



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Tom Lindsey  
Speaker*



**Vol. LXXIX No. 38B - 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 8, 2025**

ISSN 0542-5492

**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
CORBETT, Shannon	Transcona	NDP
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	

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

*The House met at 1:30 p.m.*

**The Speaker:** Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

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

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

**Larry Baillie**

**MLA Billie Cross (Seine River):** I rise today to honour an incredible constituent from Seine River, Larry Baillie. Larry has spent his entire life giving back to our province, both as a social worker and civil servant, and through his extensive volunteer work, fundraising and disability advocacy.

I first met Larry at the Manitoba Marathon where he was volunteering on his bike as a course marshal a few months before I was elected. He has always been an avid marathoner and cyclist and someone who loves physical activity, especially when it's for a good cause.

About a year later, he was suddenly hospitalized with a brain injury, and the many activities he enjoyed would become much more difficult. However, Larry would not let a wheelchair stop him from his work nor from his love of keeping active.

On his 65th birthday, Larry spent his day raising money for the Victoria Hospital Foundation in an effort to give back to the hospital that treated his illness.

Fundraising is nothing new for Larry; he's been doing it his whole life. In 2020, to honour his father's memory, he shaved his beard and ran a half-marathon trek across Winnipeg to raise funds for CancerCare, far surpassing his initial goal of \$946.88.

His volunteer work doesn't stop there. He has spent years volunteering for Diabetes Canada, serving on their lace up for diabetes committee and raising thousands of dollars by running in their marathons. It's no surprise that he received their volunteer of the year award for his hard work. He also served as Wes Lee Coyote, the Wesmen mascot for over 20 years.

While Larry may be facing new challenges, he isn't letting them slow down—slow him down for a moment. While he was still in hospital, he purchased

a handcycle bike, which he will be using next month—or, in the next few months in a marathon.

Larry, I commend you for your tireless advocacy, hard work and relentless volunteerism. Our province is a better place because of you, and I wish you all the best.

I ask that my colleagues rise in congratulating Larry and wish him well in his new chapter of his life.

Thank you.

**Elder Ruth Christie**

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** I rise today to honour an extraordinary individual from my constituency, Elder Ruth Christie, a mother, wife and a community leader. She is a distinguished community-based scholar, knowledge keeper and storyteller from Selkirk whose life's work has preserved and shared the rich history of our province. Ruth is joined in the gallery with her daughter, Leesa Christie, and her friend, David Thorne.

Over the years, she has been a nurse, historian, storyteller and mentor and has worked as an activity co-ordinator and public educator.

Ruth's role in preserving history extended to her time at Lower Fort Garry national park, where she portrayed her ancestor's wife, Isabella Monkman. She was instrumental in renaming Monkman Creek [*phonetic*], restoring a vital piece of our heritage.

Ruth was named Selkirk & District Community Foundation Citizen of the Year in 2024, to the Order of Manitoba, and she is a Member of the Order of Canada. She has received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and honorary doctor of laws from the University of Winnipeg.

Ruth's dedication is also reflected in her published works and film appearances, most notably Loon Straits Through the Years: The Monkman Ancestry. Ruth's continued work with the University of Winnipeg, Selkirk Friendship Centre and the Lord Selkirk School Division ensures that her legacy will inspire future generations.

Thank you, Ruth, for your invaluable contributions to preserving our shared history.

Please join me as we recognize the accomplishments of this fantastic lady.

### **St. James-Assiniboia Norman Art Group**

**Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park):** Honourable Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge the creative work of the St. James-Assiniboia Norman Art Group, which gathered primarily at Woodhaven Community Club in Kirkfield Park.

Established in 1979, and home to more than 40 artists in west Winnipeg, the group was founded as a place for artists to share, practice and progress in their personal study of visual art. Its goal is to encourage potential artists to challenge their creative instincts.

Several of the group's artists contribute to the Canada Connects Love & Family Mural Mosaic in 2024, installed at 1797 Portage Ave.

The members of the Norman Art Group have exhibited and sold their paintings in various venues, including the Assiniboine clinic, the St. James-Assiniboia Library, St. James Kiwanis Village, the Assiniboine Park Conservatory, Great-West Life, the Western Canadian aviation museum, St. James Anglican Church and the Sir William Stephenson Library.

In addition to taking an active role in art displays at the Red River Exhibition, members of the group have exhibited throughout Manitoba in Wasagaming, Selkirk, Carberry and Portage la Prairie.

The group also serves as a community outlet for their retired neighbours to come together and hone their artistic craft with one another.

The St. James-Assiniboia Norman Art Group is hosting an art show and sale on Friday, May 2, from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m., and again on Saturday, May 3, from 10 a.m. 'til 4 p.m., both hosted at Woodhaven community club in Kirkfield Park. Admission is free, and the show will feature over 30 local artists.

I would ask that my guests be added into Hansard. And I would also ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming members of the St. James Assiniboia Norman Art Group.

*Sid Balland, Joyce Clark, Patricia Dubuc, Nadine Hallgrimson, Brij Khatter, Eunice McKay, Michelle Paterson, Darren Raine.*

### **Shindico's 50th Anniversary in Real Estate**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** Honourable Speaker, I am honoured today to congratulate Shindico on their 50th anniversary in the real estate business.

I am even more proud to call Sandy and Robert Shindleman my friends. Their guidance and advice is one of the reasons why I'm standing here today.

They got their start in the agriculture and grocery business in Portage la Prairie. Their story—store was run by Sandy and Robert's dad Ed, who made sure that if you couldn't afford groceries, you still went home with food to feed your family.

This is where Shindico's motto, succeeding by helping others succeed, was born and it could 'mot'—not be more true of these two.

Sandy and Robert ventured into real estate business, but have never forgotten their hometown. From their philanthropy, the Shindleman Aquatic Centre was born. They have given gifts to local foundations and organizations throughout Canada. And they have contributed—continued to invest in our community of Portage la Prairie as well as throughout Manitoba and Canada.

They have built a billion-dollar empire throughout this world but they have never forgotten where home is. Anyone who knows Robert and Sandy knows they are never too busy to take a phone call or get together for lunch.

Their headquarters on Taylor Avenue is just like a family, with dogs running around—sometimes biting—and the staff truly enjoying their work.

Their company has truly been a difference maker because of these two gentlemen.

Sandy and Robert, thank you so much for helping so many others succeed. Thanks for contributing so much to the commerce of our province and this great country, Canada. And thank you for being wonderful friends and mentors to me, my family and so many others.

Please join me in wishing Shindico a very happy 50th anniversary.

\* (13:40)

### **Acknowledging Local Businesses**

**Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** Manitoba has had to face a changing landscape, with unpredictable tariffs and attacks on our country. This is why we're siding with Manitoba and standing up against Trump. We're protecting jobs, strengthening our economy and making life more affordable because we care about Manitobans.

My constituency of Riel has so many amazing local businesses that epitomize that work ethic we see across our great province. Local businesses are the backbone of our economy. When you go to a local business, owners and workers greet you with Manitoba warmth. These shops are not just important to our economy, but their uniqueness make up our identity.

While Manitobans are feeling the effects of tariffs and uncertainty, the members opposite can't make up their minds on if they would rather support Trump or thank him. On this side of the House, we know that we'll always stand with Manitoba businesses. When the core of our community is under attack, we show strength. We side with the family-run fixtures of our community.

Manitobans can be assured that we are working to safeguard our economy against the impacts of the US tariffs. Local businesses can feel secure in knowing that we are taking action.

Manitobans are doing their part by shopping local. On our side of the House, we're doing the same. We will continue to prioritize Manitoba while we wait for the members opposite to figure out their priorities because we will always put Manitoba first and we will always be the true north, strong and free.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

I would remind members that if they are a minister, to make sure their comments don't stray too far into government policy. The honourable minister for the environment and climate was dangerously close to me calling him to order, so just, in future, for all ministers, just keep an eye on how close you get to that line.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** And at this point in time, there's some guests in the gallery I'd like to introduce.

We have seated in the public gallery, from Valley Gardens Middle School, 75 students under the direction of Alanna Stromberg, and they are guests of the honourable member for Concordia, the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe).

We welcome you here today.

And now it's time for oral questions.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Crime and Public Safety Government Record

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, just yesterday, the Premier said he would work to stop violent crime. And just yesterday, he patted—*[interjection]*—his failed Justice Minister on the head and told him that he was doing a good job.

But since then, Honourable Speaker—and I hope the Premier is listening to this—since then, there's been two more murders right here in Winnipeg. I guess criminals aren't getting the NDP's message, and it's unfortunate that they clap for such a thing.

Cameras, gates, neighbourhood watches, but the NDP's safer communities promise doesn't extend beyond the Premier's personal armoured limo, Honourable Speaker.

When will Manitobans receive the same level of protection as the NDP have given their leader, Honourable Speaker?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to welcome the kids from Valley Gardens to your building, the Manitoba Legislative Building. And I want to say this: we're making Valley Gardens safer; we're making Transcona safer; we're making Winnipeg safer; we're making communities right across this great province safer.

Earlier today, the Minister of Justice announced \$3.3 million in additional support for the Manitoba RCMP's Emergency Response Team. This is an important investment. It's a very important investment that sees highly trained officers, specialists, snipers even, to respond to very serious threats to safety right across this great province.

The member opposite, one of the things that he neglected to mention is that, under their time in office, they cut the number of police officers inside the Perimeter by 55. We're repairing the damage. We're hiring more police, more specialists and we're making every community in Manitoba—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, to the students in the gallery: Do you feel safer than you did a year and a half ago?

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please. Order.

The honourable member will remember that he's supposed to direct his questions through the Chair, not to the opposition, not to people in the public gallery.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Well, Honourable Speaker, to the hundreds and thousands of Manitobans watching today, including possibly those in the gallery: Do you feel safer today in Manitoba than you did a year and a half ago? And the answer is no.

It's because crime in Manitoba has gone significantly up. And it's because of this failed Justice Minister and this failed Premier.

Every single initiative that they talk about, every single idea, every single promise has done nothing, Honourable Speaker, to stop the invasion by armed intruders of rural properties this weekend. And I table the photos for the Premier to check out. The date on these pictures is April 6, literally just days ago.

When can Manitobans expect real action to address the crime sweeping through our communities because nothing they have done to date is working, Honourable Speaker?

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, that's not true at all.

What we're doing in communities is hiring more police officers. When did the PCs start to oppose police?

I know that their interim leader just attacked the RCMP officers that work with me on a daily basis, but I would remind them that Heather Stefanson is the one who started the security detail here in Manitoba.

And when it comes to the officers that we've hired through the Winnipeg Police Service and the RCMP, why do they criticize? These are people who put their lives on the line each and every single day. They don't need PC MLAs who put in 80 days of work a year to come in here and try and call them down.

Again, we're working with communities in schools, as well. We've brought in a school food program so that no kid in Manitoba has to go to school on an empty stomach. That's how you keep Manitoba safer, not just today, but 10 years from now, 20 years from now, 30 years from now.

The members opposite can continue to do their chirping on Facebook, but when it comes to law—

**The Speaker:** Member's time is expired.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, again, to the many Manitobans that are watching and are actually taking these questions in—and situation seriously: It was the NDP government—this Premier and his Cabinet ministers—that actually walked to defund the police.

In the MacGregor property invasion, Honourable Speaker, there are two firearms. And I will be tabling the picture of the masked identities for the Premier to check out. These pictures are not from a Hollywood movie; these occurred just 120 kilometres from this very building.

The NDP solution is encouraging Manitobans to barricade their homes and properties. Rural Manitobans have to hurry up and wait. The NDP are creating a two-tiered justice system, Honourable Speaker. Every Justice announcement the NDP have made to date did nothing to prevent what these homeowners have experienced.

Can the Premier look at these photos and tell the victims exactly how he has made them safer, Honourable Speaker?

**Mr. Kinew:** Honourable Speaker, \$3.3 million more for the RCMP's emergency response team. That's an investment that we've made to date.

We're talking about highly trained, specialized law enforcement officers. Some of them are snipers. It doesn't get more strong than that when it comes to responding to rural crime.

What did the PCs do during their time in office, though? What happened 40 kilometres away from MacGregor? Well, they closed the Agassiz Youth Centre. What happened in Dauphin, not too far north from MacGregor? They closed the Dauphin jail.

They cut hundreds of policing positions across the province during their time in office.

