see that Victoria Hospital is getting a—shovels in the ground is the terminology being used. I'm not sure if they're building a brand new hospital or if they're going to fix up the infrastructure that is currently there, but I'm glad to see there's movement on this. But this creates further problems with different areas and neighbouring communities, honourable Deputy Speaker.

So with my remaining time, I'd like to talk a little bit about the gaps in the budget. One thing that has been a unanimous consensus from anyone you speak to within our health-care system is morale continues to decline. We need to make tangible changes here in the province that will fix health care from coast to coast, from all—from up north to here in the city of Winnipeg, every single Manitoban deserves quality health care and to feel safe and protected that no matter where they go to receive these—this health care, that they are going to in fact receive it.

We can talk about how the wait times, they've only increased under this government. I've been a politician now under both PC government and NDP

government and it's always a back and forth. It's your fault. It's your fault. It was longer under your time. It was longer under your time. And the bottom line is, we know that health-care wait times are longer now than they were two years ago.

And I've heard from constituents directly about this, whether they've been waiting in hospital ERs, or even in health-care facilities. I received a message a couple of weeks ago on Instagram from a constituent, and they were sharing with me how in the dead of winter, they were waiting outside Dynacare for hours. Now, fortunately, this constituent is a younger individual, well-bodied. But what happens for seniors, for example, who are expected to wait outside in -20°-plus weather to be able to go in and access, in this case, Dynacare?

The wait times have only increased under this government when they promised that they would do the opposite. So I was hoping to see a little bit more of this in the budget.

We can talk about home care, honourable Deputy Speaker. Home care hasn't been very strong here in the province for years. And if you go back decades, home care was actually created to be so much more than it is today. Currently, home care often involves a person going to someone's house and helping out for 15, 20 minutes, rushing out the door, having to drive to the other side of the city.

When home care was first created, it also included things like helping homeowners with their groceries, going grocery shopping. Sometimes it included shoveling the driveway, shoveling the walkway. They used to do a whole lot more, but because our home-care workers are so stretched thin, they're being rushed from house to house. And, again, from the stories I am hearing, it's only getting worse. And the stories I'm hearing include home-care workers not even having time to show up for their shifts, having to completely skip over houses and call the residents on their way to the next appointment that they have.

We need more home-care workers. We need an investment in home care to better enable, in many cases, seniors, for example, to stay in their homes. We need to focus on home repairs, encouraging people not to be forced out of their communities where they—we know that they're going to prosper more.

A couple of other thoughts that I have heard from community groups who have reached out since the budget include the elimination of sick notes. This

wasn't even mentioned in the budget. It includes investing in team-based care; again not included.

Earlier today in question period, I talked about the shingles shot here in Manitoba. And just a few facts to put on record here, honourable Deputy Speaker. Shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful and debilitating rash that can occur anywhere on your body. And nearly one in three Canadians develop shingles in their lifetime. This proportion increases sharply after 50 years of age. It's a virus that comes from the infection that causes chicken pox and can remain dormant for many years. And the national vaccine recommendation includes that all adults 50 and older should receive two doses.

I can hear my colleague sharing that he received his two doses. And we need to make sure that we allow all Manitobans, whether—if you cannot afford it or access it, this government needs to do a better job to ensure that those who are on fixed incomes, under the poverty line, can in fact get their shingles vaccine.

This is a wonderful form of preventative care. Right now, when people have to go and be hospitalized for usually up to 14 days if they do not get the Shingrix shot and they get—if they get shingles, honourable Deputy Speaker, this ends up costing our health-care system way more than we could be saving.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, one of the biggest issues with health care for myself, personally, because it's what I hear every single day from my constituents, is how the Seven Oaks Hospital continues to be neglected under this NDP government. During the election, they stood in front of the Seven Oaks Hospital and they shouted loud and proud that they were going to open the emergency—re-open the emergency room services, and they've done nothing on it. In fact, they haven't even begun talking about it, not even preliminary plans.

They're talking about other hospitals, and that's wonderful. But that—North End, again, begins—or continues to be neglected under the government. And they can't go on one side and say they're going to do it and then just completely ignore it, not even mention it in the budget, in throne speeches.

And the hospital itself, Seven Oaks, for those who may not know, it was created to be a major hospital here in Manitoba. It has a helicopter pad right on top. It could be—when the Pope was going to be coming to Manitoba, that was going to be his hospital if he needed services at the hospital. And yet it continues to

be cut and disregarded and can't even be mentioned by the NDP in their 2025 budget?

I'm disappointed. What about my colleagues from Burrows? What about my colleagues from The Maples? They're in the North End; they're constituents; they use the Seven Oaks Hospital. Someone needs to be advocating for them.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, \$3.7 billion in capital projects, and nothing in the North End—3.7. We can talk about the schools being built, we can talk about health-care facilities being built. If we think more about seniors, here in our province—I know we've spoken about them a little bit but I want to go a little bit deeper. In Budget 2025, it has zero increase into seniors and long-term care. If you look at the budget and you go to the line into seniors and long-term care, there's a zero-dollar increase.

We need to think about day programs for seniors. Unfortunately, under the former government, day programs did go up in price. These are important programs for seniors in the province. These are programs that help get seniors out of the house, help establish socializing, help give a purpose throughout the day. And we know how important this is for a person, mentally, socially, just for your overall health and well-being. And they continue to be completely disregarded now, under both former PC and new NDP government.

We can talk about how seniors are often forced to choose between remaining in their residence and perhaps prescription medication or being able to afford a bill. We should be having conversations, for example, about cell phone bills. Let's ensure that every senior in Manitoba, if they want a cell phone, they can have an affordable plan.

Let's talk about transit. If they want to be able to take transit here in the city of Winnipeg, they shouldn't have to worry about the cost of having to go on. And this gets into the issue of safety too, which I'll get into shortly, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Another issue that is often forgotten about with respect to seniors is the topic of long-term care facilities. Often we talk about personal-care homes specifically, and that's great—we need more personal-care homes in all areas of Manitoba. But we can't forget about the other facilities as well.

We need supportive housing homes. For example, 55-plus homes, infrastructure in place for people to remain in their homes if they so choose. Currently, seniors, when they need to leave their home, whether it's for a financial reason or for specialty reasons, like

perhaps a ramp into their front door, or they can no longer do stairs, something of that such, honourable Deputy Speaker, they're often forced to move to different communities entirely. And again, this is terrible for one's social and mental well-being.

Honourable speaker, I spoke a little bit about that \$3.7 billion in capital projects, and again, nothing being in the North End. This NDP government cut the school that was to be built in Tyndall Park. I've been the representative now for Tyndall Park specifically for six years—six, seven years. Prior to that I was MLA for Burrows; there was a lot of crossover.

And I know how desperately we need a new school in Tyndall Park. Every school I visit, they have portables. They've got—what we call it hallway education now happening under this NDP government. We need a new establishment and I want to encourage this NDP government: do what's right; bring back the school that was planned to be built in Tyndall Park. It will affect hundreds and thousands of residents, not only in my community, but some of the members in the government's community as well. They need this new school, and I would encourage them to bring it back.

* (15:20)

We know that there's chronic underfunding for the University of Winnipeg. And I'm well aware that the minister is aware of this because the students who come to speak with me share with me the conversations that are occurring. Honourable Deputy Speaker, the amount of funding that is being cut from the University of Winnipeg is becoming detrimental.

If we want to see the university succeed—and I don't understand why the NDP members wouldn't want the university to succeed when I know many of them went there. Honourable Speaker, I went there myself; I did my undergrad in political science and religion and culture there; I got my master's in marriage and family therapy from the University of Winnipeg. I know many of the other members have education from the University of Winnipeg, and they are allowing the school to dwindle down.

The school desperately needs provincial funds; they need the Province to step up and ensure that programs don't continue to be cut, like English learning. That was recently cut under this NDP government. Like the women's soccer team: that was recently cut under this NDP government. These are programs that need to be coming stronger here in our inner city, in Winnipeg. The University of Winnipeg is literally in the middle of the city of Winnipeg and we're losing

control of it. We need this government to step up, do their job and protect post-secondary education here in the province.

The last thing I'd like to share on education, honourable Deputy Speaker, is with respect to international students and their health-care coverage. No—my thoughts on this has changed over the last couple days and I've been very pleasantly surprised because of question period.

I think it was just yesterday or the day prior, and I had the opportunity to ask the minister why health-care coverage was not included for international students in this budget after they campaigned on it. They campaigned, made their promises that they so do during the election, insisting that international students and their health care would be reinstated.

I can remember members of that NDP government sitting on this side not long ago yelling across the way at the PC government saying, reinstate health-care coverage for international students. And almost two years into their mandate, they haven't done it. They're barely talking about it: not even mentioned, not even the preliminary plans for it.

But I am grateful—and I don't want to take it for granted—that yesterday in question period, I asked about it, and the minister responsible said before the end of their mandate, they are going to reinstate health-care for international students. So I look forward to seeing that come to be.

Honourable Speaker, there's so much more to say. I want to talk a little bit about child welfare here in the province of Manitoba. At this moment in time, there are over 300 hard-working people who are on strike fighting for a living wage. This shouldn't even be a question. We need to do—it's a moral responsibility; it's an ethical standpoint. We need to do absolutely everything we can to protect children here in Manitoba. But instead, this government just finished cutting over 60 critical workers, just finished cutting programs where children had some shelter.

And now, there's words going around that they might end up going back to hotel rooms. Again, when this NDP government were in opposition, they yelled at the top of their lungs, saying, we would protect children in care. Then let's see it; let's see investment into it; let's see action; let's see children being uplifted out of care.