So again, we are here today working with you to make our province safer. It's tough to repair the damage overnight that was caused by seven and a half years of cuts and closures of justice facilities and jails in Manitoba. But we're up to the task. We're making real investments. We're listening—

**The Speaker:** Member's time is expired.

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

\* (13:50)

### **Manitoba Industries Carbon Tax Inquiry**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, and this Premier stood up in front of the cameras, in 2023, as he usually does and promised that things would be getting better. Crime has gotten extremely worse.

Honourable Speaker, yesterday, the Premier's environment minister admitted in this Chamber that this government, this NDP government, is spending millions to create a brand new Manitoba carbon tax on industry and on jobs. But there are very—there's no details on this tax in the Premier's budget.

Why is this NDP government secretly designing a new tax on industry and ultimately on you, the consumer in the middle of an affordability crisis and trade uncertainty with the United States? And will the Premier explain why he's hiding this new carbon tax on Manitoba jobs from the very people who will be paying for it, Honourable Speaker?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Oh no, no, no, no. I'm the guy who cut the gas tax. I cut the gas tax for our first year in government to save you money. And then at the end of that year, which was our election commitment, we promised we'd cut it for six to 12 months and we made that gas tax cut for 12 beautiful months.

You know what we decided? We looked around and you said, You know what? Let's make it permanent. So we brought in permanent relief on the provincial gas tax. And you know what happened on April 1st of this year? On April 1st of this year, the carbon tax: poof, gone. Just like the member opposite's political career and his time in government: poof, it's not there any more.

And you know who the federal government pointed to when they said we now know that there's a progressive approach to cutting emissions without charging people money? They said it was the Premier of Manitoba.

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, and to those Manitobans watching from home and those in the gallery, this is the Premier that increased the gas tax by the largest amount in the history of Manitoba.

This new NDP carbon tax targets industry. The more they grow, the more they hire, the more they'll

be taxed. Let's call this what it is. It is a tax on jobs and the economic growth. So Manitobans deserve to know: how high will the new NDP carbon tax be? What will it cost a saw mill? A trucking company? A grain dryer? Steel manufacturers?

This Premier owes Manitobans straight answers. How much will this new NDP carbon tax add to the cost of doing business right here in the great province of Manitoba, Honourable Speaker?

**Mr. Kinew:** This is such a bad issue for the PCs. Again, we cut the provincial gas tax to zero; to absolutely nothing for one year to save you money. And then you know what we did, after we heard from Manitobans that that was really making a difference? We said, you know what? Why don't we make these savings permanent? Why don't we bring about permanent relief to the gas tax?

And so, what I would say to the members opposite is this: Pull out the calculators, do a little math and you tell me this, is the gas tax less today than it was during your entire time in office? Yes, it is.

And not only did the federal government point to our administration and say that you can reduce emissions without charging a consumer-facing carbon tax, I want to point out the members who were here in the PC government days, each and every single one of them voted in favour of a carbon tax, not once, not twice.

I'm going to table an article from the Lac—from the Beausejour Clipper about the PC government's—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired. *[interjection]*

Order. Order. Order. Order.

I'd just remind the First Minister that when the Speaker stands up and says your time's up, your time's up. Your mic gets shut off. Nobody can hear you anyway.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Thank you for your guidance and as we saw yesterday, this Premier doesn't play by any rules. He walks to his own beat of his own drum.

Let's be clear, Honourable Speaker, while President Trump is actively working to undermine our economy to steal Manitoba jobs, this Premier's finding a new and creative ways to tax our industries and raise the cost of living right here in Manitoba.

The federal government has walked back its own carbon tax on consumers. Premier Scott Moe is moving to scrap Saskatchewan's industrial carbon tax. So let me ask: Who in their right mind launches a new

carbon tax scheme at a time when we need to increase our competitiveness, not just nationally but in a global economy under threat?

How does this Premier expect Manitoba to compete with our neighbours when his answer is more taxes on industry? Will he get up today, apologize, and scrap the tax that his minister had said from yesterday, Honourable Speaker?

**Mr. Kinew:** He can't even get the slogan right. What are you talking about, scrap the tax? It's axe the tax. Even I know that.

Part of the reason I know that is because I met with Mr. Poilievre, and I'm very sorry to say that after that meeting, Mr. Poilievre went into the hallway of this esteemed building and he said some very nice things about me. And now the member opposite has to go and vote for Mr. Poilievre, knowing full well that Mr. Poilievre is very complimentary about things that we're doing in government.

So, just to review, Honourable Speaker. We cut the provincial gas tax. We made sure that the federal government removed the carbon tax from consumers in Canada. And the one question that's still remaining unresolved: this article about the PC government's carbon tax that these members voted in favour of twice that was published in the *Beausejour Clipper*. Who wrote it? It sure looks like the member for Lac du Bonnet who tried to make it a political issue. But again, I'll leave the member opposite to tell me whether he still—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

#### **Interlake School Division Funding Property Tax Increase Concerns**

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** Honourable Speaker, this minister and their government is great at inflating their accomplishments while deflecting blame and passing the buck on to their all-too-frequent mistakes.

They claim their education funding increases but, in reality, they amount to less than inflation. Interlake School Division received a 1 per cent funding increase this year from the government, which is no increase at all.

Can the minister explain why Interlake School Division has received a de facto funding cut this year?

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** I want to thank the member opposite for their question. It's been a full two weeks since the opposition Education critic vacated

his seat and left this failed party behind. They have yet to name an Education critic. I'm not sure if it's the member opposite; if it is, I congratulate him.

The fact is, Honourable Speaker, where they cut, we will build. That's what we announced in Budget 2025. Manitobans know who they can rely on when it comes to the funding of education in our province, and that's the Manitoba NDP.

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

**Mr. King:** Honourable Speaker, diving deeper into Interlake's budget reveals something that is more shocking than the funding cut. It's the increased burden being placed on taxpayers. The municipal portion of Interlake School Division's budget indicates a 19.5 per cent increase. This means that real out-of-pocket property taxes have increased dramatically under this government.

Will the minister take responsibility for the financial strain their government has put on taxpayers?

**MLA Schmidt:** I do take my role as minister incredibly seriously, which is why we are so proud of the funding we've been able to provide school division: \$170-million increase in just our first two budgets, Honourable Speaker.

This is funding—the reality is we are playing catch-up. School divisions were underfunded year after year after year after year under the previous failed PC government under the leadership of Heather Stefanson, Brian Pallister. Manitobans know and school divisions know who they can count on. And what we won't do, which the members opposite love to do, is to tax school divisions and create further division in this province.

We are here to work with school divisions. We are here to fund our school divisions, ultimately to support students—

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

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

\* (14:00)

**Mr. King:** Honourable Speaker, this is all par for the course for this NDP government. They're wilfully blind to their actions. They know that when they cut funding to school divisions that the shortfall will have to be made up elsewhere. But they throw up their hands and say, we didn't do it.



They blame school divisions, they blame municipalities and the economy, but never themselves. This government has two budgets under their belt. The time for passing the buck is over.

Will the—when will this minister and their government start taking responsibility for their actions and stop blaming the very people dependent on them?

**MLA Schmidt:** What the member opposite has said could not be further than the truth. The member opposite—I challenge the member opposite to find a situation in which we have blamed school divisions or that we have blamed municipalities.

We are—on this side of the House we're here to work with school divisions, we're here to work with municipalities and we're here to fund schools. I take this very seriously.

And, again, I wonder where the education critic for the Tories is? Grant Jackson up and quit. My only question is, who's next? Is it the member opposite? All the member opposite has to do is look to his right and see the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan) thanking Donald Trump. Maybe he can look further to the right and see Wally riding a polar bear, which I will table for this House, because I believe this is of important record for the province of Manitoba.

Who does the member opposite stand with?

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please. Order.

I would remind all members that when they're tabling documents, they shouldn't be waving them around like props. Just go ahead and table them.

#### **Provincial Economic Forecast—Recession Concerns Financial Impact on Businesses and Manitobans**

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** Leading economists are clear that a Canadian recession is now inevitable. The only questions are how long it will last and how deep it will cut.

The Bank of Canada Q1 Business Outlook Survey and Survey of Consumer Expectations released yesterday shows business sentiment has fallen to its lowest level in years, while consumers are more worried about job security and inflation. I table that for the minister.

Forty per cent of Canadians are saying they are worse off than they were a year ago, and one in five cite housing costs as a top financial strain affecting their spending decisions. Yet this minister claims Manitobans will spend more into the economy while increasing their taxes and property taxes.

Will this minister release his department's economic analysis as other provinces such as BC have done?

**Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance):** Honourable Speaker, there's no question we're facing challenges due to the Trump tariffs, but all I can say is thank God we do not have a Conservative government right now in Manitoba navigating that.

We were very proud recently to release our Budget 2025 where we announced the way we're going to Trump-proof our economy with, first of all, \$3.7 billion in capital investments. We are going to build, build, build this province: 11 schools, 3 PCHs, the Vic ER; we're going to build new energy infrastructure.

We're getting the job done that the members opposite didn't do for seven and a half years. We know that that's the best way to grow our economy, protect jobs. We're going to create 18,000 jobs in Manitoba over the next year through those investments.

We're going to keep focusing on protecting our economy, protecting jobs, and we're not going—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Midland, on a supplementary question.

**Mrs. Stone:** This minister's budget failed to actually have the economic realities that Manitobans are facing. Economists for months have been warning about a possible economic recession, and they painted a rosy, in-the-clouds picture as to what's to come.

According to Stats Canada, under this minister's watch, since October of 2023 when he took office, almost 10,000 more Manitobans are unemployed. In addition, economists are forecasting a 10 per cent of Manitoba jobs will be directly impacted and vulnerable to the ongoing economic fallout. The BOS indicator fell in Q1, and the Bank of Canada survey has shown business confidence is down, and the worse may still be ahead with a third of businesses anticipating an economic recession within the next 12 months.

Investment plans, hiring intentions are all falling. I table—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**MLA Sala:** Honourable Speaker, Manitobans can always count on this government to be transparent, and they know that that's very different than what they received for seven and a half years under the members opposite. They left Manitobans, as we've spoken about

in this House many times, with a \$2-billion hole. And we know that before they left, prior to the election, they misled Manitobans with their update, July 28, prior to the last election.

And they did that, of course, to mischaracterize our fiscal position in the hopes that they could mislead Manitobans into somehow finding another path into government. They tried to fool Manitobans. They were dishonest. We've spoken to that. We had an independent accounting firm, MNP. This wasn't the NDP analysis that showed that out. It was an independent accounting firm that proved that they misled Manitobans.

We will—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

**Mrs. Stone:** It is so clear that this minister and this NDP government have no grasp on the economic realities that are facing Manitoba and Canadians today. It's now even more apparent that this NDP failed to address the economic storm that experts have been warning about for months. Economists are predicting massive impacts on hiring, wages, business investment, mortgage costs, yet this minister is still proposing to collect more in income taxes and more on housing property taxes.

Manitobans are concerned they won't be able to make their mortgage payments and maybe not even afford their house. This NDP is completely out of touch with the economic realities that are facing Manitobans. This was not a tariff-proof budget. It was not a recession-proof 'budeg.'

What is the minister going to do to support those Manitobans that are going to lose their homes and their jobs in the next coming months?

**MLA Sala:** Honourable Speaker, we've brought forward a budget that, again, is a \$3.7-billion capital plan that's going to create 18,000 jobs in Manitoba. What are they talking about? We invested in NFI, Magellan. Oh, a new gold mine is opening up in Manitoba—

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

**MLA Sala:** *[inaudible]*. A gold mine.

We are creating jobs—

**An Honourable Member:** It's a literal gold mine.

**MLA Sala:** —and this budget will support that. It's a literal gold mine.

A payroll tax cut going to create a more investable Manitoba. We brought in, of course, a permanent gas tax cut. We brought in foreign investments in tourism to bring more people in Manitoba to see our beautiful province. We're getting the job done.

### **Manitoba Emergency Rooms Wait Times and Violent Incidents**

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** The Manitoba Nurses Union is again raising the alarm after yet another nurse was violently assaulted at work, this time at the Grace Hospital emergency department. I will table their social media post from this morning.

The NDP government's response was to reward the attacker by fast-tracking their care, giving them priority over law-abiding patients waiting hours in the ER only to be cut in line by a violent criminal.

I'll quote straight from the post and ask the questions the nurses asked today to this minister: How is this an appropriate response? How does this protect staff from future harm?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** Honourable Speaker, that member should probably stand up at some point in her place and apologize to nurses and health-care workers across this province, because for seven and a half years, the PC government, when they were in power, did less than nothing to keep nurses and front-line health-care workers safe. In fact, they did the opposite. They closed emergency rooms, they cut services and they fired front-line health-care workers. That member and members opposite are the reason why our health-care system is where it is today.

But on this side of the House, we're focused on solutions, which is why we are taking very real action to improve safety and security across the province. I'll share more about that in my next response.

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

**Mrs. Cook:** Well, that answer provided no comfort to nurses at Grace Hospital today.

And while we're talking about ER wait times at the Grace, let's have a look at the most up-to-date data available, which I will also table. ER wait times at the—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Cook:** —Grace Hospital have spiraled out of control. The median wait time has increased by almost two hours compared to this time last year, and one out of 10 patients are now waiting an additional five hours before receiving care than they were a year ago. These are some of the worst wait times we've ever seen.

How much worse does it have to get before the NDP take responsibility for their failures and stop making excuses?

**MLA Asagwara:** Honourable Speaker, I have a question for that member: What did she think would happen to the health-care system when she was advocating to close three major emergency rooms in Winnipeg?

What did she think would happen when she was saying: You know what we should do in Manitoba? We should close 23 EMS stations across rural Manitoba.

What was she thinking when she said: You know what we should do? We should fire hundreds of nurses and freeze the wages of health-care workers.

That member opposite has no credibility on health care because she is part of the reason our health-care system struggles. That member on that side of the House would do better to stand up and apologize to Manitobans.

On this side of the House, we're going to keep fixing the damage that she did.

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

\* (14:10)

**Mrs. Cook:** They'd do better to take responsibility for their own record and put forward some solutions, because it's not just at the Grace. ER wait times have hit near 10-year highs all across Winnipeg. Wait times are up at HSC, St. Boniface, Children's, Victoria urgent care, putting patients at risk and overwhelming health-care workers.

And the NDP's solution? You assault a nurse, you get to cut the line. This is completely unacceptable. The NDP campaigned solely on health care. The NDP promised to lower ER wait times in their Throne speech in two budgets, and they are completely failing to deliver.

When will the NDP actually do something about the crisis in Winnipeg ERs?

**MLA Asagwara:** Honourable Speaker, our government has added nearly 300 new beds fully staffed to the health-care system. We've added well over 1,255 net-new health-care workers. We have reopened emergency rooms closed by that member opposite and members in that caucus, whose only focus was to cut and close and damage health care.

On this side of the House we are doing the very real work that Manitobans sent us here to do, and that is to fix the generational damage done to health care by that member and members on that side of the House. We are focused on fixing health care, repairing relationships that they damaged and making sure that health care in our future is stronger than its ever been. We're going to keep doing that work—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

#### **Brandon Correctional Centre Death Family's Letter to Justice Minister**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** Yesterday this minister stood in the House and discussed communicating with the family of a man who died under this minister's watch. Except he hasn't. The letter from a grieving mother and father lay unanswered on the minister's desk, and we know that because I tabled a fresh copy for him yesterday.

The minister's staff had a very brief conversation with a different family member, but the mother and father have yet been ignored.

When the minister finds the time to answer this letter, I hope he finds the time to talk to the parents as well, since he wanted to pretend that yesterday he already had.

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Well, once again, Honourable Speaker, our heart goes out to all victims of crime and, in this case, specifically this family.

Our office, as I said yesterday, our office has been in touch with the family, and not only were we able to connect with them to talk about their grief and their loss, but also talk about solutions, about a path forward, about supporting that family, but, of course, supporting all families of victims of crime in our province.

That has been a focus of our government. It is in our public safety strategy, which we developed and released last fall. The member opposite should take a look.

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

### **Crime in Rural Manitoba RCMP Staffing Levels**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** Yesterday, I gave this minister a new copy of the letter, but he couldn't even be bothered to read it. It's a common thread for this minister, since he wouldn't give any assurances to the constituents of my colleagues from Agassiz yesterday either. The minister's half measures aren't working.

This weekend, farmers chased armed thieves off properties and tailed them for 30 minutes, and I table that article. Vigilant justice is not a solution, but Manitobans are feeling unserved and vulnerable.

When will the minister act to bring real safety for Manitobans, rather than headlining nine more Manitoba RCMP positions that will remain vacant under this NDP government?

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Well, as I said, Honourable Speaker, we've talked with the family and we're committed to continuing that dialogue, learning from them about steps we can take to further support, again, their specific circumstance, but for all Manitobans.

But it's all about listening, Honourable Speaker, and that's what our government is all about. That's why when we went out across the province we talked to communities, all different corners of this province, about public safety. We heard great ideas and great ways that we can support law enforcement.

Of course, we increased our budget 28 per cent last year, a 2 per cent escalator going forward, but now we're giving additional resources like our additional \$3.3 million for the RCMP emergency response team. That's in Budget 2025, and it's just one of the many measures we're taking to listen to Manitobans—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

**Mr. Balcaen:** So let's be clear as to what is actually happening here. The minister is once again single-handedly ensuring rural Manitoba is left void of the few boots on the ground that are presently serving our rural communities. The minister is stealing nine members that could be the first responders to these violent incidents and just to satisfy his hunger for headlines.

So I ask again: Will this minister provide the 30 per cent staff the RCMP are already short so they can stop calling in members from other provinces to fill these shifts?

**Mr. Wiebe:** I'm surprised, honestly, Honourable Speaker, that the member opposite would advocate for defunding the police in this province. In fact, what we're talking about is adding additional resources, additional boots on the ground. And, as the Premier (Mr. Kinew) mentioned earlier, this is a highly trained, highly skilled response team, a group of individuals that will support local law enforcement.

Again, I'm surprised the member opposite doesn't realize the impact that this can have in supporting law enforcement across this province. We know that it starts with stable, predictable funding and partnerships with law enforcement, but it goes further. It continues to listen to communities, build on successes, and in this case support directly the RCMP and the needs that they have.

This emergency response team will go a long way making our communities safer.

### **Waste Water Lagoon Project in Armstrong Environmental Assessment and Consultations**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Lake Winnipeg commercial fishers are concerned about the provincial government's recent decision to forgo a recommendation to have the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission conduct an environmental assessment and hearing of a proposed new waste water lagoon in the RM of Armstrong.

Since the project was announced, significant concerns have been raised by stakeholders, including Indigenous groups, local community members, environmental organizations and fisheries experts.

Can the minister address some of the concerns that have been shared with this government?

**Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** Well, I want to thank the member for bringing up important issues like water. For two terms in government, there was nothing done on water, and that's why we are coming at it with a new approach where we are consulting with municipalities, where we are working with all different types of stakeholders. We're having those regular meetings to ensure that we're doing that good work. *[interjection]*

Members opposite like to chirp. They want to heckle right now but, instead, we are just going to get

down to business and ensure that we're doing the good work and ensuring that the water in Manitoba is clean.

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

**MLA Lamoureux:** I've been told that local communities have written letters to the minister responsible just this past December. These letters outlined three major environmental impacts of approving the lagoon, including how these pollutants, animal by-products, can kill fish populations, how it can contribute further to phosphate and nitrogen loading into Lake Winnipeg and how it could further cause cumulative effects on the environment from the pollutants it will release. I table an article with these details.

Honourable Speaker, who did this government consult with for this project?

**MLA Moyes:** We have a number of initiatives that are working on the issue of water. It's—we've have incredible work done. We are very proud of the new Clean Environment Commission, which we recently announced, led by the incredible Aimée Craft. We are so—we are going to be so excited to let her do that good work on water, and we are going to continue to work with stakeholders across the province.

So we have no issue with that. We are going to criss-cross the province and ensure that we're working with all municipalities to get these decisions right.

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

**MLA Lamoureux:** Honourable Speaker, concerned citizens have requested halting the approval of this project until further consultation has taken place with Indigenous groups, local communities, environmental organizations and fisheries experts.

Will this government agree to hold off on approving the lagoon until these appropriate consultations have taken place?

**MLA Moyes:** One of the things that I can say is that consultation and actually listening, unlike members opposite, to different stakeholders, to different community groups, to those people that are in those communities, is incredibly important and that's exactly what we are going to do.

We are always willing to listen to those people that are going to be affected, including First Nations, including different communities. And we will listen to experts and scientists, unlike members opposite for two terms.

### **Winnipeg Jets Return of Whiteout Street Party**

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** Honourable Speaker, great news. Whiteout street parties are coming back to downtown Winnipeg. With the Jets at the top of their game, Manitobans are ready to get together to celebrate and to cheer on the best team in the NHL, the Winnipeg Jets.

\* (14:20)

Manitobans are ready. The Jets are ready. It's time to show our pride in our team, our city, our province and our country.

Can the Premier please share more about this exciting news and invite all Manitobans to join us as we cheer on the Winnipeg Jets at the Whiteout street parties?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to thank my colleague from St. Boniface for this timely, hockey-loving question. Thank you so much.

The Winnipeg Jets are the best team in hockey, and Winnipeg is the best hockey town in the league, and Manitoba is the No. 1 hockey jurisdiction, bar none, anywhere in the entire world.

This year, we get another chance to prove it. Every single Winnipegger, every single Manitoban is invited to come to downtown Winnipeg for the Whiteout street parties.

I was very, very proud to be there with Mayor Scott Gillingham, with the Winnipeg Jets organization and many Winnipeg Jets superfans, including Dancing Gabe, to invite you all downtown to cheer on our Winnipeg Jets as they go on a long, illustrious, amazing run through the NHL playoffs.

This is one thing that unites every single Manitoban, except of course for the PCs—

**The Speaker:** Member's time is expired.

### **Agriculture and Agri-Food Processing Industrial Carbon Tax Exemption Request**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** Honourable Speaker, Saskatchewan has indicated that they're removing the industrial carbon tax.

On the other hand, this government just recently announced that they're spending \$7.3 million finding ways to increase the carbon tax, drive away investment and kill agriculture. And I'll table that.

Minister and I both know the value of agriculture and agri-food processing.

Can you confirm that agriculture and agri-food processing are exempt from this new tax?

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

I just remind the member once again that you cannot say you. You cannot direct your questions directly across the way. You have to direct them through the Chair.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture—oh, sorry about that—the honourable First Minister.

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I couldn't contain myself. I had to leap to my feet to say we have the best Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kostyshyn) in the entire country right here in the MLA for Dauphin.

Now, of course, there is no carbon tax in Manitoba. We brought in relief when it comes to the gas tax because we are on a path to net zero while saving you money.

I do, however, want to educate my colleague from Portage la Prairie. Again, if you look to his right, the member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk), in the Star and Times in 2018, voted twice for a PC bill. He was quoted in the Stars and Times in saying, he was quoted: I feel very confident with this plan, \$25-per-ton carbon tax—that was applied by him.

He can look ahead to the minister for—former minister from Riding Mountain, who again, on the PC caucus website in 2018 said he was voting for what? A \$25-a-ton carbon tax. He can look to the front row, to the member for Turtle—

**The Speaker:** Member's time is expired. *[interjection]*

Order.

Once again remind the Premier that when the Speaker stands up and says your time is done, you're supposed to sit down.

The time for question period has expired.

## PETITIONS

### Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

**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) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all of the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and 'implement'—implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increase bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

This petition has been signed by Francine Nelson, Kevin Nelson, Kim Skor and many, many other fine Manitobans.

## House Business

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** On House business.

**The Speaker:** The honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

**MLA Fontaine:** Pursuant to rule 34(11), I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members'

business will be one put forward by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux). The title of the resolution is Calling on the Provincial Government to Recognize the Valuable Role That the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra Plays in Manitoba Communities.

**The Speaker:** It has been announced that, pursuant to rule 34(11), that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Tyndall Park. The title of the resolution is Calling on the Provincial Government to Recognize the Valuable Role that the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra Plays in Manitoba Communities.

\* \* \*

**The Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, resuming petitions.

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This tragedy was entirely preventable.

\* (14:30)

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision, and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for the continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

Honourable Speaker, this petition is signed by A. Schirp, A. Vandine, K. Vivier, and many other fine Manitobans.