But instead, we're seeing more and more tragedy, unfortunately. We're seeing children not be protected,

not be taken care of, and I believe that the provincial government has an ethical role to play in this.

Honourable Speaker, with respect to our environment, we need goals to be established for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Someone emailed me saying we can do much better in the approach to treating the sewage in Winnipeg to reduce phosphorus going into our waterways and into Lake Winnipeg. I'm noticing the time; I only have a few more minutes, so I'm going to speak quickly through this.

With respect to justice, there's been an increase in crime. And again, I don't want to play the game that crime increases under one government or another government. I don't care who is in government. Whoever is in government has a responsibility to do what they can to improve the safety, to get rid of crime as much as possible all throughout Manitoba. But instead, we're hearing and seeing preventable accidents, honourable Deputy Speaker.

If you go into any small business in the North End, and again, I know this affects many of my colleagues in the North End, they have had recent break and enters. They have had so much theft. They have had weapons held up and used against them, honourable Deputy Speaker. There is more that we can be doing.

And this should be a round table conversation. I believe I heard one of my colleagues talk about having a non-partisan committee. I think that's a wonderful idea. Let's have a non-partisan committee and let's focus on how we can improve the safety of Manitobans.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, homelessness in the province: I remember, during the election, this government came out strong, saying that they were going to eradicate homelessness within eight years. Again, they are almost 25 per cent through those eight years—but let's just go mandate by mandate here—almost halfway through their mandate, and we aren't seeing an improvement.

What is their plan? We've seen money be spent in arguably frivolous ways. We want to be careful there, but trips to Boston: How many staff have to go to Boston? What information perhaps could have been conveyed over a Zoom call? These are all conversations that I think should be held.

But the bottom line is our homeless population is continuing to increase, and not just here in Winnipeg, but in cities like Brandon. There needs to be a better approach, and perhaps it's working more with municipalities. Perhaps it's getting the federal government,

the provincial government and the City to all come together and talk about a homelessness approach.

I believe that the minister responsible for homelessness is specifically doing a good job for the resources that she is being provided. But I think that this government is failing her a little bit, and she could be doing so much more.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, we also know EIA rates. They need to go up. We need to give people a fighting chance. Currently, EIA rates are less than the amount that a person has to pay for a single or a bachelor apartment. How can we expect someone to even get one leg up if we can't even have a place for them to reside here in the province?

These are the actions that this government needs to start to take. A lot of words being put on record, a lot of promises being made—and again, I do credit them for what they have done well in the budget—but there are a lot of gaps missing, and my hope is that they will start turning some of their rhetoric into action, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): I am so pleased to have the opportunity today to stand up and speak about this incredible budget that has been brought forward by our Minister of Finance (MLA Sala). You know, and I want to start today by telling a little story that I think really speaks to what this budget is all about, and specifically it's from when I was working as a firefighter.

So, you know, we're at work; it's a night shift. I get a call at about one in the morning, and it's pitch black outside, very dark. And we called for a check well-being at this elderly woman's home. And her family hadn't heard from her. They usually hear from her all day; at some point, they'd hear from her. So we go, we knock on the door, there's no answer. It's one in the morning, again, it's kind of eerie, dark, nobody home, so we have to break in. We break in through the front door. Still nothing. Don't hear anything in the house.

We come in, I start sort of fumbling my way through, trying to find some lights to turn on, to see what I'm going to do in this house. We're calling out, you know, firefighters—anybody home? I finally get to a bedroom. It's pitch dark, again, and so I try to find a light. So I'm, you know, feeling around, and all of a sudden—and I want to—I just want to say this—it was very quiet, kind of eerie, creaking floorboards. And from the darkness and the silence I just hear, hello, would you like some tea?

And this woman is sitting there, she's sprung up from her bed, and now she's running to the kitchen and she's putting a kettle on before I know what's going on. And she's making me tea, and the crew. And so, you know, we go in, we're like, are you okay? Your family called in, we didn't know what was going on. And she turns to us like, oh yes, yes, no I'm fine, you know, but would you like to come and have a tea?

We're at work, so we're thinking we should probably head out but, you know, the captain I was with was feeling gracious and he said, yes, yes, we'll have a tea. At one in the morning. And so we sit down with this woman at her dining room table and she loved it. You know, we sat down for 10 minutes. Conversation, tea, she got to tell her friends that she had a VIP experience with the fire department at one in the morning. She loved it.

And, you know, maybe it was sort of a VIP experience because I think, ultimately, that's what building community is about, right? And maybe it's a bit of a stretch, but it was one of these moments where I felt like, in my work, I got to really connect with somebody one-on-one.

* (15:30)

And I think that that's what this budget does, and it's about showing up and turning on the lights, I suppose; offering some reassurance. And I would also say that sometimes people don't really need the—or know that they need that support until it shows up and it's sitting there beside them making sure they're okay.

And, honourable Speaker, I would just say that I think that's exactly what this budget is about. You know, building one Manitoba, it means investing in one another in our community. It means showing up for families, for businesses or for communities, and not just when they ask, but sometimes before they would even know it.

And sometimes that looks like \$3.7 billion invested in building hospitals, schools, roads and critical infrastructure, and sometimes maybe it just looks like having a tea at one in the morning.

You know, this budget, it's bold, it's responsible, it's hopeful, and as I just said, we're investing \$3.7 billion in building hospitals and schools, roads, critical infrastructure and the very foundations, you know, that allow communities to thrive. And that's how you make that sort of idea of you're not alone a reality across this great province.

And I want to start by talking about education, and I want to thank the Minister of Education for the incredible work that they are doing in their new role, following the footsteps of our dear colleague Nello Altomare, and the incredible work that she is doing to move forward on that incredible work that he started.

You know, the—in Waverley, where I am fortunate enough to represent, we are building two new schools. That's right. Very exciting. And, you know, these schools obviously aren't just buildings, you know, they're where kids will make friends, they learn teamwork, they find out who they are. And, yes, they learn math and science and all of those other things too.

You know, and right now also, so many kids in Waverley—and I heard this at the door so often, canvassing around the neighbourhood—they're being bused to different communities, right, and I commend the school division, actually, for the incredible work that they have done in trying to work over the seven and a half years of cuts and freezes that they faced when the PCs were in power, and now they are seeing what a stable budget can do, and so promises of actual schools that go through Treasury Board and are actually processed in a reasonable and responsible way.

So, you know, we talk about these schools and how they won't be busing any more, and that means that now kids that live a couple blocks apart will have that opportunity to meet on their walk to school. Parents, when they go to pick up their kids, can talk about maybe a family barbeque, and that means building more community, right. And it's just so important to be doing that work.

So I am so incredibly proud and grateful as the MLA for Waverley, just to see our community's needs being so reflected clearly in this budget.

We also need to talk about health care. Incredibly important. You know, on doorsteps as I was canvassing around the neighbourhood, I heard the same question over and over again: What happens if something goes wrong? And with my history as a first responder, there were a lot of questions around why am I driving across town right now to get to an ER? And, unfortunately, that was due to cutting of ERs by this former government. They closed the Victoria ER. They said they had a plan. I don't think that plan ever came to fruition, obviously.

But now our government, under a Premier (Mr. Kinew), Minister of Finance (MLA Sala), Minister of Health, we're delivering. And, you know, in 2025 we will break ground on a new Victoria

emergency room. That's right. And that's—ultimately, that's peace of mind for families, that's trust restored. It's so important for the community, the growing community in south Winnipeg.

I also want to touch on the incredible work that our Minister of Housing and Addictions, Homelessness and Mental Health is doing with that Your Way Home plan, and her work with addictions and harm reduction, and the funding that we're doing to get people housed in our city as part of this budget. It is so incredibly important.

And I would actually just take a moment too to caution members opposite. I've been seeing some really harmful rhetoric and some pretty toxic language around this work that's being done to save lives, and as someone who has worked in that field, I would just encourage them to really think about the words they're using as we try to help folks, give them a hand up in their life in this budget and try to help with this scourge of opiates here in our city.

So, you know, I also think it's important for me to talk a little bit, because we're talking about one-building one Manitoba. And that also includes rural health care, as well, right? I worked as a paramedic in Virden and travelling to Russell, Minnedosa, Reston. I was out there for a while—great town.

You know, there's small towns where people take huge pride in their communities. They show up for each other. They volunteer. They coach. They make sure their neighbours are never left behind.

In Spruce Woods, for example, is a great community. I know we've got a lot of friends and support out there, as well, for the work that we're doing. And, you know, folks in those communities, they show up for each other. And what they've needed for too long is health care that shows up for them too, close to home. And that's exactly what we're delivering through this budget.

You know, this—[interjection] Yes, it's right. That's right. After seven and a half years of the PCs, unfortunately, cutting rural health care. And this budget will invest in communities, in Spruce Woods specifically, for example, and Brandon and out in the Westman.

It's really important because building one Manitoba specifically means building for everyone. You know, this budget, it invests in every corner of our province. Up north, as well, we're doing a ton of work. We're building hospitals and clinics. We're upgrading roads. We're expanding mental health services, strengthening

water systems, because that is what a responsible government looks like.

And, you know, honourable Speaker, I wasn't going to bring this up, but I have been chatting with a lot of first responders about this budget, and they were pretty disappointed with some of the words they heard from the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Piwniuk) last week, actually, who suggested that myself as a former firefighter might not have the mental horsepower to talk about payroll tax.

And so they were deeply disappointed by this. I've had quite a few emails and phone calls, actually. It's been really disappointing. Well, you know, they were disappointed. And since the member brought that up, I'm more than happy to talk briefly about payroll tax and what we're doing in this budget, and how our government is actually cutting it.