### 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.

*Mr. Diljeet Brar, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

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

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

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

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

There are currently hundreds of children on a wait-list for child care in Headingley. The daycare operator in Phoenix School has been told that they will

continue to have space within the school for the 2024-2025 school year only, that further expansion of child-care space within the school is not possible and that space may be reduced moving forward due to the shortage of classrooms. If new space is not constructed as planned, many families may be left without child care.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this petition is signed by Marian Craig, Blaine Clapham, Todd Martin, and many, many other Manitobans.

#### **Amending The Winnipeg Foundation Act**

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Winnipeg Foundation Act was amended by the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in 2011, but in the ensuing years, changes in the method of governance of The Winnipeg Foundation board have necessitated an update to the act.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To amend The Winnipeg Foundation Act by:

(a) Removing the requirement that the mayor of the City of Winnipeg be a director of The Winnipeg Foundation; and

(b) Removing a requirement that copies of the audited financial statement be provided to the public on request, and that information respecting the financial statement be published in a newspaper; and

(c) Ensuring that the information respecting the audit of the financial statement of The Winnipeg Foundation be published on its website.

Signed by director of the Winnipeg Foundation, Sky Bridges.

Thank you.

#### **Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices**

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

The background to this petition is as follows:

In 2022, according to Statistics Canada, there was an 11.4 per cent increase in food prices.

(2) Staple food products such as baked goods, margarine and other oils, dairy products and eggs have seen some of the largest price increases.

(3) Agriculture and agri-food sectors contribute close to 10 per cent of Manitoba's GDP.

(4) There are increased costs added at every step of the process for Manitoba's agriculture producers. In order to make 18 cents from one bread of loaf worth of wheat, farmers are paying carbon tax at every stage of production to grow the crop and get it to market.

(5) Grain drying, fertilizer and chemical production, mushroom farming, hog operations, the cost of heating a livestock barn, machine shops and utility buildings are all examples of how the carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels cost farmers and consumers more each year.

(6) In food production, there are currently no viable alternatives to natural gas and propane. The carbon tax takes money away from farmers, making them less profitable and hindering rural agricultural producers' ability to invest in upgrades and improve efficiency while reducing emissions.

(7) The provincial government neglected farmers in the six-month fuel tax holiday until the opposition critic and local stakeholder groups called for their inclusion.

(8) Other provincial jurisdictions and leaders have taken action on calling on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax and/or stop collecting the carbon tax altogether.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to call on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels and farm inputs for Manitoba agriculture producers and the agri-food sector to decrease the costs of putting food on the table for Manitoba consumers.

This is signed by Ernest Doell, Crystal Malenko, Lori Schroeder and many, many more Manitobans.



**Death of Jordyn Reimer—Judicial Review Request**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** I wish to present the following petition.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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 investigation provided adequate evidence to meet the charging standard and recommended charges be laid against this accomplice. The Crown prosecutor declined to prosecute the accomplice.

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

(6) As recently as 2022, there is a precedent to refer criminal files of decisions to not proceed with prosecution to extra-provincial departments of justice for review. This was done with Peter—the Peter Nygård file, which ultimately led to a reversal in the decision to not prosecute, and charges were laid.

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

\* (14:40)

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

(9) In 20–December 2024, the Winnipeg Police Service 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) Manitoba deserves to have confidence in the provincial government and the 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 is signed by Jessica Gusperchuk [*phonetic*], Michelle Hildebrand, Tracey Moore and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

**Provincial Trunk Highway 34**

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly 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 Rod Bornn, Tim Reimer and Wayne Early and many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

#### **Funding Crime Cost Mitigation for Small Business**

**Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) Small businesses are vital in supporting their local economy and the provincial government has a responsibility to act and support them.

(2) The recent increase in vigilantism shows that Manitobans do not trust this provincial government to fulfill its responsibility.

(3) More than half—54 per cent—of small businesses in Manitoba are impacted by crime. Property damage, theft, littering and public intoxication are some of the crimes that affect most businesses. According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business there has been a 44 per cent increase in shoplifting incidents over the last year.

(4) In order to combat this rise in crime, small businesses try unaided to implement various out-of-pocket security measures and safety training for their staff and they face increasing costs when they incur property damage or theft.

(5) Vandalism, break-ins and other senseless acts cannot be accepted as a cost of doing business for businesses throughout Manitoba, and the provincial government must do more to ease the burdens small businesses are carrying with its catch-and-release justice system.

(6) Failing to support small businesses is failing the Manitoba economy, failing Manitoba families and failing Manitobans' dreams.

(7) The security rebate program in place for homeowners and small businesses does not cover the real costs impacting businesses such as vandalism, property damage and repairs.

We urge the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support Manitoba small businesses through specific funding

to reimburse the expenses and insurance deductibles that they incur as a result of crime.

And this petition has been signed by Ann Wolfe, Tina Hildebrandt, Susan Peters and many, many Manitobans.

#### **Little Mountain Park**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

(2) The proposed path would eliminate a portion of Little Mountain Park, which abuts Kimpke *[phonetic]* Road, private residences and the neighbouring Little Mountain Sportsplex.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

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

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

#### **MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

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

\* (14:50)

(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 Portage regional health facility is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Diana McIntyre—McIndyre [*phonetic*], Christine Tremblay and Rebecca Blake, and many other Manitobans.

#### **Medical Assistance in Dying**

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Thank you, honourable Deputy Chair, and I think I've forgotten to congratulate you. So congratulation on your appointment. But I do wish to petition the following.

The legislative—to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, these are the reasons for the petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition;

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery, and medical assistance in living, not death.

This petition is signed by Kaylie Specula, Julianna Roberts, Brett Johnson, and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Chair.

### **Provincial Road 227**

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) As part of ongoing strategic infrastructure investments to the provincial highway network, it was announced in August 2022 that almost \$70 million would be spent on upgrades to provincial road 227.

(2) Over 72 kilometres of PR 227 were to be paved, along with the repair or replacement of three bridges and multiple drainage works.

(3) Reeves, mayors, councillors and residents of the surrounding municipalities, cities, towns and villages were ecstatic and overwhelmingly supportive of this plan.

(4) The planned PR 227 was to connect Highway 16 with Highway 6, thus creating an alternative route to Highway 1.

(5) PR 227 was to be part of Manitoba's trade and commerce grid initiative, an expanded grid of highways that can accommodate heavy commercial loading that will attract new industrial activity, reduce transportation costs and optimize supply chain efficiency, which will benefit all Manitobans.

(6) The 2023 multi-year infrastructure investment strategy is a five-year, \$4.1-billion investment in Manitoba's roads, highways, bridges, airports and flood protection. The paving of PR 227 was part of this strategy.

(7) The Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure has cut the PR 227 project, notwithstanding that the project appears in the multi-year infrastructure investment strategy and listed on the Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure website as an active project.

(8) Additional keystone projects in the 2023 multi-year infrastructure investment strategy were the Winnipeg One Million Perimeter Freeway Initiative, the Lake St. Martin and Lake Manitoba outlet channels, and the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway to the Ontario border. The actions of the NDP government now bring into question whether any of these projects will be completed as planned.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to immediately restore funding to the PR 227 paving project.

(2) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to commit to Manitobans to carry out all of the projects as outlined in the 2023 multi-year infrastructure investment strategy in their totality, to the same scope and in accordance with already stated timelines.

This petition has been signed by Josef Upgang, Henry Hueging and Tom Rouse, and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

\* (15:00)

### **Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices**

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

In 2022, according to Statistics Canada, there was an 11.4 per cent increase in food prices.

(2) Staple food prices such as baked goods, margarine and other oils, dairy products and eggs have seen some of the largest price increases.

(3) Agriculture and agri-food sectors combine—contribute close to 10 per cent of Manitoba's GDP.

(4) There are increased costs added at every step of the process for Manitoba's agriculture producers. In order to make just 18 cents from one loaf worth of wheat, farmers are paying carbon tax at every stage of production to grow the crop and to get it to market.

(5) Grain drying, fertilizer and chemical production, mushroom farming, hog operations, the cost of heating a livestock barn, machine shops and utility buildings are all examples of how carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels cost farmers and consumers more each year.

(6) In food production there are currently no viable alternatives to natural gas and propane. The carbon tax takes money away from farmers, making them less profitable and hindering rural agricultural producers' ability to invest in upgrades and improve efficiency while reducing emissions.

(7) The provincial government neglected farmers in the six-month fuel tax holiday until the opposition critic and local stakeholder groups called for their inclusion.

(8) Other provincial jurisdictions and leaders have taken action on calling on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax and/or stop collecting the carbon tax altogether.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to call on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon

tax on natural gas and other fuels from farm inputs and Manitoba agriculture producers and the agri-food sector to decrease the costs of putting food on the table for Manitoba consumers.

This petition has been signed by Barry Hawrysh, Rick Rivers, Bill Mollard and many other fine Manitobans.

### **Removal of Federal Carbon Tax**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

(4) The federal government has selectively removed the carbon tax off of home heating oil in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, but has indicated they have no intention to provide the same relief to Manitobans heating their homes.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Candice Narth, Landon Hudson, Charlene Nikkel and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders**

**Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with a long criminal history.

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. This 'tragedy'—tragedy was entirely preventable.

(3) While the Criminal Code falls under federal jurisdiction, provinces have been given the responsibility for the administration of justice, allowing for meaningful provincial action on bail reform to ensure public safety.

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail enforcement, but Manitoba has not used all the available tools to address this issue effectively.

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

(6) Immediate action is required to close gaps in the justice system that allow dangerous criminals to remain free, which puts innocent Manitobans at risk.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious defects in enforcement by utilizing all available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to immediately repeal provisions of the Criminal Code that allow for continued victimization of law-abiding Manitobans while granting repeat offenders additional rights.

This petition is signed by Shelly Best, Madison Zurwich [*phonetic*], Brighton Webb and many, many more Manitobans.

### **Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices**

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) In 2022, according to Statistics Canada, there was an 11.4 per cent increase in food prices.

\* (15:10)

(2) Staple food products such as baked goods, margarine and other oils, dairy products and eggs have seen some of the largest price increases.

(3) Agriculture and the agri-food sectors contribute close to 10 per cent of Manitoba's GDP.

(4) There are increased costs added at every step of the process for Manitoba's agriculture producers. In order to make 18 cents from one bread loaf worth of wheat, farmers are paying carbon tax at every stage of production to grow the crop and get it to market.

(5) Grain drying, fertilizer and chemical production, mushroom farming, hog operations, the cost of heating a livestock barn, machine shops and utility buildings are all examples of how the carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels cost farmers and consumers more each year.

(6) In food production there are currently no viable alternatives to natural gas and propane. The carbon tax takes money away from farmers, making them less profitable and hindering rural agriculture producers' ability to invest in upgrades and improve efficiency while reducing emissions.

(7) The provincial government neglected farmers in the six-month fuel tax holiday until the opposition critic and local stakeholder groups called for their inclusion.

(8) Other provincial jurisdictions and leaders have taken action on calling on the federal government to improve the punishing carbon tax and/or stop collecting the carbon tax altogether.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to call on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels and farm inputs for Manitoba agriculture producers and the agri-food sector to decrease the costs of putting food on the table for Manitoba consumers.

This petition is signed by Sandra Bancraft [*phonetic*], Isabelle Adams, Bonito Goertz and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Support for Border Communities**

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain):** I petition the following petition for the—with the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) Illegal border crossing into Manitoba has increased by 14 per cent in 2024, raising significant public safety and security concerns, particular in border communities.

(2) Changes to the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement have driven migrants deeper into hiding to avoid apprehension, making law enforcement efforts more difficult.

(3) Border patrol officials believe that the criminal organizations, including Mexican cartels, are involved in smuggling operations at the border, posing serious security threats to Manitoba.

(4) Human smuggling networks are abandoning valuable immigrants, including families, in isolated and dangerous locations, exposing them to severe risks, especially during Manitoba's harsh winters.

(5) Border communities are preparing for a possible surge of illegal border crossings, which could overwhelm local resources and emergency search-and-rescue services.

(6) Despite the challenges, there are—has been little communication or support from the provincial and federal governments regarding this plan to assist border communities, leaving them under-resourced and unprepared for managing this escalating crisis.

We petition the Manitoba Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge provincial government to lobby a federal government to develop and implement a comprehensive plan to assist border communities in

managing the rise in illegal border crossings into Manitoba; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to work closely with the federal and local authorities to ensure adequate resources, including funding and support for emergency services, are available to protect local communities, and that immediate measures are taken to dismantle and destroy any human smuggling networks operating in Manitoba.

This petition has been signed by Scott Sambrook, Garry Serruys, Darryll Breemersch and many other Manitobans.

### **Removal of Federal Carbon Tax**

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

(4) The federal government has selectively removed the carbon tax off of home heating oil in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, but has indicated they have no intention to provide the same relief to Manitobans heating their homes.

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

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

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all

Canadian home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Honourable acting deputy Speaker, this petition has been signed by many, many, many, many fine Manitobans.

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** No more petitions? Grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** Can you please call second reading of Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes); followed by Bill 25, The Public-Private Partnerships Transparency and Accountability Act; followed by Bill 10, The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (2).

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** As announced, we will consider second readings of bills 17, 25 and 10.

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill 17—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes)

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** Second reading for Bill 17.

\* (15:20)

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine), that Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques (équité alimentaire pour un apprentissage durable), now be read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

**The Acting Speaker (Diljeet Brar):** It's been moved by Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, seconded by Minister of Families, that Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes), be now read a second time and be referred to committee of this House.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been advised of the bill, and the message has been tabled.

**MLA Schmidt:** It is my privilege to rise today to do the second reading of Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes), or Nello's Law.

So I want to start my remarks today by acknowledging our dear friend, our colleague, the former minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning and the MLA for Transcona, Nello Altomare. And, honourable deputy Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege to serve in this role and to introduce this bill. But I wish that it was Nello that was here today to introduce this bill and to enshrine the legacy that was his work, which is the universal nutrition program.

And I know that I—certainly, I know that everyone on our team and, in fact, everyone in this Chamber has and had a great deal of respect for Nello Altomare, and I hope that we can respect his legacy and that we can come together as an Assembly and have 'unanimous'—unanimous support for this bill, which is ultimately about feeding children.

#### *The Speaker in the Chair*

Nello's life work as an educator impacted the lives of so many students and educators in the River East Transcona School Division and across the province. As opposition critic, Nello championed an accessible and equitable learning experience for all Manitoba children; and as minister responsible, he spearheaded many important initiatives, including our government's \$30-million universal nutrition program.

And I want to thank the Minister of Families for being my sister in this work and for seconding this bill and for championing this work and for being such a good friend and, I know, a mentor to our mutual friend, Nello. I know how much this means to you and how much it means to our team and I want to lift you up. And I'm so proud to do this work alongside you, and I know that Nello would be so proud to be here with us today.

Nello cared so deeply about all kids and their education. He knew that a universal nutrition program was so much more than providing kids with the food



they need. He often spoke about how a nutrition program is about creating a community that looks out for each other, a community where children are supported to be the best they can be, a community that prioritizes education. And already, we've heard from so many schools and school divisions about the amazing impact this program is having.

Park West School Division has noted that not only are more students attending school consistently, they are showing up on time and ready to learn since the implementation of their breakfast program. Mystery Lake and Frontier school divisions have both seen an increase in attendance and in-class engagement since the inception of universal school meal programs.

In Portage la Prairie, we've heard that on a day when buses were cancelled due to cold weather, at one school, 77 per cent of students still attended school that day, up from 30 per cent who would have traditionally attended school on a day like that prior to the school nutrition program.

Metro divisions here in the city have told us that this funding has been transformational and that the number of students being served continues to grow.

This proves what Nello already knew and what Nello taught all of us: that food is not only essential for students' health and well-being, but also their success in the classroom. When we talk about the universal nutrition program, that's why we talk about it as generational change. And we heard our Premier (Mr. Kinew) talk about that just today in question period.

The universal nutrition program, Nello's Law, is and will continue to create generational change for years to come. And I'm so very proud to stand here and bring this bill forward today.

For far too long, food insecurity has been a barrier for many Manitoba children as—and has prevented many students from succeeding in their studies. Our government believes that no child should have to learn on an empty stomach. Research has long shown that well-fed students show an increase in life skills and are better focused in the class and they're more on-track for high school graduation.

Nello was a life-long educator. His willingness to learn from not just experts but also children is what made him such an amazing person. And that's why the universal nutrition program is a quintessential Nello policy. It listens to experts but it puts kids first.

Manitoba's universal nutrition program is the first of its kind in Canada and even inspired the federal government to follow suit and fund a national school food program, Honourable Speaker.

So not only has Nello's leadership made a difference here in our province, the beautiful province of Manitoba, but Nello's universal nutrition program is changing the lives of children across our beautiful country. It's a profound legacy that Nello has left us with.

And our government is continuing on with Nello's legacy in education. We know he would have been proud of Budget 2025, which includes more than \$67 million of an increase for school funding. We've announced 11 new schools, including one in his home division of River East Transcona School Division, in the beautiful riding of Radisson.

Budget 2025 also includes a five-year extension to the Canada-wide child-care agreement providing Manitoba with \$1.9 billion of funding that will help our government expand access to child care across the province.

And, of course, Budget 2025 invests another \$30 million into the universal nutrition program. The benefits of the universal nutrition program are clear. And that's why we are protecting it with Bill 17, Nello's Law. Nello's Law amends The Public Schools Act to make universal school nutrition programs mandatory across the province and ensures the programs in each public school are tailored to meet the specific needs of the students that they serve.

At the heart of our nutrition program are four principles: access, accommodation, equality and quality. Access means every student can participate without stigma and without barriers. Accommodation ensures that we meet the needs of students with food allergies as well as religious or cultural dietary restrictions. Equality ensures that all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, can benefit from these programs. And quality will ensure that these programs must adhere to nutritional standards so that students receive healthy and balanced meals, beverages and snacks.

Guided by those four principles, schools will be required to respond to the needs of the local community and to use food that is locally sourced wherever possible.

Unfortunately, despite all of these clear benefits, we know that there are members in this House that have opposed the universal nutrition program and feeding kids.

Just this last fall, the Leader of the Opposition said in this very Chamber that sandwiches, fruit, vegetables, milk and more are, quote, not a real meal for kids, unquote.

That's why Nello's Law stipulates that Cabinet ministers will be subject to a 20 per cent cut in ministerial salary if a bill is passed to reduce or repeal the legal obligation to provide kids with free nutrition in schools.

\* (15:30)

This measure is important to ensure that the right of every child to have access to nutritious food at school and have the same opportunities to learn and succeed is not reduced or eliminated by any future backward government.

In our November 2024 Throne Speech, we pledged that we would continue to help kids focus on learning, giving them the freedom to be just kids. With Nello's Law, Manitoba will become the first province in Canada to make universally accessible school nutrition programs mandatory, setting a precedent for all other jurisdictions to follow.

With that, Honourable Speaker, I will conclude my marks on this very important bill.

Thank you very much. Merci. Miigwech.

### Questions

**The Speaker:** A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any opposition or independent member in the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic or designate; subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties; subsequent questions asked by each independent member; remaining questions asked by any opposition member. No question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** With the facing-rising costs of food right now, what is the contingency plan if food inflation or supply chain issues cause program costs to outpace the current \$30-million budget?

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** Thank you to the member opposite for the question, and that's one of the reasons why Bill 17 is so important. It's to protect and enshrine the right of every child here in Manitoba to

have access to healthy and nutritious food every single day.

And again, you know, in my opening remarks, I talked about the four guiding principles of accessibility and equality and quality, and so Bill 17 is designed to do exactly what the member is talking about, which is to ensure that no matter what, that all students here in Manitoba will have equal access to nutritious, quality food.

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** To the minister—almost came close to even attempting to answer that question from my colleague.

To the minister: Does the minister believe that the school nutrition program is fully costed and fully funded?

**MLA Schmidt:** When it comes to supporting kids in our classroom, that is our utmost priority, which is why we have brought forward a record, historic, transformational \$30-million annualized investment in a school nutrition program here in Manitoba, to fill the gaps left by the member opposite and his failed government during their—I'm sorry, his failed party during their time in government.

The amount of money that the member opposite invested into feeding children here in Manitoba was zero dollars. On this side of the House, \$30 million; and that \$30 million is going to—

**The Speaker:** Time has expired.

**Mr. Perchotte:** How will the government ensure transparency and accountability for outcomes? Will the reporting obligation in the act include audited financial statements, performance targets, benchmarks?

**MLA Schmidt:** Yes, thank you for the question. And again, there are already annual reporting requirements required here in Manitoba, where school divisions have to report on the universal nutrition program. And while that data is still being collected, it's—it will be reported to us in October and will be released in the next report.

We're already hearing, again, from school administrators, from school trustees about the incredible impacts that this universal nutrition 'progre' is already having. I would urge the member opposite to get out into the schools in his community and ask them how their students are being supported and the amazing outcomes that are already happening in schools—

**The Speaker:** Member's time is expired.

**Mr. Ewasko:** I see that the minister doesn't really want to take that jovial, come together, Kumbaya type of moment here in the Leg. on Bill 17, Nello's Law. *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Has the NDP truly created a universal—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —school food program? Then how come, in the December 2024 report, only 32 per cent of Manitoba's children—students have actually accessed the program?

**MLA Schmidt:** The report that the member opposite is referencing is—concerns a time in which his party was in government. That's the truth.

So thank goodness that 33 per cent of those children were receiving food, thanks to the good work of organizations around Manitoba: philanthropic, not-for-profit, community-based organizations that are committed to delivering food for kids in the classroom. That's what children were relying on prior to the election. They were relying on the goodness and the goodwill of the non-profit sector here in Manitoba.

Thank goodness there's new leadership here in Manitoba. We have a government now that sees the value in feeding children. I would love to know if the member opposite sees value—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mr. Perchotte:** What is the projected number of students that will be receiving the much-needed nutrition under this program?

**MLA Schmidt:** Our universal nutrition program ensures that every child in Manitoba who needs access to food during their school day will have access to that food. That's exactly what it was designed to do. It's designed to help the children most in need.

That is what our government is focused on, is helping Manitobans that—if you are in Manitoba, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) has talked about this—if you live in Manitoba and if you're willing to commit your life, if you're a student that wants to do well in the classroom and succeed in your life, we're going to give you that hand up and that hand up includes the universal school nutrition program.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Well, I see, Honourable Speaker, that the minister has one cheerleader over there in regards

to her answers, but it's unfortunate she continues to put misinformation on the record.

Honourable—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —Speaker, the obligation to report on the school nutrition program was actually established in May of—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The honourable Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) will come to order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** So the obligation to—the—for schools to report on the program was established in May 2023 under our government, and so the minister had not answered my previous question on the fact that only 32 per cent of students, reported in December 2024, which is actually under their government, has accessed the program.

So what types of things is she doing—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**MLA Schmidt:** Honourable Speaker, it's unfortunate that the member opposite, who is currently the interim leader of this party, would get up and put those words on the record, which he knows to be misleading.

The previous government required school divisions to report on a universe—apologies—on a nutrition program that was not delivered by them—not a dollar. Not one dollar was provided to school divisions for school nutrition under the previous government.

Again, schools and school divisions were left to rely on the goodwill and the fantastic folks in Manitoba, folks like Harvest Manitoba, folks like the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba, that were working hard to make sure that students here in Manitoba—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

Just before we move on, I caution the member that suggesting that he—that a member knows to be misleading, is very dangerously close to being unparliamentary, so just choose your words a little more carefully in the future.

\* (15:40)

**Mr. Perchotte:** Can the minister let the House know what is the investment that's been done for infrastructure for the schools to deliver this: for the freezers, refrigerators and the other items required to deliver? Isn't that important? *[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

**MLA Schmidt:** Yes. Thank you to the member opposite for the question, and I'm glad to—I'm surprised that he's not aware. But I'm glad to share with all members of this House that care to pay attention that as part of our universal nutrition funding, a significant portion of that funding, especially in these first couple years as we roll it out, is specifically earmarked for divisions to invest into the infrastructure that he's talking about.

Many schools do have infrastructure. Many schools, again, were already delivering meals for their students. But those schools who need to invest in infrastructure like fridges, like staff, are absolutely provided funds to do that and, again, are having fantastic, great success and incredible outcomes in feeding kids in their schools.

**Mr. Ewasko:** It sounds like it was a very good question from the member from Selkirk, because the minister got up and actually put some answers on the record.

So the question to the minister is: How many dollars that is based in this \$30-million school nutrition program is actually coming from the federal government?