So we're raising the exemption threshold to 2 and a half million. We're increasing the point where businesses pay the full rate to \$5 million. That means over one thousand Manitoba businesses will be better off. And that is how you support small-, medium-sized business, so they can hire, they can invest, they can grow. You know, and that's how you build one Manitoba, ultimately.

And if the member for Turtle Mountain would like, I'd be happy to sort of talk about that policy a little bit more with him, maybe over a cup of tea. I could put the kettle on, as the woman did with us on our call in the middle of the night. Be happy to do that.

So, you know, one bigger idea that I think is really important to talk about that's touched on in this budget, specifically, is our democracy; it doesn't take care of itself. And the tariffs, the division, the disinformation, they really test the strength of our institutions and as special envoy for military affairs, I've seen how fragile trust can be, and how quickly it can erode when leaders stop showing up for their people.

You know, there's a historian that I really like, Timothy Snyder. And he talks about this idea that freedom isn't something you're given; it's something you build and you defend every single day.

So this budget, it builds freedom through investments and health care, through investments in education, infrastructure in communities that lift people up and create good opportunities. Because I would say real freedom, honourable Speaker, isn't about slogans, necessarily. You know, it's about Manitoban families spending less time worrying about broken systems or closed ERs or schools that were promised in the

campaign but not actually delivered through a budget, and more time maybe worrying about, I don't know like—things like how two parents are going to execute sort of a logistical masterpiece to get three kids to five different activities in one night.

Maybe I'm speaking too close to home there, but I think that it's a pretty widely held concern here in Manitoba. You know, and it's about debating about what you're going to throw on the barbecue on the weekend with your friends, or who you're going to cheer for.

And, you know, when the big things are taken care of, then those small joys can really come alive. And that's freedom, that's community, that's what we're building with this new budget.

* (15:40)

So, honourable Speaker, just to close, I'm so proud to stand here as MLA for Waverley. I'm proud to represent a community that has been heard and to be part of a government that listens and delivers. I want to thank the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and thank the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) and his incredible team for leading with vision and compassion and courage.

And, to Manitobans, we see you. You know, we hear you, we're showing up and we're doing that for you, because of the work that you're doing. And sometimes, if you'd like, even though I'm more of a coffee guy, myself, I'd love to sit down for a cup of tea.

Thank you.

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): It gives me great pleasure or—you know, standing up today, put a few words on the—honourable Deputy Speaker. Gives me pleasure to put a few words on the record and we see—and I know a lot of times, everybody wants to take credit for certain things, et cetera, and we see all the jostling going back and forth in the House.

You know, the government had a chance to go up and—to Lynn Lake yesterday, and make a big announcement on a gold mine that we really sowed the seed for a couple years ago and got through all the red tape that was created over a number of years.

And I know that the honourable member from Dauphin there, he—actually, one day, I stopped in at McDonald's and a guy came up to me and said: Boy, do you see the great job that our new minister had done on the highways in Dauphin? And I said, well, that's a couple of years ago that we got that in motion, and it finally came, you know, into being as soon as

they stepped in, and another project—but those projects are running out.

They're going to soon run out and they won't have any more of our announcements to make, so hopefully they're going to be able to either fabricate a few of their own, just like we hear about these 1,200—or nurses, or the doctors, nurses, health-care people that we never seen. And I asked one of the people in the health-care system. I said: Where are these 1,200 nurses and doctors and health-care aides, et cetera? Well, they're sure not in Prairie Mountain Health, so we kind of wait to see where that's going to come.

But, anyway, I think our member from—the MLA from Midland summed it up really well the other day when she said: tax, tax, tax, spend, spend, spend, borrow, borrow, borrow. And that seems to be the way things go when we see the, you know, NDP come in, because they've got quite a history.

The Speaker in the Chair

So today we gather in this Chamber to critically examine a budget that, on its face, boasts record figures and bold promises, but on closer inspection falls far short of addressing the real needs of rural Manitobans.

And one of the interesting things that I seen in the budget, and we do need an—you know, I'm sure the minister for natural resources and Indigenous reconciliation worked hard to get these water bombers that they talked about. However, nobody said that a water—those three water bombers would cost about \$80 million Canadian.

And also, the other thing about those water bombers is that they mentioned, oh, we're going to fight the wildfires and the zebra mussels. And I know our former minister of Environment, who is just nodding with me, saying, you know, you're absolutely right, well, they talked about the—they talked that they're going to fight wildfires and zebra mussels.

And they—[interjection] Yes, and I thought, gee, maybe these water bombers, they better really maybe spend an extra \$10 million on the bottom, because when they hit the bottom of that lake to try to scoop up those zebra mussels to dump on the inferno to get rid of them, it's liable to do a little bit of damage.

So that's one of the—and the other thing is these water bombers, there's a six-year—six-year—waiting period for them, so—

An Honourable Member: Yes, you guys should've ordered them.

Mr. Wowchuk: Oh, yes, we should, hey? You betcha.

And the Minister of Education is really kind of standing with us, because she said: I know you did a lot of good things; you guys had nine schools in the making, you know, and you put it through your budget, so now those are nine extra projects that we can take credit for. So lots of neat things here.

So the 2025 budget presented by this NDP government promises much on paper. Yet, when we compare its broken promises and fiscal recklessness with the tangible achievements of the previous Conservative government, the contrast is both stark and troubling.

Rural Manitobans have been the backbone in—of the province, and sometimes we're forgetting about in rural Manitoba. I know our MLA from Dauphin advocates really, really hard for our rural constituencies. And hoping he's going to make a couple meetings here on Thursday night, you know, to stand up for some of the things that the rural—that's really important to rural people.

Our communities, our families and our local economies depend on sound investments and infrastructure, education, health care, affordability and 'responsical' fiscal management. Yet the policies in the budget not only neglect these core needs, but actively undermine them. The figures don't lie. When the NDP toots a record capital investment of \$3.7 billion, they have simultaneously slashed essential maintenance budgets, a move that leaves rural roads, water systems in a state of rapid decay.

Under the previous Conservative PC government, targeted—[interjection] And I know the member—the MLA from Dauphin is just saying, God, I wish we could do the things that you did in the time that you were there. And he's just kind of agreeing with the things here. And I know that he stands behind a lot of our great work. But every dollar spent is translated directly into safer roads and more reliable water services.

For example, while the current administration has cut \$64 million from highway maintenance and \$104 million from water infrastructure, our government's committed the—an extra—our government had committed an extra \$120 million to upgrading these vital systems, a clear testament to the PC government's commitment to long-term sustainable growth.

And that's the difference. There's one fundamental difference in budgets that our PC government put forth, and the NDP, and that's we worked hard on economic growth, Honourable Speaker. We worked hard because that's how revenue should be generated,

with the economical growth, not the tax, tax, tax, spend, spend, spend, borrow, borrow, borrow, you know, and all those kind of things.

So let us be clear: strategic spending isn't measured by headline numbers; it's measured by quality and longevity of services delivered in Manitoba. And we worked hard to—when we brought in the New West Partnership, and that was something we were bringing. But everyone, every one of those members across the floor, voted against everything that we tried to do to take down the barriers and the—you know, on those things that were happening—take down those inter-provincial barriers. They just—they fought tooth and nail. They would pull those bills and make sure that we didn't get some of those stuff through.

But we did make some progress, and now they're going to be forced to have that interprovincial trade barriers taken down that they—the silo that they built over their 17 terrible, terrible years in government.

So those are some of the things. And a cut of \$64 million in highway maintenance, and I—when I look at that, and they say, oh, well, we brought in the gas tax holiday and then we put money in the pockets, well, they brought it back with the biggest tax increase in the history of Manitoba. The—and then they said, oh, and we're going to cut 10 per cent permanently. Well, whoopee ding, 1 cent on a litre. And then we didn't see a lot of those things come about, but it's the messaging that fools a lot of Manitobans.

But we can see that Premier (Mr. Kiewit) has dropped to second. He's going to go to third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth place as time, you know, comes along here, and we're going to actually see that.

So it's—I know that the Minister of Education, she kind of put her, you know, her hand on her forehead, saying, God, I just hope it doesn't happen as quick as it looking like it may.

Similarly, a reduction of the \$104 million in spending spells trouble for communities. Can the government honestly claim that this reallocation of funds reflects a fair and balanced approach when it sacrifices the foundations that support rural health?

Even more troubling is the budget's approach to education—and all of a sudden there's a little bit of a perk of interest here—a sector that holds the promise of a better future for our youth. And that's why we budgeted for nine new schools—nine new schools. You know, and now they're announcing 11 now coming up.

* (15:50)

But, fortunately, after those nine new schools are announced, there's going to be nine less announcements that we kind of set-sowed the seed for the NDP and they're—you know, to take credit for.

Yet it's been undermined by some shortsighted fiscal decisions. The NDP government allocated the \$700 million for new school construction. However, while building can be a welcome sight, they're not a substitute for the operational supports that keep schools running smoothly day in and day out.

Under our—

An Honourable Member: The school division taxes.

Mr. Wowchuk: Yes, that's—yes; taxes, tax, tax, tax, and we're seeing that all over Winnipeg with these huge, huge increases.

I mean, we capped and we kept the reign on those school divisions to keep it down to 2 per cent. Now they can go ahead—hey, and you know what, who do you blame? Blame the school divisions. It's not our responsibility if they want to put it up to 25, 26, 27, 28 per cent, you know, and it's probably going to go, go, go. So, those are some of the stuff.