**MLA Schmidt:** Zero. So we do absolutely, thanks to the leadership of Nello Altomare—introducing a \$30-million provincial investment—an annual \$30-million provincial universal nutrition program—we inspired the federal government to come up—they thought, what a great idea that they had there in Manitoba. What fantastic leadership of Nello Altomare. Perhaps, as a federal government, we should invest.

So absolutely. Have there been dollars invested here in Manitoba thanks to the leadership of Nello Altomare? Absolutely. The \$30-million investment here in Manitoba is a \$30-million provincial—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mr. Perchotte:** With the importance of purchasing local in Nello's Law, can the minister give us a dollar value of what's actually being spent in the local communities to support this nutrition program?

**MLA Schmidt:** It is fantastic to know that the members opposite are so intrigued about our universal nutrition program that—although it's been rolled out for a year, that they're finally asking some questions about it. They're concerned about feeding kids. But that hasn't always been the case, Honourable Speaker.

The members opposite have put some very interesting words on the record, both in this House and also in the local media. So let's remind Manitobans about what the members opposite think about feeding children: If children are going to school hungry, parents aren't fulfilling their responsibilities. That was former premier, failed premier, Brian Pallister in this House on March 4, 2020.

So I ask members opposite if they agree with the former premier.

**Mr. Ewasko:** The Minister of Education will have an opportunity shortly, within the next year and a half or so, to get on the opposition side and actually ask some questions.

So I ask the minister today, in clause 2, subsection 1(1), who did she—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:**—collaborate with to come up with that particular clause in the bill?

**MLA Schmidt:** It's a very important clause, Honourable Speaker, although I'm sure Manitobans like me would scratch their head and really have to dig deep to try to think about someone that might disagree with feeding hungry kids in school. But, unfortunately, that is the reality for members opposite.

So again, let's get back into our time machine. James Teitsma, former PC MLA who was defeated, said in the CTV News on February 27 of 2020: This is a bad idea. Kids need to eat breakfast in their own home.

So, again, Manitobans: I, like you, believe in feeding kids. Unfortunately, members opposite think that feeding kids—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mr. Perchotte:** Can the minister let me know—let us know in the House if this is fully implemented in all the schools in Manitoba at this stage?

**MLA Schmidt:** Thank you to the leadership of former Minister of Education, Nello Altomare, every child in Manitoba who needs access to a healthy meal in school has that access today.

**Mr. Ewasko:** So Honourable Speaker, it's obvious that the minister doesn't know the answers to the questions that we're trying to put forward. It's unfortunate that the—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:**—you know, the clause that I mentioned, she dodged the question.

It's okay. She'll have the opportunity over this second reading, plus committee, plus third reading, to educate herself on the bill that she brought forward, Honourable Speaker. *[interjection]*

And it's unfortunate—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The honourable Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) will come to order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** So I guess, really, in the big picture, Honourable Speaker, the 70 cents a day for students, is that to go to those infrastructure components that the minister mentioned earlier in her answer to my good friend and colleague, the member from Selkirk?

**MLA Schmidt:** Again, the member opposite, while he stands in his place and feigns some sort of interest in caring for children or feeding them, what he's doing right now, Honourable Speaker, is heckling our members. He's mansplaining education to me. He won't stand in his place and apologize to kids in Manitoba that he refused to feed.

Under his watch, Honourable Speaker, the children that we were feeding, that we are feeding today, sat in their desks hungry every day while this failed Education Minister defended a government that said feeding kids was a bad idea.

Will he stand in his place today and apologize—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

And the time for question period has expired.

### Debate

**The Speaker:** The floor is open for debate.

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** It gives me great pleasure to stand today and put a few words on the record in regards to Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act, also known as Nello's Law.

And it's unfortunate that this minister—and Manitobans today witnessed the sheer anger coming from this minister—Education Minister—Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister, Honourable Speaker, who, unfortunately, I take a look across all their benches—the NDP's benches—and there's many people there that I think—I personally think—and I've got to know a few of them—would've made a good Education minister—*[interjection]*.

And not one to take partisan shots, when they get up on such an important bill, to not only Manitobans but also to students, themselves.

We on this side of the House, Honourable Speaker, despite—despite—what the member for St. Johns or the Minister of Education has to say, absolutely believes that feeding kids, feeding students, is an important thing to do. As a teacher, myself, of over 17 years, we know that students, on a day-to-day basis, learn better when their tummies are full.

And so I know that the member for St. Johns, Honourable Speaker, wants to get up and put a few words on the record. But, you know, much like the Education Minister, who I believe put on this very important bill—I would like to actually talk a little bit about the original sponsor of this bill, Nello Altomare, who was a teacher and he was a great advocate for education, both in opposition and in government.

\* (15:50)

And, again, Honourable Speaker, it's unfortunate that I'm getting heckled from the Minister for Families, who has her own department issues and the Minister for Education, who has her own department issues.

But the fact is that over the time under the Progressive Conservative government and as the Minister of Education, we had worked collaboratively not only with our community partners, stakeholders, but also school boards, schools, community centres, absolutely to bring in various different funds.

And it was actually our government that had more than doubled the grant to the Canadian council for food and nutrition right here in Manitoba, Honourable Speaker, September 1st of 2022. So when the Education Minister, who by profession is a lawyer, gets up and absolutely puts false information on the record, it's deplorable, Honourable Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I do believe I just heard the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition suggest that someone was knowingly putting false information on the record. I could be mistaken, but if one says that there's been misinformation, that's different than suggesting someone has put misinformation on, on purpose. That would be wrong.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, if I did say what you're accusing me of, I do apologize because—but I don't think I did.

But that being said, we'll have to check Hansard and you'll check Hansard and we'll all be happy moving forward with the fact that, again, it doesn't stop the fact that this Minister of Education, who by lawyer of a—as a profession, puts misinformation on the record, because we more than doubled the—to the food and nutrition council of Manitoba—to the tune of a total of \$2.5 million. We more than doubled. So the NDP sat on their hands in 17 years of government, failed. They failed, Honourable Speaker.

I know that the Minister for Environment and Climate Change wants to put some words on the record, but we're getting away from the bill. He's happy to have announced yesterday—I think there's going to be probably a Cabinet shuffle, so for those educators back there, there might be a spot.

But he announced yesterday about the new carbon tax that they're going to bring in, but we're here to talk—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

I've called the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) to order several times. The language she is using in her heckles needs to stop.

**Mr. Ewasko:** And, Honourable Speaker, once again, I appreciate your guidance.

I mean, again we, on this side of the House, absolutely believe that kids should be going to school with a full tummy. And we know that, even myself being an educator and many educators across the way in the NDP benches, know the benefits of having those snacks or meals, or both, as the definition.

So I'm actually answering my question to the minister, so the minister knows for future that the actual clause in No. 2 is the question that I asked.

And the Minister of Families is saying how gross. Well, I—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, I agree with her. I think her Premier (Mr. Kinew) has said and put things on—many times on the record, gross things.

But these are his words. And whatever she is doing as the Government House Leader to disrupt the flow of what's happening in the government and their turmoil that they were having yesterday and continue to have on a day-to-day basis, she will have to answer to him.

And I'm assuming again, Honourable Speaker, so the Minister for Environment and Climate Change announced the carbon tax yesterday, assuming there's going to be a—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I would suggest that the Leader of the Opposition bring his comments back to the bill we're discussing.

**Mr. Ewasko:** And again, thank you for your guidance. And if I was allowed to actually continue speaking about the bill instead of being heckled from the people that you've already—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, it would be beneficial to us all because I think that there is quite a few things that we can add to this debate.

So I think the member for—over there, whatever constituency that is, maybe they're hoping to be shuffled in in the next Cabinet shuffle into a position, and I think they are looking at their spot.

So clause 2, Honourable Speaker, is the nutrition program, and the definition is—and it means a school program that provides meals or snacks or both to pupils each and every day. Well, we've got nearly 700 schools, public schools, in this great province of ours. That's almost—which has about 220,000 students attending school on a day-to-day basis, and the NDP's current report on who's actually accessing the food and nutrition program is roughly about that 32, 33.

Now, there will be more and more students taking up—taking the schools up on those. But we know that it's landed solely on the school divisions and then to be brought forward by school principals to make sure that that's being brought forward.

So some of the pomp and circumstance that this minister is trying to bring forward is unfortunate, and she's trying to take credit for a lot of the work that her predecessor did. Matter of fact, all the—not all the work he did, but majority of the work that he did—[interjection] I know, Honourable Speaker, that the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle)—

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Like, Honourable Speaker, like, they're going to have lots of opportunity to get up and put some words on the record. I'm able to put some words on the record, and I'm glad that, you know, I'm able to do that. Matter of fact, words on the record, I know that the Minister of Education actually had unlimited

time to talk about a whole lot of great things, not only about this bill, but about her predecessor, Nello Altomare.

But she spoke for roughly seven minutes. I think she spoke for about a minute longer than their Premier did on their budget yesterday, Honourable Speaker. And so when we talk about the budget, I don't believe he really mentioned a whole lot of this. I know that the Education Minister, she had unlimited time to put things on the record. She chose not to. She chooses now to chime in from her chair. I guess she'll have another opportunity to say a few words at committee. She'll have another opportunity at third reading.

Because we are in favour of this bill. We're in favour of this bill because we on this side of the House put concrete, factual information on the record as opposed to this Education Minister that puts misinformation on the record.

As I said, the NDP sat on their hands for 17 years, and when the initial school nutrition program came out, you know, roughly the early 2000s, Honourable Speaker, the NDP funded it to a certain degree to get it going, and then they cut the ribbon, they showed up for photo ops, as they continue to do even now in government, and then they forgot about them. They totally forgot about them when we had to talk about the Child Nutrition Council. And in the Child Nutrition Council report—and I had many conversations with them—they had been asking the former Selinger government for years and years and years for an increase to their funding. Nothing, nada, zilch, nothing. It was deplorable. And then in 2022, we went, had a conversation with the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba, and increased their funding.

And you know what? Good on the former Education minister, Nello, for bringing forward the—not necessarily the idea, but to get it across the finish line. Because I know that the Premier (Mr. Kinew) himself couldn't have thought of that, so the former Education minister did.

And I do want to talk about a couple initiatives. I know that the Minister of Education's upset with the fact that the former Education minister and early childhood learning minister, Nello Altomare, the MLA for Transcona, she's upset with the fact that we actually got along.

\* (16:00)

And that's all I'm hoping for, Honourable Speaker, is that we can just get along, because at the end of the day we're all here to make sure that our students, that the students in Manitoba—whether they're in the public

school system, independent school system, home-schooling—are all going to benefit, grow up through the K-to-12 education system, go to post-secondary, get a job, stay in Manitoba and benefit our economy.

So I do want to reference a couple things—initiatives that we actually did work on together when the former MLA for Transcona—and again, congratulations to the MLA for Transcona, who is also an educator.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** Yes, yes, that's right, yes, she's—and I've congratulated her on a few occasions, so that is good; it's nice to see her take her place, another educator in this Chamber.

So when Nello was the Education critic we worked on things like respect in schools—unlike here, what's happening today; there's a lack of respect in the Chamber, Honourable Speaker, and not only to me but also to the powers that be here in this Chamber as well, which we saw evidence yesterday.

But the MLA for Transcona, when he was a critic of Education and I was the minister, we actually worked on various things in regards to respect in schools, making sure that kids were safe, whether they were doing something in extracurricular activities, whether that's sports. We know, for 17 years, there was inappropriate things, Honourable Speaker, happening within the sports community. We know that there was various different inappropriate things happening in extracurricular activities.

It was our government that brought forward the respect in sports. And the one thing that I needed to do in regards to Nello's Law and bringing him forward so that we can continue to work across the party lines—because the former MLA for Transcona, of course he had an extensive career in education, we have many mutual friends all across this great province of ours, and so we—I wanted to get his 2 cents on the whole respect in sport and respect in schools.

**An Honourable Member:** Relevance. Relevance. Talk about nutrition here.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle)—

**An Honourable Member:** Talk about nutrition.

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —is asking relevance. Well, right in the title of this bill, which he is so sitting in his chair and being disrespectful, Honourable Speaker, when we're talking about the MLA for Transcona. I'm just trying

to tell a little bit of a story on how some of these ideas had come to fruition.

And we're celebrating the fact that students are eating, having food, on a day-to-day basis and that the Minister of Education feels that it's okay that the amount—the pittance of money that they have put into the program is funding.