Instead the budget raises property taxes by \$182 million, a move that increases the financial burden on rural families already grappling for the soaring living costs. And it's sad to see that so many families are within \$200 of disposal income. You know, with \$200 away from not being able to go to the grocery store, not being—oh, I forgot the gas tax holiday—and able to stop at McDonald's on the way to the hockey game.

But the, you know, other various things there is—there's a lot of things that families struggle in today and affordability is a big thing. And this budget does not help with affordability.

The phasing out of the educational tax credits 'previously' provided and wait until all those homes around the edge of the cities, et cetera. Not too much—there's not too many homes that aren't valued at \$434,000 and when they see their tax bill, that's when it's going to go to No. 3, No. 4, No. 5 position for the Premier (Mr. Kinew).

You know, and it's a lot of those things. Consider the broader context: under the PC stewardship, reforms in post-secondary education focused not only in expanding access, but ensuring affordability and—wow, I've got 30 pages yet, and I only got eight minutes left here, so I think I better just kind of—maybe we'll go to health care.

Health care, arguably the most—in Swan River, we have had 10 beds that in the personal-care home where families have to get taken away or elderly people, loved ones, have to get taken to places two and three hundred miles away. They don't have many friends left, you know, one or two elderly friends. Some of them don't have family. And, I'll be honest, when they go away to these places, they just—their loneliness succumbs to mortality, and that's what happens.

And that's why it's important. Those 10 beds in Swan have been vacant for this whole 18 months that the PC government—I mean the NDP government—has been in power. And I'm getting calls every day, and they claim staffing shortages. Well, where are these 1,200 staff members that they have hired? Surely we can get a couple down to Swan River to open those 10 beds so that some of our loved ones can stay in their local community and have the support of friends and family and extend their lifeline, because.

By contrast, the—and I can see the member from Dauphin is just saying, God, you guys, you did such a great overhaul in our hospital while you were in power. They gave us everything. You built a beautiful twin highway coming in there. We got all these offshoots. We love you for it. And I thank him for those kind remarks because we like Dauphin, too.

We must ask ourselves: How can we expect our children to thrive when the very structure meant to support their education is burdened by policies? And the health care? Well, for too long Manitobans have endured long ER wait times, and it has not got any better.

You know, just claiming that we're going to fix this health care when we get in, within six months everything's going to be beautiful. Has it happened? Of course not. It's gotten worse. The ER wait times have gotten worse.

You know, I phoned my doctor the other day, and he said, well, unfortunately, the person taking the schedule: in three months, I can see him in person. If you want to see—talk over the telephone, in six weeks we can maybe arrange it.

So things aren't getting better. Things are getting worse. And this—the failed Health Minister knows it, but every day tries to defend her dismal record.

So the NDP government promises to add new hospital—

The Speaker: Order, please.

Once again I must remind the member that proper pronouns are required, and please use them going forward. I shouldn't have to keep standing up reminding members. We've all been here long enough now that we should know that.

Mr. Wowchuk: Yes, I apologize on that, okay. I'll be more mindful of that. Sometimes when you get talking, you kind of get into it and you get forgetful, so my apologies.

The NDP government promise to add new cap—new hospital beds and recruit more health-care workers—is vague and insufficient. Their plans don't address the unique challenges, the tracking and retaining medical professionals in rural and northern regions.

And we all know, whether we're in Flin Flon or the member from The Pas-Kameesak or Swan River, it's tough to get doctors up there. Lot of good boards work on incentives to try to keep them there, and there's—it's definitely a challenge. You know, there's not much to do, and I give our health board a lot—in Swan River—a lot of credit on—they have a lot of health-care workers, doctors that come in, visit, and they do a great day of fishing, skidooring, visiting the ski hill and showing them all the perks that Swan River and Swan Valley and area has to offer.

An Honourable Member: The roundup in the summer?

Mr. Wowchuk: Yes, you betcha. The Northwest Round Up, that's a great time.

Instead, nearly 9 per cent of the budget, or over \$2.3 billion is funnelled into debt servicing, siphoning resources that could've been used to modernize rural clinics.

And that's what I—it just—it's so painful to watch the amount of money that is spent when we run a deficit and we, you know, spend, spend, spend, borrow, borrow, borrow like the NDP is doing, and knowing how much that is taking away from our health-care system, from the opportunities to have all these great things happen. How can the government justify a scenario when debt obligations take precedence over life-saving health services?

And I got to give the old toot-out out to our CT scan. Like there's probably been over 2,000 CT scans administered in the Swan Valley. We were told under the NDP's previous disaster that you get—you know, that Swan River does not need a CT scan.

Well, you think 2,000 trips to Dauphin or The Pas or Winnipeg or Brandon, where people have to take time off of work, that was a revolution, and that was

all because of our hard-working premier at that time that made that happen. And I don't care what anybody says, we are forever grateful for that.

The impact of these decisions extends well beyond infrastructure, education and health care. Affordability, property taxes and the overall cost of living are direct barometers of the government's commitment to its citizens.

And I'm just kind of wrapping down, so I'm going to, you know, bypass about 20 pages here and get maybe to my summing up here.

Let us remember more spending is not 'synopsis'—with better outcomes. The NDP's government or government's budget with its inflated figures and grand promises ultimately delivers less, failing to improve the services that rural Manitobans rely on. The choice before us is clear: we can either accept the future where fiscal mismanagement and broken promises dictate policy or we can demand a return to a model of government that 'prioritizes' responsibility, fairness and sustainable investment.

The Progressive Conservative vision for Manitoba is built on that, okay, that latter principle, a vision where every policy is measured by its real-world impact, and every dollar is spent with the well-being of rural Manitobans in mind.

* (16:00)

And I call on this government to re-evaluate its approach. The time for empty promises is over; the time for meaningful, effective actions is now. Let us build a better, fairer and more prosperous Manitoba, a Manitoba where the legacy of responsible government is renewed, where every rural road is safe, every school is well-funded and every Manitoban can share in the prosperity of our great province.

Thank you.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas-Kameesak): It's always an honour to put a few words on record as the MLA for The Pas-Kameesak. I've been here for 10 years and I still get a little bit nervous before speeches. But the 10 years I've been here have been absolutely fuelled by the support that I get from my constituents and especially from my family.

So, in speaking of support, I want to talk about health in northern Manitoba, something very foreign to every single person in this room that I sit in, except for Eric and you, Honourable Speaker.

I've attended many, many funerals in the past three weeks. Friends, constituents, dying of diabetes. A childhood friend of mine, couple of weeks ago, had a heart attack. We spoke to her that morning, said we would meet her at the hospital that evening, and she had a heart attack due to diabetes. Her poor little body, no legs, amputated off. In a wheelchair.

She didn't make it. So—excuse me. It was traumatizing talking to her in the morning and then getting a call that night from the nurse that she died, right before her heart surgery. So she died just two weeks away from her late son's death, who also died from complications from diabetes, and that's a main problem where I come from. Even I'm a diabetic.

All these funerals that I've attended were all results—because of diabetes, and that's why I always pushed for health in northern Manitoba. The My Health Team, which we announced, maybe it was a couple of months ago, I was really proud to support, because My Health Teams is basically a way to recruit and surround yourself for supports to deal with mental health. And people who have been here with me for the past 10 years, I've dealt with mental health, which is not dealt with in northern Manitoba when you're a child 18 and under.

You have to be medevac'd out to the city or to Brandon, and I've been medevac'd out four times with my young girls due to thoughts of suicide, mental health. And I can tell you, it's not fun at all to be flown or driven at 140 kilometres per hour and make it to—The Pas to Winnipeg—in five hours, and then sit in a dark room of a psychiatrist at the Health Sciences Centre, only for your child to be assessed for, like, 10 minutes. And no follow-up plan as well.

So that is why I am happy that we're starting at home first to provide these supports for our children in northern Manitoba when they have thoughts of suicide or mental health problems.

In terms of diabetes as well, dialysis units, this government will be looking at providing dialysis treatment in northern Manitoba. And once again, I've seen so many people die at this home care—this health facility that's on River Avenue near where I live. I've seen three people removed that I know personally, removed from their communities to come here for dialysis, and all three died. All three gave up on their dialysis and said screw it. This is—this loneliness is killing me. Three people, one as young as 19.

So I'm looking forward to providing that crucial service to our people in northern Manitoba instead of

ripping them apart from their family and their supports to come here and die alone.

Also, too, foot care not existing in Thompson? That's outrageous. Do you know how many diabetics are up in northern Manitoba? That's all we are. First Nations. Number one for diabetics. Because of food. It costs so goddamn crazy that we can't even afford fresh food. We've got to eat bologna; we've got to eat KD. No wonder we're diabetics.

Also, too, kidney checks program in northern Manitoba. Anything that will address our health-care concerns will always be helpful to us. I come—I've come a long way and seen our health-care services slowly grow from when I first moved back home in 2007.

I also want to talk about the medevac situation. Ever since, you know, when somebody gets sick, like I've—when somebody gets sick back home in The Pas or Thompson, Flin Flon, we usually are medevac'd out, once again ripped away from your families, ripped away from your job, ripped away from your school. And we need services provided in north Manitoba. And that's why I was happy to hear that money will be invested into The Pas clinic, something I've been talking about since 2016, something that we need, something that needs to be invested. And I'm glad that I'm on the team that sees that.

Doctor recruitment—it'd be great if we could have doctors working in this Pas clinic. That would be an absolute way to attract new and keep our doctors as well, to have a great up-to-date facility for our doctors to practise in.

So speaking of doctors, we have systemic racism that exists in your face every day in The Pas. I too, before I was an MLA, experienced systemic racism. I went in there for an earache. I got heck from the doctor, thinking I only came in there for Tylenol for a cold. I gave him heck when I said he should take his bedside manner course over again, after he yelled at me for coming in for a cold.

I have a constituent who lost her husband because she wasn't taken seriously when she was trying to address systemic racism and the doctors wouldn't even help her husband, so they had to go to Prince Albert to get health care there.

What about that man from Nelson House who went to The Pas hospital and he had a serious illness. Instead, this doctor said, you're hungover. I'll give you Tynol [*phonetic*].

And that's why I am looking forward to working with this new board, which does have First Nation representation, to ensure that this systemic racism does not continue. It's killing my people.

And I can see it here, too. When our people have to be transferred from north to south and go through this systemic racism again. It just seems like there's a stigma, this thing that we only go there for free drugs, because it's covered under our treaty. That's what I see, and that's what I think. That's what our patients are all thought about.

I also want to work with initiatives to address this systemic racism. I'm looking forward to working with the Minister of Health, who I've discussed this very important issue many times. And I'm glad that we're going to have opportunities to speak to our leadership in these—in our First Nation communities up north who have to deal with this. You don't know how many times I get phone calls and emails about how our First Nations were treated cruelly at the hospital; not taken seriously; sent home. And I'm tired of that. That's why I'm looking forward to speaking to our Minister of Health, to correct that and get rid of it.

And another thing that I want to address, that this budget addressed: I'm really extremely proud of the Manitoba's poverty reduction program. And I'm also extremely proud of the universal school food program.

* (16:10)

The poverty reduction program, it was just an absolute delight to see how people's lives are being changed. Imagine going from a tent and going to an actual roof over your head, and getting those supports that you need. I know many, many people at Oscar's Place, our homeless shelter in The Pas, and I want to see initiatives like that too, as well, for our people in northern Manitoba; from tents to house, or shelter to house.

And the universal school food program, something that I hold dear to my heart. When I was a young kid, growing up on social assistance with my mom, single mother raising all of us, social housing, I remember, too, going to school with an empty stomach. You know, because we were just a few days away from the end of the month, when we can get groceries. And I'm very thankful that kids—sorry, it's my old age. I'm just crying a lot more these days. I'm just very thankful that these poor kids have an opportunity to learn and not feel poor. Because that's how I felt when I grew up.

So with that, these programs are very dear to my heart because they take care of people; things that this side of the House care about—that the things that I care about, the principles that I hold dear to my heart.

And another thing that I hold dear to my heart is University College of the North. I'm absolutely proud how central stage they take when it comes to addressing what the North needs: to our economy, to our health-care system, education, trades. I used to work there as a representative workforce co-ordinator, and I absolutely know the potential that that place holds and how much more it can hold.

And University College of the North is some place that I will always hold dear to my heart, because it has a beautiful library named after my late father, the Oscar Lathlin Research Library. And all the investment that has happened all these years is what he truly wanted to see, and it's fitting how they named the library after my father, and it's because he was No. 1 about education.

He always said education is your weapon against poverty and unemployment. And a library assists you with your education, something my dad always wanted to do: help with education. So I thought it was very—quite fitting to name that library after my father, somewhere I always go, and always take pictures of his name there.

So with the University College of the North, with all these investments, I'm looking forward to seeing 16 additional paramedic positions to be created. I'm also looking forward to the \$3 million that was invested in a mobile MRI. And with this budget, I've read it, embraced it; of course, I fine-tuned it to make sure that we weren't left out but that is not going to be happening here with our government. I'm looking forward to working with our ministers to ensure that the North will be invested in.

And with that, I just want to thank my constituents and my friends and family who have been with me throughout this whole journey. It's the best job in the world, when you can actually help people and be there for them. So all of us should be here and be honoured that we have that position and not take it for granted.

Ekosi.

The Speaker: Any more members wishing to debate?

MLA Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to share my thoughts on Budget 2025, the second budget presented by this government.

As I expressed last year, I'm once again taken aback by the briefness of the honourable Minister of Finance's (MLA Sala) speech on this matter.

I want to begin by saying this government often takes credit for accomplishments they claim as their own. Today, however, I want to extend my applause to the residents of Dawson Trail. I commend the council, the RMs, the constituents, our schools, the teaching staff and all the community members and organizations who have tirelessly advocated for a new vocational school in Ste. Anne.

Many may not yet be aware, since the Minister of Finance chose not to prioritize informing Dawson Trail constituents during his notably brief statement yesterday—or, sorry, a couple days back, that after numerous questions in this House, petitions and emails, the funding for the Ste. Anne regional high school has finally been approved by this government, which, thinking back, had already been approved by our government and budgeted for. This truly is fantastic news, and both the community and I are celebrating this achievement.

In the Budget 2025 Building One Manitoba document, on page 65, it states, and I quote: Budget 2025 is investing over \$20 million in adding four new K-to-8 schools in Manitoba's education system. With seven more schools to follow in the next two years, these 11 schools represent over \$700 million of investments in the next five years.

The previous PC government, back in March 2023, made a significant announcement: funding had been allocated for the construction of the new Ste. Anne vocational high school, with the promise that it would be fully operational by 2027, not just started.

Now fast-forward 18 months, and this current government has merely re-announced this project, the same project previously committed by our government, and the commitment included the funds.

I have—or, instead of adhering to the original timeline, it appears that the construction may only, again, begin in 2027, the very year the school was supposed to be complete. This delay highlights a disappointing prioritization of political maneuvering over the needs of the people. It's a frustrating setback for the community, which deserves much better.

At this point, I must urge the Minister of Education to offer clarity regarding the details of this vital project. Budget 2025 referenced seven more schools

to follow in the next two years, but this statement raises several critical questions.

Does this imply that, within the next two years, all planning and preparations will be finalized, allowing construction to commence in 2027? Or does it suggest that, in 2027, the planning and preparatory work will only begin, further delaying that timeline?

The residents of Ste. Anne and the surrounding community deserve transparency and precise timelines for this initiative. When can we expect tangible progress: the commencement of construction? And can the Ste. Anne regional high school officially open its doors and begin—when can it officially open its doors and begin serving its students?

It is imperative that the government provide answers to these pressing questions so that the community can have a clear understanding of the project's trajectory and timelines.

When our previous government announced the development of a new vocational school in Ste. Anne, it had included an exciting plan to add nearly 100 new child-care spaces to the community. As we await more details from the minister about the timeline for this school's completion, it is equally important to understand the government's plans for expanding child-care spaces across the entire Dawson Trail region.

*(16:20)

The communities of Dawson Trail are growing rapidly, and the demand for accessible, affordable child-care options continues to rise. Therefore, it is essential to build—to know whether new child care centres will be built and where they will be located to meet the needs of our expanding population.

In addition to expanding child-care spaces, it's crucial to ensure there are sufficient work forces of qualified early childhood educators to staff these centres. It's one thing to build more spaces, but without enough trained professionals to operate them, the centres won't be able to provide the quality care needed. The recruitment, training and retention of ECEs must be a priority for the government to ensure these new centres can run effectively.

As these plans move forward, it would be helpful to have more clarity on both the physical infrastructure of the child-care centres and the necessary work force to support them, ensuring that Dawson Trail communities are prepared for the growing demand of child care in the future.

Now let's turn our attention to the issue of taxes. At this moment, our province, and indeed our entire country, find themselves in a precarious situation. The state of our economy is fragile, with many uncertainties clouding the future. Manitobans are grappling with affordability in an affordability crisis and families are facing increasing pressures as the cost of living continues to rise.

Business owners of all sizes, whether small, medium or large, are deeply concerned about the averse effects that tariffs and other economic policies may have on their operations, threatening both their probability and their livelihood—their 'profitability', sorry, and their livelihoods of their employees.

Workers, too, are anxious at the looming possibility of layoffs as layoffs become more real with every passing day. And yet, as we look ahead to Budget 2025, it is clear that the government's response to these challenges is to impose nearly \$1 billion in additional taxes on the very people who are already struggling the most.

This is a worrying proposal, as it makes it even—as it takes even more money out of the pockets of Manitobans who can least afford it. For many, every dollar counts and adding such a significant financial 'burdain'—burden during a time of economic uncertainty is a step in the wrong direction. This tax increase will only add to the pressures on families, businesses and workers, making it even harder for them to navigate these already difficult times.

So here's a breakdown of the taxes: there are \$292 million more in income taxes, \$150 million more in business taxes, \$178 million more in retail sales taxes; \$182 million more in property taxes and \$81 million more in assorted other taxes. I could elaborate further on this, but there's little need to do so. Manitobans have witnessed first-hand the consequence of previous NDP governments in our province. Their approach has been simple: tax, tax, tax, tax.

Not only do they burden the people with higher taxes, but they also use this revenue to increase their own salaries, engage in excessive spending and leave the province and its residents in an even worse position than they were before. The result is a cycle of financial strain that fails to address the root issue and not only deepens the challenges faced—and not only deepens the challenges faced by Manitobans.

Now moving on to more takeaways from Budget 2025. Exploring our magnificent province has always been a source of great joy for me, from discovering its

diverse landscapes to 'mancing' myself in the natural wonders that define our trails, lakes. Each journey feels like a celebration of beauty. I've had the privilege of visiting many of our treasured provincial parks, each offering unique experiences and breathtaking scenery.

What makes these adventures even more memorable are the connections I've made along the way, whether it's chatting with friendly campsite neighbours, meeting visitors from other provinces who are equally enthralled by our parks or engaging with dedicated individuals who work tirelessly to enrich these spaces. They have all contributed to the richness of my experiences.

The amounts—the announcement to provide families a year of free access to provincial parks is undoubtedly a welcome relief, especially during a period when Manitoba residents are grappling with an affordability and economic crisis. It's a gesture that will allow families to enjoy the natural beauty of our province without financial barriers of fostering—and fostering connections and well-being.