And if you do the math—I know math is hard even for the new member on that side of the House—but it equates, Honourable Speaker, to 70 cents a student per meal per day. Seventy cents.

And as the Education Minister said—and she's going to have this solid for third reading, Honourable Speaker—is that that includes anything that schools and school divisions have to do. And we worked together. We worked together quite often on—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —various different announcements, Honourable Speaker.

So give me a second, Honourable Speaker. Let me just make sure. I don't want to misquote or say anything—yes, the MLA for Radisson—so the MLA for Radisson, I didn't hear anything in regards to her getting up and talking about the fact that her school division that she represents is having to do double-digit increases on her taxpayers. Nothing, not a zilch.

So to get back to the good relationship that I had with the former Education minister and the fact that we have multiple friends across this great province of ours, because, of course, education is a small world but also Manitoba is a 16th degree of separation.

So getting back to that story, so we've got the MLA for St. Vital, and we had the MLA for St. James—

**An Honourable Member:** Boniface.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —and we were talking about—no, not St. Boniface.

You know what? The MLA for St. Boniface wants to get up, put some words on the record, Honourable Speaker. Let him just sit there, wait his turn, his turn will come. He'll be able to get up and we'll all—I'll even clap for him when he gets up next to speak to this very important bill.

So we've got the MLA for St. Vital, and we've got the MLA for St. James got together and they're, like, you know, in opposition we want to write the Education minister a letter and we want to help with respect in schools and respect in sport.

That's what they did. They wrote a joint letter to talk about those issues that affect kids—students—in school, Honourable Speaker. So I took the letter; I read it, and I'm, like, yes, you know what? Cross party lines, this is a great opportunity. But who did those two NDP members not include on the letter? I know the Families Minister is waiting on her edge of her seat to find out who is he going to be talking about.

They forgot to cc and include the Education critic, the MLA for Transcona, the person who's got over 30 years experience in the education world, they didn't want to include him. So who invited the MLA for Transcona, the Education critic, to the table? I've got proof. I know some of the NDP members over there are sitting there bewildered. Why would their members do this?

I've got proof to that, Honourable Speaker, copies of the letters. So I sent and I invited—the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loisel) is talking about he'd like a Snickers bar. So I know you might have a Snickers bar up there; you might want to pass one over to the MLA for St. Boniface, and he's going to need a big one because he's hoping that soon there's going to be that Cabinet shuffle that we talked about. And I think that the Minister for Environment and Climate Change better not be measuring the drapes anytime soon after his—the announcement that he mentioned yesterday.

So, again, the Education Minister—again, Honourable Speaker, I don't know if she doesn't understand that when she gets to champion or sponsor a bill, she gets unlimited time. And so I'm not sure if the hundreds and thousands of people in Manitoba are hearing this, but the minister says that she has much better stuff to do than to stand up and talk about Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act, which is Nello's Law.

And, again, so she continues to get me a little sidetracked, Honourable Speaker, because I can't—it's unfortunate that there's so much noise coming across from the NDP benches, but I'm just super glad to know that I have opportunity to stand up in this House and put a few words on the record.

She stood up—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

Minister of Education will come to order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** So, again, Honourable Speaker, here we go. The Minister of Education gets up, talks about a very important bill, which is Bill 17, which we're in favour of, and we are going to be—we are speaking in



favour of it—and I don't know why the member for Radisson (MLA Dela Cruz), I know she wants to get up as well, and her and the member for St. Boniface will have to do rock, paper, scissors or arm wrestle or something to see who gets up next, because I know they're all chomping at the bit to tell their story.

But, Honourable Speaker, I've got a couple stories going here, so I'm going to have to focus and get—and I'm going to land the plane on one of them, and that's the fact that when I had invited Nello to my office as the Education minister to sit down with the Education critic, I think that just showed that we could work across party lines.

And as I've said multiple times before, it was an important time for students, for those that take the time to volunteer, to then talk to school divisions, talk to school boards, talk with the child protection—The Canadian child protection association of Canada to make sure that we are making sure that these things are implemented and enforced and these are have-tos.

\* (16:10)

So, again, I think that the Education minister—the former Education minister, the former MLA for Transcona—and the member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses) and the member for St. James (Mr. Sala) actually got together, and I think they had to have a—like, a breaking bread-type of ceremony where the former MLA for Transcona had to say: Well, why did you guys exclude me from your invite letter to talk with the Education minister when I'm the Education critic?

He had over 30 years. I know that the member for St. Vital had a lot of experience in sport and representing some of our post-secondary institutions but also secondary schools. Absolutely, he had a lot to bring to the table, for sure. And that's why it was good to have those three individuals plus some NDP staff in my office to have conversations about how we were going to make sure that students moving forward were going to be protected in sport, in school, and make sure that all staff in this great province of ours was receiving that training, paid for, bought by the government of Manitoba.

So that's sort of it for that story, Honourable Speaker.

The thing is, the point of the whole story, and I'll summarize, was that their own members were so busy trying to step on each other's backs to hopefully one day become Cabinet ministers, that they didn't care who they threw under the proverbial bus.

But, again, in sheer Progressive Conservative manner, we reached across the aisle—I had the pleasure of reaching across the aisle, coming together with those members and strengthening our education processes and policies moving forward, Honourable Speaker.

So we get to talking about—I know the Education Minister talked about how that there's absolutely zero dollars of federal dollars in this plan, which is interesting.

And then, what else did she say? She said something to the tune of: The federal government saw that the provincial Manitoba NDP government had brought forward Nello's Law and the money for food and nutrition.

And then they champ—and then they piggybacked off of Manitoba for a universal child nutrition plan which—I hate—you know, one of these things, and I think the Education Minister will do this as her time rolls along in this Chamber. And I have no doubt that this minister will serve in this Chamber, you know, for the next year and a half or couple years until the next election, Honourable Speaker.

But actually, the federal government, Honourable Speaker, was talking about the universal child nutrition plan way back in the summer of 2022 under, at that time, a federal minister that was in charge of early childhood education. Matter of fact, we had that discussion in British Columbia, just outside of Vancouver in Burnaby. And we were talking about that as Education ministers all across this great country of ours.

And we were talking about that, and so that was well in the plans far before this minister was even thinking about potentially running to become an MLA. But I'm glad that she continues to stand up and put—that she just continues to stand up. And every time she stands up, there's more misinformation put on the record, Honourable Speaker.

So that's good. So I encourage her, next time she has the opportunity, to put more than six or seven minutes on, which is, again, about one minute more than what their Premier (Mr. Kinew) put on the record for their budget, Honourable Speaker.

So we continue to sort of—*[interjection]*—oh, now, Honourable Speaker, it seems like the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kostyshyn) wants to get up and talk. But honestly, we've heard questions from our side; the only answers we continue to get from that Minister of Agriculture is something to the tune of Crown lands, so it wouldn't necessarily fit with his diatribe and his talking points that he has memorized.

I truly believe that the member for Dauphin (Mr. Kostyshyn) has memorized the Crown lands speech that he has, which would not necessarily fit with talking about Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act, Nello's Law.

So again, to recap: so we've got almost 220,000 students, Honourable Speaker, enrolled in Manitoba schools as of September of 2023. That's the latest public data, by the way, so those of you that are keeping track at home.

So then we talk about the \$30-million provincial investment, which works out to approximately \$136 per student, per year. You want me to repeat that? Okay, I got that: 220,000 students enrolled in the province, September 2023.

And I know that the minister for Housing and mental health, addictions, she was a teacher as well; and I'm not sure if she's maybe upset right now, because the other Education Minister is in her place without an education degree, but she is a lawyer, so we'll see how that shakes out.

But anyway, 220,000 students enrolled in the province of Manitoba as of 2023: that's the most recent data. So we look at the \$30 million, do some quick division. We take a look at how many days of school, which is approximately 193. Not approximately: in '24-25 there are 193 school days. So the Kinew government, Honourable Speaker, is spending—

**An Honourable Member:** How much?

**Mr. Ewasko:** I'm glad you asked that question. The question from a great colleague of mine was how much. So here it is: 70 cents per day—70 cents per student per day. Feeding kids for less than \$1 a day, Honourable Speaker.

Well I don't know. I don't know where this Premier's (Mr. Kinew) shopping, because we've heard on the record: the Premier buys a salad, somewhere between \$13 to \$16 a salad out of his own pocket, per salad. Now we're talking, we're feeding kids. Less than \$1 a day: 70 cents.

I don't know. We take a look at the 70 cents per student per day, Honourable Speaker, is the total amount allocated. Any distribution, collection, transportation, supplies, kitchens, et cetera, all must come out of this 70 cents, and that's what the Education Minister said today. That's what she said: out of the 70 cents.

I don't know what kind of math this is going on over here, but we do know that moving into the future,

this Education Minister has watered down, dumbing down, the education standards for our teachers moving forward, where they don't have to take a whole lot of math courses or any subject matter courses, Honourable Speaker, which is going to fall on this Education Minister; not the food and nutrition announcement. That's going to absolutely go forward in Nello's name. Absolutely it will.

I'm not sure, as we know—she didn't answer the question. But we don't know, Honourable Speaker, what is going to happen when they start to take into the account the increased food inflation that has happened here in Manitoba, and will continue to increase because this government, this Kinew government, has no plan on how to deal with, first of all, strengthening the economy, never mind the—not never mind. I mean, the fact is we've got these US and China tariffs coming on us. He's got no plan.

We know that Manitobans are struggling on a day-to-day basis with affordability. As I said, food inflation is up. Unemployment is up. We know crime is up. I know the Justice Minister wants to get up and talk about Bill 17, Nello's Law. Maybe he'll talk a little bit about how the fact that he hasn't really done a whole lot in regards to keeping Manitobans safe, Honourable Speaker.

So we take a look at the minister for housing and mental health and addiction, Honourable Speaker. Sounds like she wants to get up and put a few words on—or, they want to get up and put a few words on the record: 70 cents a day.

\* (16:20)

**An Honourable Member:** I'm a she.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Is a she. Okay, I apologize. The pronoun thing, I am—look, look. I'm learning and I'm, you know, I'm making sure and I know that all of us in this Chamber has made the odd mistake but should not be ridiculed for it.

So 70 cents a day per child, Honourable Speaker. But the Education minister can't actually talk about—*[interjection]* now, the minister for home—housing, homelessness, addictions and mental health, well, here we go. So an additional \$1.3 million. What we did, we announced to the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba.

And that's when her government, previous Selinger government—we know the relationship they had together. We do know on how there's a lot of backstabbing and turmoil going on in there, that they continue to put

misinformation on the record, this—these NDP ministers. And they will have to account and answer to Manitobans eventually, Honourable Speaker.

So again, going back to the summer of 2022, the federal minister from—with early childhood and education actually started working on that universal child nutrition program in the summer of 2022. That was supposed to be announced within that next little bit.

But this is sort of what happened, Honourable Speaker. So I know that many of the members across the way are very good friends, of course, with their leader Jagmeet Singh, and Justin Trudeau at the time. Matter of fact, there's many pictures on social media with them all hugging it out. But the thing is that these—so the Education Minister again wants to get up but she will have time again during third reading.

So the fact is that this NDP government—so we're talking about Bill 17 today, which again, is a bill that we on this side of the House are going to support because we strongly feel that each and every student in this great province of ours should be going to school full. They learn better in the classroom.

Also on the food and nutrition side, the minister actually—it brings me to another little tidbit here—but the minister put some misinformation on the record almost right after—matter of fact, I don't know if it was during her speech or if it was during question period. I don't know. It sort of gets confusing there for a little bit, Honourable Speaker, because she's absolutely all over the map.

But we've always been—I've always been a champion for making sure that I was working with students, with my teachers, with my teacher colleagues, with my support staff, with my senior administration in the schools that I taught in to try to make sure that if there were students coming to school hungry, that we found a way.

And at this time, Honourable Speaker, I do want to say thank you to all of those volunteer groups, those not only church groups but community groups that actually come together, and they not only fundraise, which this Education Minister has kiboshed, by the way—and that—what that means is done without—done away with it, so that school divisions apparently now can't even fundraise.

I don't understand the thought process there, especially when this Education Minister has cut education funding this year for the second year in a row and then forcing school boards to actually go back to taxpayers and fund education properly.

Because this Education Minister just doesn't understand the fact that education is one of those departments that actually should get funding increases, much like the one that I had the pleasure of bringing forward, which I know that the Free Press had quoted me so it was astronomical funding, the largest in over 40 years of education funding to our school divisions, Honourable Speaker.

So with that, I do want to, again, congratulate and thank those parents, guardians, those volunteers, those community organizations. You know, the Education Minister stands and talks about how this is the silver bullet for everything, the panacea to fix what is happening.

What's unfortunate is that her and her—some of her department officials have gone out publicly to school divisions and said that under this NDP government, education is actually not even in the top five of priorities. *[interjection]* It is. It's upsetting. And the Justice Minister laughs because we see also that really, justice—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —that justice also is not really one of their priorities.

So what is their priorities? Their priorities, Honourable Speaker, are TikTok videos, ribbon cuttings, little announcements after the fact and various things like that.

So, again, I want to get back to thanking those organizations. And if you listen to the radio and watch billboards and those types of things, Honourable Speaker, we see that organizations are still today—*[interjection]*—the—even today, as the Premier (Mr. Kinew) sits, you know, or is quiet on this topic and had an opportunity yesterday but only wanted to bring forward, I don't know, maybe five minutes, six minutes to his budget. Didn't have much to say. It was very interesting.

I think there is going to be a little bit of a Cabinet shuffle over there, because it's unfortunate that the Premier doesn't see his own orange bus or train with the big shining light coming right for him, because I think, as he sees, more and more of his own teammates are actually out to get him over there.

So it's a Greg Selinger 2.0, except it's now called the Kinew government. Because it's unfortunate—

**An Honourable Member:** They're so jealous about our unity.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —it doesn't seem that some of the people—well, the Minister for Education's talking about jealousy and various different things. I'll tell you who's jealous, Honourable Speaker. So first of all, the Education Minister—so the MLA for Fort Whyte is absolutely living rent-free in her head and the Premier's head.

And in addition to that, you know who else is jealous, Honourable Speaker? It's the Premier. Why is the Premier jealous? Because Grant Jackson, who is the MLA for Spruce Woods, has now gone on into federal politics. This is exactly what their Premier (Mr. Kinew) wants to do. He's upset. He's upset that this federal election right now is being called, but he's seeing that—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I would ask the member to keep his comments relevant to the bill we're discussing.

**Mr. Ewasko:** So the minister for—the Justice Minister wants to get up and put a few words on the record. Honourable Speaker, I've seen the Justice Minister get up time and time again, not answer questions and not actually bring forward any policies to strengthen any type of safety in regards to our youth, which I do see that Bill 17 will help our youth and kids in school. But the Justice Minister—he's got lots of time to sit and chirp from his seat but doesn't actually want to get out and do anything. He wants to talk about respect.

So I think the Justice Minister can get up in a little bit on Bill 17 and publicly apologize to all those victims of crime that are having to go through what they're going through on a day-in and day-in—day-out basis. And the fact that he stands and puts on the record the fact that a doorbell camera is going to—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I've asked the member previously to stay relevant to the bill that we're discussing, so I would ask him, yet again, to keep his comments relevant to the bill we're discussing here today.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Thanks for your sage advice as usual. And I know that, you know, when I was referencing the Justice Minister, I was talking about safety and the youth on how not only making sure that children, that students, are going to school on a full stomach if they can, from home, but then having that accessibility at schools.

\* (16:30)

But in order to do that, they need to make sure that they can get to and from school safely, Honourable Speaker, without having to look over their shoulder, much like many of the Broadway bullies we now call the NDP Kinew government, who have a lot of experience on intimidation and the self-proclaimed dominator that the Premier says—I don't know where he was going with that; that's got to be a history lesson from his 20s or something.

But back to Nello's Law. We know that there's many organizations right now working with the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba, working with schools, with—working with school divisions, making sure that the funds are there to supplement, to augment, that 70 cents that this minister pats herself on the back for.

But we know that it's not enough. And we know that from the minister's own report, only 33 per cent of children are getting a snack or a meal or both, as the definition says. And all I asked her was to explain that definition earlier on, but she couldn't do that. And then again, she only stood up and spoke for about six or seven minutes when the Premier couldn't even do that long on his budget.

So, Honourable Speaker, with that, we, on the Progressive Conservative side, the caucus, the royal opposition, is definitely speaking in favour of this bill.

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** So, again, the Attorney General of Manitoba (Mr. Wiebe) right now—which, again, shouldn't be measuring his drapes any longer because I'm certain that soon there shall be a Cabinet shuffle, and if there isn't, I don't know what we're in for, Honourable Speaker. I think students at school, besides going in and making sure that their tummies are full so that they can learn, I'm hoping that they don't—we don't have to get some of that security back into schools because of this failed Justice Minister's policies and the way he's been dealing with various issues—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** So it's unfortunate, Honourable Speaker. Again, the Education Minister had lots of time to put some words on the record, and I think she sat down after about five minutes. Especially under something as important as Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act, I would have liked to hear more from the Education Minister as far as future planning.

We already heard, you know, is that \$30 million indexed with the food inflation? I mean, we know that when you do the basic math it's 70 cents. You know, feeding kids for under \$1 is sort of unfortunate. And I know for a fact that not all schools in Manitoba and not all students in Manitoba are getting these snacks or meals or both, as it's referenced in clause No. 2 in the bill, Honourable Speaker.

So with that, I know the Justice Minister, it sounds like he wants to get up and put a few words on the record. So with that, I know that we'll have an opportunity to see this go to committee eventually. I know there's many, many, many more colleagues that probably want to put a few words and also share maybe an odd story, a good story, about the former MLA for Transcona, my friend and former colleague, Nello.

And so I will concede the floor now, Honourable Speaker, because I know that the NDP, in the last little bit of time that I've spoken this afternoon, many of them had wanted to put some words on the record, so I'll concede my time on the floor now, and we'll see this bill eventually pass to committee.

So thank you for your time.

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families):** I just want to get up and put a couple of words on the record in respect of Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act, or as we call it, Nello's Law.

So first and foremost, I just want to acknowledge our dear, beloved colleague Nello Altomare for the courage and the vision of bringing forward a universal student nutrition program here in Manitoba.

Often, on this side of the House, we often talk about the transformative work that our government is doing or the legacy work that our government is doing. And Nello's Law, this universal school nutrition program, is one of those things that we're doing that is literally transforming the lives of students right now that are able to get food to be able to go to school, as is their right.

So I want to honour our dear, beloved friend for his vision and that wisdom and that tenacity that he had.

But I also want to take a couple of minutes to disabuse everything that the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Ewasko) just put on the record, including his disrespect and his misogyny shown to the Minister of Education.

Throughout his time getting up and speaking here—I don't know if we can even construct it as speaking.

It was nothing really relevant or intelligent, and, actually, it was just another example of men getting up in this Chamber to blab on, to hear themselves speak really about nothing.

But what he did do in that was he showed how misogyny operates in this Chamber. Instead of offering the respect that the Minister of Education deserves as the Minister of Education—a highly educated woman—a highly educated woman of which he continuously brought up the fact that she was a lawyer, as if there was something wrong with our colleague being a lawyer.

I don't know if members opposite are acutely aware that we need lawyers in Manitoba, and I'm very proud to work with a lawyer who is now the Minister of Education and who is infinitely more qualified than any single member opposite, including the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Ewasko), who keeps talking about himself as an educator. And yet, as an educator for 17 years, as he often puts on the record, he was part of a government that for seven and a half years ridiculed, fought against feeding children in schools.

Not once did the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) get up and say to his boss, Brian Pallister: You know what, Brian, I think that that's wrong. I think we're on the wrong side of history. We really should be feeding children.

Not once did the member for Lac du Bonnet get up and talk to the—James Teitsma, his colleague—his former colleague from Radisson, and say: You know, James, I think what you put on the record is actually really crappy. You really shouldn't be blaming parents or saying that it's a bad thing to feed children.

Not once did he do that, because again, back in the day, each and every one of them did the bidding of Brian Pallister and then did the bidding of Heather Stefanson, again, two multimillionaires in Manitoba, one with like a six- or eight-car garage, the other who forgot to announce or make sure that she's claiming the \$31 million that she made out of selling—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I would ask the minister to keep her comments relevant to the bill we're discussing.

**MLA Fontaine:** The two former premiers, multimillionaires who thought it was a bad thing to offer food to Manitoba children, to the next generations of Manitobans, none of them got up and said: You know, Brian; you know, Heather; you know, James Teitsma,

I think it's a bad thing that you're saying and we're on the wrong side of history. And I expect us, as a failed government, to try to get something right and let's feed kids.

Not once did they do that.

\* (16:40)

And so who did that? Our government. Who did that? That was led by Nello. And who is now coming forward with legislation to ensure that none of those members—again, who think feeding children is a bad thing—can ever, if—Lord forbid—they ever get into government again, decide that they're going to unannualize and cut the \$30 million that our minister and our government have dedicated to feeding children in Manitoba.

And so let me say this: throughout the member's 'gibblegoshy', whatever he tried to put on the record there, he repeatedly insulted the Minister of Education. He questioned her credentials; he kept saying that there was going to be a Cabinet shuffled. He repeatedly said she doesn't understand her portfolio. That is misogyny, and anybody on that side that stands by while their so-called leader disrespects a minister of the Crown in this Chamber in such a grotesque, misogynistic way is shameful, and you all are on the wrong side of history.

And so let me set the facts straight here: I am so proud to work with the Minister of Education. Nello was so proud of the Minister of Education. He was so proud that she was standing in his place and that she was going forward with the vision of him and our government. And our team is so proud to work with this Minister of Education.

And so my message to each and every one of them, including the so-called Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Ewasko), is, put respect on her name.

**The Speaker:** Seeing no more speakers, is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**The Speaker:** The question before the House is second reading of Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes).

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

### Recorded Vote

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** A recorded vote, please.

**The Speaker:** A recorded vote has been asked for. Call in the members.

\* (16:50)

Order, please.

The question before the House is second reading of Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act, nutrition equality for lasting learning and outcomes.

### Division

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

### Ayes

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

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Ayes 49, Nays 0.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

\* \* \*

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

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

## CONTENTS

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>		Agriculture and Agri-Food Processing	
<b>Members' Statements</b>		Bereza	1107
Larry Baillie		Kinew	1108
Cross	1097	<b>Petitions</b>	
Elder Ruth Christie		Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders	
Perchotte	1097	Balcaen	1108
St. James-Assiniboia Norman Art Group		Ewasko	1109
Oxenham	1098	Phoenix School	
Shindico's 50th Anniversary in Real Estate		Cook	1109
Bereza	1098	Amending The Winnipeg Foundation Act	
Acknowledging Local Businesses		Loiselle	1110
Moyes	1098	Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices	
<b>Oral Questions</b>		Stone	1110
Crime and Public Safety		Death of Jordyn Reimer–Judicial Review Request	
Ewasko	1099	Bereza	1111
Kinew	1099	Provincial Trunk Highway 34	
Manitoba Industries		Byram	1111
Ewasko	1101	Funding Crime Cost Mitigation for Small Business	
Kinew	1101	Guenter	1112
Interlake School Division Funding		Little Mountain Park	
King	1102	Lamoureux	1112
Schmidt	1102	MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility	
Provincial Economic Forecast–Recession Concerns		Hiebert	1113
Stone	1103	Medical Assistance in Dying	
Sala	1103	Johnson	1113
Manitoba Emergency Rooms		Provincial Road 227	
Cook	1104	King	1114
Asagwara	1104	Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices	
Brandon Correctional Centre Death		Perchotte	1115
Balcaen	1105	Removal of Federal Carbon Tax	
Wiebe	1105	Narh	1115
Crime in Rural Manitoba		Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders	
Balcaen	1106	Wharton	1116
Wiebe	1106	Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices	
Waste Water Lagoon Project in Armstrong		Wowchuk	1116
Lamoureux	1106	Support for Border Communities	
Moyes	1106	Piwniuk	1117
Winnipeg Jets		Removal of Federal Carbon Tax	
Loiselle	1107	Nesbitt	1117
Kinew	1107		

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**  
**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**Second Readings**

Bill 17—The Public Schools Amendment Act  
(Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning  
Outcomes)

Schmidt	1118
---------	------

Questions

Perchotte	1120
-----------	------

Schmidt	1120
---------	------

Ewasko	1120
--------	------

Debate

Ewasko	1123
--------	------

Fontaine	1131
----------	------



The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings  
are also available on the Internet at the following address:

**<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>**