However, alongside this I find myself deeply concerned about the potential of unintended consequences of this decision, particularly for those individuals who have been employed at our provincial parks in roles focused on checking and enforcing valid park passes. Were their positions considered during this decision-making process? Has the NDP government evaluated how this initiative might affect the employment opportunities of these work years—of these workers, many of whom rely on these roles, especially during the summer months, to support their livelihoods?

Additionally, I would like to know if there were any meaningful discussions held with the parks department regarding this policy. It is crucial to understand how this decision may impact summer employment figures and whether there are plans in place to mitigate any negative repercussions.

While the intent behind free park access is admirable, it is important that the government provides assurances, taking into account that solutions are in place to address any challenges that may arise.

So, as I was stating earlier, Mr. Honourable Speaker, a lot of this budget has left me wondering what has been overlooked. I know we talked a little bit about—well, some examples of why this concerns me is when some of the legislation that's been brought forward regarding procurement of just Canadian goods, just the basic questions that were asked about policy and

how this was going to be rolled out couldn't be answered by this government.

So these are just, like I said, a few of the things that concern me largely when any document is being produced by this particular government.

With those brief words, Mr.—Honourable Speaker, sorry, not Mr. Speaker, I would like to end my statement by saying I do appreciate that the government has taken into account and reannounced a school that was already announced under our government, but, again, it goes to the community leaders and those who are genuinely concerned and—about these kinds of projects and advocate on behalf, through me, that deserve the credit, and not the NDP government.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): C'est un plaisir d'avoir cette opportunité de mettre quelques mots à l'avant au sujet de notre excellent Budget 2025-2026, un budget si rafraîchissant comparé aux budgets médiocres et absolument décourageants des anciens — de l'ancien gouvernement conservateur précédent, qui a failli et n'a pas écouté aux priorités des Manitobains et des Manitobaines.

Et j'aimerais prendre ce moment pour vraiment remercier notre ministre des Finances (DAL Sala) pour avoir pris le temps d'écouter les priorités des Manitobains, des Manitobaines, de mettre ces priorités-là à l'avant, pour mieux répondre aux besoins des Manitobains et des Manitobaines.

Et j'ai fait partie d'ailleurs des consultations que l'honorable ministre des Finances a mis à l'avant. On est allés à la rencontre des Manitobains et des Manitobaines à Lac-du-Bonnet. C'était un plaisir d'aller à Lac-du-Bonnet, à la rencontre de gens qui veulent entendre parler de ce que ce gouvernement a à partager avec eux, un gouvernement qui est, comme je l'ai dit, à l'écoute. On a aussi eu la chance d'aller à Brandon pour rencontrer des gens qui étaient très contents de nous voir.

* (16:30)

Et naturellement, on a pris le temps d'écouter les Franco-manitobains et les Franco-manitobaines en ayant une consultation au Centre culturel franco-manitobain. La salle était remplie, pleine à craquer. Le Conseil jeunesse provincial était là; Santé en Français était là; la Société de la francophonie manitobaine était là; et plusieurs résidents de Saint-Boniface étaient là pour partager leurs priorités avec notre gouvernement.

Alors, parlons de ces priorités, s'il vous plaît, Monsieur l'Honorable Président. On sait que la santé est encore en premier plan quand ça vient aux priorités des Manitobains et des Manitobaines. En tant que résident de longue date de Saint-Boniface, juste la semaine dernière j'ai eu la chance d'aller parler à la Fondation de l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface, et ce que j'ai entendu était absolument effrayant et décourageant.

Il y a 10 ans, à l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface, on avait des soins cardiaques qui étaient de pure beauté, reconnus comme étant un modèle national et international. Et au niveau personnel, j'ai un père, une mère et un frère qui ont passé à travers les soins cardiaques à l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface, et qui ont reçu des soins incroyables, avec un continuum de soin qui a tellement bien pris soin de ma famille.

Mais ce que j'ai entendu la semaine dernière, c'est que, sous l'ancien gouvernement médiocre conservateur, les soins de santé cardiaques à l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface ont été saccagés. Et ce qu'on trouve maintenant à l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface est un piètre reflet de ce qui existait il y a 10 ans.

Et c'est à cause de l'ancien gouvernement conservateur. C'est à cause d'eux. Et on a souffert sous sept années et demie de Stefanson-Pallister, qui ont absolument saboté les soins cardiaques qui existaient autrefois à l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface.

Notre gouvernement s'engage à rebâtir les soins de santé, on le sait. On va commencer par investir en ressources humaines, en embauchant au-delà de mille travailleurs de la santé. Je crois qu'on en a embauché jusqu'à 1 255 jusqu'à date. Et on veut rebâtir les soins de santé, non seulement au milieu rural, mais au milieu urbain aussi. Et je suis fier de dire qu'à l'Hôpital de Saint-Boniface, on va rebâtir les soins cardiaques.

Au niveau de l'éducation, Monsieur l'Honorable Président, je suis fier de dire que notre gouvernement va continuer à investir dans nos écoles, va continuer à investir dans nos centres de la petite enfance, et je suis fier de dire que notre gouvernement d'ailleurs a annoncé des nouvelles garderies, des expansions de garderie à Saint-Lazare, à l'École Roméo-Dallaire, à l'École Précieux-Sang et à l'École Lagimodière à Lorette.

Alors, ce sont des écoles, naturellement, sous la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, et on sait jusqu'à quel point que les centres de la petite enfance sont importants pour les Francophones manitobains, les Franco-Métis aussi, parce qu'on sait que la langue est le véhicule de la culture.

Alors, ayant – c'est un ayant-droit : mes enfants sont allés à la garderie en français, ils sont allés à l'école en français, secondaire en français, et on continue de parler en français à la maison. Et d'ailleurs, je suis fier de faire partie d'un gouvernement qui, juste la semaine dernière d'ailleurs, a rencontré la Francophonie manitobaine, puisque c'est Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie en ce moment. Et on a célébré ensemble d'ailleurs le 20 mars dernier la Journée internationale de la Francophonie.

Alors, étant un gouvernement à l'écoute, étant un gouvernement divers, étant un gouvernement qui veut aller à la rencontre des gens pour vraiment savoir c'est quoi leurs priorités, je trouve que ce Budget 2025-2026 est précisément à l'écoute des Manitobains et des Manitobaines.

Et ce qui est encore plus époustoufflant, c'est que nous avons un plan pour construire 11 nouvelles écoles dans les trois prochaines années, qui est absolument incroyable. Et je suis fier de dire que nous allons même construire non seulement une nouvelle école d'immersion à Brandon ouest, mais aussi une école francophone – une nouvelle école francophone dans l'ouest du Manitoba, à l'ouest de Brandon, pour la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine.

Qui veut dire, en autres mots, encore une fois, que notre gouvernement est à l'écoute. On s'est pas mis la tête dans le sable comme l'ancien gouvernement médiocre qui a pas écouté aux Franco-manitobains et aux Franco-manitobaines, qui n'a fait que saboter les efforts des communautés culturelles pour faire avancer leurs choses – leurs priorités. Et nous allons continuer à avancer avec les priorités des Franco-manitobains et des Franco-manitobaines.

Étant éducateur de longue date, j'ai travaillé pendant 28 ans en français, en anglais, et comme le dit l'ancien – excusez, comme l'a dit le ministre des Affaires municipales très récemment, on a souffert sous l'ancien gouvernement. Mais, le temps de cette souffrance est maintenant venu à la fin, puisque nous avons un gouvernement capable de mettre à l'avant les priorités des Manitobains et des Manitobaines. Le temps de cette grande souffrance est fini.

Alors, pour moi, le Budget 2025-2026, c'est comme si encore une fois le soleil brille sur la plaine manitobaine. Les gens sont encouragés. Les gens sont heureux de voir un gouvernement qui est finalement à l'écoute. Et nous allons continuer, non seulement d'écouter les Manitobains et les Manitobaines, mais nous allons les outiller. Nous allons leur donner les soins de santé, les écoles et les centres de la petite

enfance que les Manitobains et les Manitobaines ont besoin pour vivre une belle vie, une vie sous un Manitoba, et comme l'a dit le ministre des Finances (DAL Sala) très récemment, nous allons « bâtir, bâtir, bâtir », Monsieur l'Honorable Président.

Alors, dans ce Budget 2025-2026, on parle aussi d'une autre priorité pour les Franco-manitobains et les Franco-manitobaines, et c'est la justice. Comme vous savez, la Francophonie manitobaine est en plein essor. Nos écoles sont pleines à craquer. Mais avec ça vient aussi des défis au niveau de la justice. Alors, nous avons annoncé l'été dernier, et nous allons avancer avec ce plan de mettre sur pied un centre bilingue de services au niveau de la justice où les Franco-manitobains et les Franco-manitobaines, les jeunes familles, les parents, vont être capables d'aller pour recevoir des services en justice, mais en français.

Alors, non seulement nous avons des centres de bilingue – des centres de services bilingues ici au Manitoba qui d'ailleurs va aller à la rencontre des Manitobains et des Manitobaines, mais nous allons maintenant avoir à Saint-Boniface un centre de services de justice qui va opérer de façon bilingue.

Alors, pour moi, ce ne sont que des bonnes nouvelles. Et quand nous allons à la rencontre des Manitobains et des Manitobaines dans nos circonscriptions, nous rencontrons plusieurs, plusieurs citoyens qui nous disent qu'ils sont encouragés par le beau travail que nous faisons, qu'ils sont encouragés par ce qu'ils voient dans ce Budget 2025-2026. Et je vous assure que notre gouvernement va continuer à travailler fort pour s'assurer que nous donnons aux Manitobains ce qu'ils ont besoin pour réussir.

Nous savons que pendant ces temps incertains, avec ce qui se passe aux États-Unis, nous allons devoir travailler extrêmement fort pour s'assurer que l'économie manitobaine reste résiliente. Et on reconnaît aussi que nos communautés culturelles comme la communauté franco-manitobaine est un engin économique. Et c'est en travaillant ensemble et en encourageant cet engin économique que nous allons être capables d'aller plus loin, de faire avancer les choses en concertation naturellement avec les autres provinces – parce que les échanges commerciaux avec les autres provinces, on l'encourage de façon très positive. Et c'est en reconnaissant que la Francophonie manitobaine est un engin économique que nous allons en faire avancer le logement, l'éducation, les soins de santé, la justice et toutes les autres belles priorités que les Manitobains ont partagées avec nous.

Alors, sur ce, Monsieur l'Honorable Président, je suis absolument encouragé par ce budget. Je remercie le ministre des Finances (DAL Sala) pour son excellent travail. Je remercie mes collègues pour l'excellent travail qu'ils ont fait en allant à l'écoute des Manitobains et des Manitobaines. Et je vous assure que, dorénavant, le Manitoba sera bien servi par ce gouvernement, puisque nous allons continuer à travailler fort pour nos Manitobains et nos Manitobaines, et nos communautés culturelles.

Merci, l'Honorable Président.

Translation

It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to say a few words about our excellent Budget 2025-2026, such a refreshing change from the mediocre and utterly discouraging budgets of the previous Conservative government, which failed to listen to the priorities of Manitobans.

I would like to take this moment to sincerely thank our Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) for taking the time to listen to the priorities of Manitobans and for putting these priorities first in order to better meet the needs of Manitobans.

I took part in the consultations that the Honourable Minister of Finance organized. We went to meet Manitobans in Lac du Bonnet. It was a pleasure to go to Lac du Bonnet, to meet people who want to hear about what this government has to share with them, a government that is listening, as I have stated. We also had the chance to go to Brandon to meet people who were very happy to see us.

And, of course, we took the time to listen to Franco-Manitobans by holding a consultation at the Centre culturel franco-manitobain. The room was packed, full to capacity. The Conseil jeunesse provincial was there; Santé en Français was there; the Société de la francophonie manitobaine was there; and many residents of St. Boniface were there to share their priorities with our government.

So, let's talk about these priorities. We know that health is still at the top of the list of priorities for Manitobans. I am a long-time resident of St. Boniface, and just last week, I had the opportunity to speak to the St. Boniface Hospital Foundation. What I heard was absolutely frightening and discouraging.

Ten years ago, St. Boniface Hospital had a cardiac care program of outstanding quality, recognized as a national and international model. On a personal level, I have a father, a mother and a brother who have been

through the St. Boniface Hospital cardiac-care unit, where they received incredible care, within a continuum that looked after my family so well.

What I heard last week was that, under the former mediocre Conservative government, the cardiac health-care program at St. Boniface Hospital was trashed. What you find now at St. Boniface Hospital is a poor reflection of what existed 10 years ago.

And it is because of the former Conservative government. It is because of them. We suffered under seven and a half years of Stefanson and Pallister governments, who absolutely sabotaged the cardiac-care program that once existed at St. Boniface Hospital.

Our government is committed to rebuilding health care, as we know. We will start by investing in human resources, by hiring over a thousand health care workers. I believe that we have hired up to 1,255 to date. We want to rebuild health care, not only in rural areas but in urban areas as well. I am proud to say that at St. Boniface Hospital, we are going to rebuild the cardiac-care program.

In terms of education, I am proud to say that our government will continue to invest in our schools and in our early-childhood education centres. I am proud to say that our government has also announced new daycare spaces, with daycare expansions in Saint-Lazare, at École Roméo-Dallaire, at École Précieux-Sang and at École Lagimodière in Lorette.

These schools are in the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, of course, as we know how important early childhood education centres are for Manitoba francophones, as well as for Franco-Métis, because as we know, language is the vehicle of culture. It is a birthright: my children went to daycare in French, they went to school in French, they did their secondary education in French, and we continue to speak French at home.

I am proud to be part of a government which, just last week, met with the Manitoban francophone community, as it is currently hosting Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie. And, on March 20, we celebrated the International Day of La Francophonie together.

As a member of a government that listens, a diverse government, a government that wants to reach out to people to really find out what their priorities are, I think that this 2025-2026 Budget does precisely that: it listens to Manitobans.

What is even more amazing is that we have a plan to build 11 new schools in the next three years, which is

absolutely incredible. I am proud to say that we are even going to build not only a new immersion school in Brandon West but also a French-language school for the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine—a new French-language school—in western Manitoba, west of Brandon.

Which means, once again, that our government is listening. We did not put our heads in the sand like the former mediocre government, a government who did not listen to Franco-Manitobans and who sabotaged the efforts of cultural communities to advance their priorities.

And we will continue to move forward with the priorities of Franco-Manitobans.

I am a long-time educator, having worked for 28 years, in both French and English. As the Minister of Municipal Affairs said very recently, we suffered under the former government. But the time for that suffering is now at an end, as we now have a government capable of putting the priorities of Manitobans first. The time for this great suffering is over.

For me, Budget 2025-2026 is like the sun shining again on the plains of Manitoba. People are encouraged. People are happy to see a government that is finally listening. And we will not only continue to listen to Manitobans, we will also empower them. We will give Manitobans the health care, schools and early learning centres that they need to live a good life, a life under One Manitoba. As the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) said very recently, we will "build, build, build," Honourable Speaker.

In this 2025-2026 Budget, we also talk about another priority for Franco-Manitobans: justice. As you know, Manitoba's francophone community is booming. Our schools are bursting at the seams. But with that also come challenges in terms of justice. Last summer, we announced that we would be moving forward with a plan to set up a bilingual justice services centre where Franco-Manitobans, young families and parents will be able to receive legal services in French.

We already have bilingual service centres here in Manitoba, which to meet Manitobans' needs, but we are now going to have a legal services centre in St. Boniface that will operate bilingually.

For me, this is all good news. When we go out and meet Manitobans in our constituencies, we meet a great many citizens who tell us that they are encouraged by the good work we are doing and by what they see in this Budget 2025-2026. And I assure

you that our government will continue to work hard to ensure that we give Manitobans what they need to succeed.

We know that during these uncertain times, with what is happening in the United States, we are going to have to work extremely hard to ensure that the Manitoba economy remains resilient. We also recognize that our cultural communities, such as the Franco-Manitoban community, are economic drivers. It is by working together and encouraging these economic drivers that we will be able to go further, to move things forward in consultation with the other provinces, of course—because interprovincial trade is something we encourage in a very positive way. It is by recognizing that Manitoba's francophonie is an economic driver that we will make progress on housing, education, health care, justice and all the other great priorities that Manitobans have shared with us.

On that note, Honourable Speaker, I am absolutely encouraged by this budget. I thank the Minister of Finance for his excellent work. I thank my colleagues for the excellent work they have done in listening to Manitobans. And I assure you that, from now on, Manitoba will be well served by this government, as we will continue to work hard for our Manitobans and our cultural communities.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

** (16:40)*

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): I'm looking at the clock and it's interesting to know and to see that for as much as the NDP side of the House goes around and starts talking to Manitobans and sharing their own view of how great they actually think this budget is, they sure leave a lot of time on the clock about the amount of time to actually talk about good things about their budget.

So today, Honourable Speaker, I'm going to start by talking a little bit about the budget and start talking about the amendment that we're going to be bringing forward to this budget within—you know, I believe I have unlimited time, so sometime between right now and the future, I'll be bringing forward that amendment.

So I would like to start off in regards to budget. We start talking about various different celebrations, start talking about, you know, birthdays earlier today.

Of course, I wanted to put on the record: Happy birthday to Denise, who, you know, I have been here for—this is my 14th year, I guess, that I've had the

pleasure of working with Denise, and just want to wish her a happy birthday.

But at the same time, I want to take this opportunity to say happy birthday to a colleague of mine, the MLA for Lakeside. So a big happy birthday to the MLA for Lakeside, as well.

And I know, Honourable Speaker, we're all waiting to hear from the MLA for Lakeside, to talk, and now he'll be talking and speaking to an amendment that I'll be bringing forward, again, sometime between right now and the future.

I—some of the things that are in Budget 2025 were absolutely—

An Honourable Member: Horrendous.

Mr. Ewasko: Well, horrendous is a word, and I thank colleague for saying that.

But underwhelming—underwhelming. I think we were all sort of looking towards something in the lines of—you know, I mean, this government, the Kinew government's been in power now for 18 months. We've been watching and we've been waiting and I think Manitobans have been waiting for the fact that—you know what, they kept talking during the election, \$3-billion promise, and what did they do? They went and racked up the deficit to almost \$2 billion.

What did they inherit when they—well, when we lost the election, Honourable Speaker? We lost the election; they didn't win it. So, but what did they inherit? They inherited a \$300-million surplus. What did they do? They took that, they crumpled it into the garbage and they blew some more money and they went and racked up a deficit of \$2 billion.

That's on top of, Honourable Speaker, in last year's budget, they had talked about a \$1.3-million deficit, and now we're looking at this budget and they are coming to—I don't know what they're coming to. What did they say in there? They're hoping to be—to bring in worst—or best-case scenario, they're hoping almost \$800 million.

Now, you know, the economists, the financial experts—not the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe). Definitely not. I mean, he wants to get up and talk. I think he'll have his opportunity to be able to speak to the amendment after this, so I'll encourage him to sit and do his fake listening tour and listen here for a while and see what he wants to put on the record later on.

But they actually—in addition to running up that deficit to \$2 billion, they actually received \$900 million of an increased transfer payment from the federal government. So technically, their deficit last year was technically \$2.2 billion.

And so I know math is hard for the NDP. We know that. You know, we know that. I look across the way and that's what we have inherited here as a new government. But, Honourable Speaker, shortly—in about two and a half years at the most, probably sooner, because we know that the Premier (Mr. Kinew) can't help himself—probably sooner, he will call an election. And then our new leader, which will be chosen in just about a month from now, will be—then also be the next premier of Manitoba.

I know that—you know, the members across the way—*[interjection]* Yes, that does deserve a bit of a round of applause for our new leader.

So I know that one of the members the other way were talking about the Premier and his polling and various things. And we see that, due to his inaction and inability to show and actually bring anything forward to Manitobans in the Trump tariff battles that we're having, he's actually dropped to No. 2 in Canada, and actually, the No. 1 premier in Canada now is a premier that actually doesn't exist anymore; he's no longer a premier.

So our Premier dropped behind a premier that doesn't exist anymore. And I think that's—it's funny—and not really funny—it's strange. It's one of those strange situations where, you know, our Premier at one time and the MLA for Fort Rouge—*[interjection]*

Oh, and the MLA for Rossmere wants to speak, and I want to congratulate them on their—and now—appointment to become the Education Minister. So I would like to congratulate her, the MLA for Rossmere, on becoming the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning (MLA Schmidt). It was sort of interesting, Honourable Speaker, when I think about all the educators on that side of the bench and not one of them were chosen to be the Education Minister. Sort of interesting.

But we also saw today, earlier in question period, the talents of the new Education Minister when they stood up to talk about the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv), who was one of their teammates, and just shows that type of personality. So it is sort of a little interesting because I guess where else was that minister going to be put unless they were talking about the budget and talking about education?

But the members across the way want to talk about relevance. Well, here's where—what's relevant, Honourable Speaker. What's relevant to the budget, what's relevant to the MLA for Rossmere, what's relevant to the fact that they did not choose any other educators to be the Education Minister—Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister, is the fact she singlehandedly had cut the education budget. Cut the education budget.

School divisions all across this great province of ours were sitting there in February scratching their heads and wondering, what is with this NDP-Kinew government? It must be this new Education Minister from Rossmere pulling the strings. Maybe it's the Finance Minister, Honourable Speaker.

But the fact is, they've cut the education budget. They've cut the education budget to the point where school divisions are now going back to the taxpayer—they're going back to the taxpayer—and they're doing double-digit percentage increases on education taxes, Honourable Speaker, which that will be the record of this Education Minister, and it's unfortunate that this Education Minister decided to go that route because technically, she did have some very huge shoes to fill.

And, again, I've said this on the record multiple times, but definitely the former MLA for Transcona, Nello Altomare, was a great representative, and as an educator myself, Nello and myself had many great conversations about education and moving education forward in this province of ours and because we weren't really—our school divisions weren't really that far apart from one another.

So with that I do wish the MLA for Rossmere luck. I'm hoping that they absolutely start turning the tide a little bit on their record on education. Because when it comes to budgets, we know that on our side of the House, in the—within the most recent years, we had done the largest increase to education in over 40 years. Some might say, Honourable Speaker, some might say that it was an astronomical increase to education. And now what has happened is with this budget, we're seeing absolute cuts to the education. It's sad, but it's true. *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: And I appreciate that the member from Rossmere, maybe they will have, you know, the opportunity if her leader or her other members allow her to get up to put some words on the record. But I could see the performance in question period today,

maybe that she will not be given that opportunity today, because it shows the fact of how she would turn like that on a teammate that was Fort Garry.

* (16:50)

The member for—minister—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: —the Minister for Justice is also speaking from his seat quite abruptly.

The fact is, is that this behaviour coming from the Education Minister is unbecoming of an Education Minister. That being said, Honourable Speaker, it's not really a big surprise because the Premier (Mr. Kinew) talked about, you know, how he was the star candidate in 2016 for the then-premier Selinger. Well, we saw what happened shortly thereafter: Premier Selinger actually got the knife in the back by his star candidate. And so now he's the Premier.

And so some of the members across the way don't necessarily know the history. They don't know the history, but they should be talking, you know, to some of their colleagues that have been here for a long time. Like the MLA for Concordia, he's been here a long time. The MLA for Elmwood has been here for a long time. They could definitely reach out to them and talk about the history of the Selinger days, the history of the backstabbing that happened in the NDP back in the day there, as well.

So, but getting back to this budget, Honourable Speaker. Many Manitobans are emailing and they're upset. The Finance Minister talks about—and I brought one here, and I'm not sure if we're actually—if we're talking about this document, I'm not sure—I wouldn't hold it up, because I don't want to be called upon for using a prop or anything, but this budget document, I think, is very much some smoke and mirrors.

It talks about building. Well, I'm not quite sure what they're going to be building, Honourable Speaker, because a lot of the things that they've pledged to build here in Manitoba are things that they have recycled from Progressive Conservative announcements, whether that's schools; whether that's early childhood education centres, the spaces; whether that's personal-care homes; whether that's various infrastructure, bridges, right; repairing roads.

We heard loud and clear from the Minister of Infrastructure within the last couple days talk about

how they are concerned about public safety on the roads. Well, what they voted against last night—and the Justice Minister's nodding his head as well, because he was there—voted against some amendments that would strengthen the Justice Minister's Bill 5 on drinking and driving laws right here in the province.

I think, again, when it comes to budget and putting money towards things to actually help Manitobans, I think—not I think—I know that this NDP Kinew government has absolutely missed the mark.

We look at the various different deficits that they are going to be having over the next few years. I know that the Finance Minister crowed about how he feels that he's still going to be able to balance the books by, I think—I don't know what he said, 2037 if he's still in power—no, I think he said 2027. I don't want to put false information on the record, Honourable Speaker. That's up to the NDP staffers to fill out their news releases and put absolute falsehoods in their news releases.

So there's only two ways—and I think it's going to be a combination of those two ways—when this NDP government are going to be able to balance the books. And that's—they're going to continue to cut things, like they've done to education, or they're going to raise taxes, which they've already done. That is the NDP way, Honourable Speaker.

They're going to take money out of hard-working Manitobans' pockets, put it into general revenue, because you know why? The Kinew government is not that much different than the Selinger government, and I'll tell you why. Because they feel that they know how to spend your hard-earned money far better than you know how to spend your hard-earned money. That's how arrogant the former—the current NDP government is and the former Selinger government is, and that's why they're much the same, Honourable Speaker. They will run up our deficit, year after year, but they will also increase our debt.

I mean, let's just take a look to see what some of the negative public reaction was to the budget. So the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce says, and I quote: We remain concerned about a lack of concrete measures to provide businesses with the support they need moving forward. End quote.

Well, what have we heard in the last couple weeks, Honourable Speaker? We've been pushing for a bipartisan, or tri-partisan—we're willing to have the Liberal come with us and have a conversation with the

NDP and talk about how can we fight these Trump tariffs together. One team Manitoba, part of team Canada approach. No: this Premier (Mr. Kinew) is so arrogant that, no, he's not going to take any help.

So he's going to go on it on his own. So what's the plan, what has he come up with? Well, first of all, there's no plan. But he's come up with a plan to try to sell to Manitoba businesses that they're going to defer certain taxes. Well, defer isn't a whole lot of help, because deferring just means that you're going to pay more later.

He stands and he talks about the fact that they lowered the—or gave a gas tax holiday. Well, the best analogy that I've heard from this Premier—not the best, there's lots, there's lots of things that I'm open to sharing with Manitobans as far as many of the things that the Premier has said, not only as an elected official but prior to him getting in as an elected official.

But the one thing that I thought was quite humorous, and I see some of the members across the way, they're sort of chuckling, and I see a prop going on over there, Honourable Speaker, but that's okay. I'm not going to tell you how to do your job.

What I see is, is that the Premier goes and talks about how, because we both are parents of our children that played hockey, his analogy was the fact that he ran into an individual that thanked him at a hockey arena for the gas tax holiday because they were then able, with the money they saved, with this family of four, to go to McDonald's and to buy supper for their kids and the family. *[interjection]*

I appreciate—this is telling, Honourable Speaker. Here we go. So we have the Education Minister and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) clapping for what I just said. But here's how out of touch those two individuals are—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: Unless, Honourable Speaker, that individual who brought his two children and partner to the hockey practice and went to McDonald's after, unless that individual was driving some kind of 40-foot motorhome to fill up, that is the only way that they could possibly save that type of money to go to McDonald's nowadays. It's laughable. It's laughable.

Honourable Speaker, I'm not sure—you know, and again, I'm hoping that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe)

and Minister of Education gets up and puts some words on the record, because it's unbelievable.

So I think what's being—what's telling is that Manitobans are finally starting to see through that our Premier (Mr. Kinew) is a phony patriot, Honourable Speaker. I've had the pleasure of being in the House in this Chamber now and serving the constituents of Lac du Bonnet now going on 14 years. I know the Minister of Justice has been here much longer than me, but you know, it happens, right? He was appointed and got into the former premier Doer's spot without any real life experience over there, but that's okay. And they're saying—and one of the colleagues from across the way on the—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: —NDP side: fact, they said. That's a fact, they said. That's great. They agreed with me. That's okay.

Well, so, you know, we take a look at what is happening here in the next—

The Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Opposition House Leader will have unlimited time remaining.

The hour being 5 o'clock, this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

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