



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
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

Thursday, April 17, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

And I think before we get started today, I've got an extensive list of guests that are visiting in the gallery, so I'll try and get that done first.

Speaker's Statement

The Speaker: First off, I'd like to take a moment to quickly draw members' attention to the Clerks table.

Today marks exactly 25 years to the day that our Clerk, Rick Yarish, first walked through the front doors of the Legislative Building to begin his truly illustrious career with the Assembly. Twenty-five years is a long time to spend doing anything, let alone diligently serving members of this Assembly with the level of professionalism and dignity—who wrote this?—that Rick embodies.

Oh, I'm not done yet. After starting in committees branch as a clerk assistant on April 17, 2000, Rick became the province's fourth Deputy Clerk on April 12, 2011, a position he served the next 12 years with distinction, until on November 23, 2023, he was honoured to be appointed as the 14th Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba by the unanimous passage of a resolution in this House.

Since then, Rick has risen to every challenge, answered every question and overseen the operations of the huge enterprise that is this Assembly.

The Assembly is a better place for your 25 years of dedicated service. Your passion for upholding the democratic process, your work ethic and your commitment is inspiring to those lucky enough to work with you.

On behalf of all the fantastic staff who work here and all the honourable members, happy 'Legiversary'.

And here to celebrate it with him is his wife Jackie, who is sitting in the Speaker's Gallery. On behalf of all members of the Assembly, we appreciate your understanding for the late nights and the crankiness that he sometimes no doubt comes home with. Thank you for allowing Rick to be here for the past 25 years, and, personally, thank you for all you've done for me since becoming Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Now before we get all weepy, I would like to draw attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us today Lloyd Celones, Sonny Sylvester, Cheryl Kalinin, Shane Torrance, Ranbir Brar, Harjivan Dhaliwal, Jean Dusimimana, Cristian Giron, Adrian Lanoria, Adrian *[phonetic]* Laquette, Bryan Lindsay, Rushawn Martin, Terry Ogbeide, Emmanuel Thon, Adrian *[phonetic]* Walker, Settimo Yugu, who are the guests of the honourable Minister of Justice and the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe).

We welcome you all here today.

Further, in the public gallery, we have Derek Neufeld, Daniel Emond, Keith Stewart, Deborah McVeigh, Noah Cousineau, who are guests of the honourable member for Morden-Winkler (Mrs. Hiebert).

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

I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us today Amarjeet Kaur and Mangal Singh Brar, who are the parents of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Brar).

And we welcome you here today.

Further, we have seated in the public gallery, from Palliative Manitoba, Wayne Sandler, Lindsay Felstead, Kathleen Williamson, Cindy Charette; from the Canadian Cancer Society, Susan Russell-Csanyi, who are guests of the honourable member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott), and we welcome you here today.

We have some special guests in the public gallery. From the government of Nunavut, ministerial political adviser Ron Elliott, who is the guest of the Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, the member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara). We welcome you here today.

And I'm not sure, is the Nunavut MLA present? I don't see him, so we'll save that one for later. Now—orders of the day.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

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

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Daffodil Campaign

Mrs. Rachelle Schott (Kildonan-River East): Honourable Speaker, the Canadian Cancer Society's Daffodil Campaign and the incredible work of Palliative Manitoba are helping so many Manitobans. I ask for the names of my guests to be added into Hansard.

The Canadian Cancer Society has been committed to funding research and providing support for those affected by the disease. The organization has grown to the largest national charitable funder of cancer research.

Cancer has touched the lives of almost everyone. My dad is my kids' grandpa in heaven. This has been the only way they've ever known my dad. Cancer took him from us too early. He never walked me down the aisle at my wedding or held either of our babies. I pray more Canadians hear those four important words: You are cancer-free.

The Daffodil Campaign helps people with cancer see life beyond their diagnosis. When you donate, you're helping to fund groundbreaking research and a support system for those affected by cancer.

Palliative Manitoba has been an invaluable supporter in helping individuals in their end-of-life care and their families in their grief. Their Love Takes Flight butterfly release event commemorates the new life someone leads following the death of a loved one.

Last spring, the member for Lagimodière (Mr. Blashko), the Minister of Advanced Education and Training (MLA Cable) and myself attended the event. But, my butterfly didn't fly at first; it reminded me of my late father who was stubborn like that. I laughed and had a tear when the butterfly finally flew.

I ask for leave to take a moment of silence following my statement to remember and reflect upon the people who have passed, all those living with cancer and the loved ones who support them in their journey, such as Canadian Cancer Society and Palliative Manitoba.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Cindy Charette, Lindsay Felstead, Susan Russell-Csanyi, Wayne Sandler, Kathleen Williamson

The Speaker: Is there leave for a moment of silence, as requested by the member? *[Agreed]*

Leave has been granted.

A moment of silence was observed.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Sid Dueck

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): It is my privilege to rise today and recognize an exceptional Manitoban, Sid Dueck of Arborg.

For over 35 years, Sid has been a driving force for global food security and local community development.

He has helped launch Manitoba's very first Canadian Foodgrains Bank project in 1989 and has been the cornerstone of the Arborg and District growing project nearly every year since.

These initiatives unite farmers, churches and volunteers to grow crops, with proceeds supporting the fight against global hunger.

Just last season, under Sid's leadership, 150 acres were harvested in just two hours, powered by 13 combines, dozens of trucks and more than 30 volunteers; a remarkable display of a community in action.

Sid's impacts go far beyond Manitoba. For 20 years, he has worked with the Mennonite Economic Development Associates—MEDA, for short—helping empower women and youth in the global south through sustainable agri-food systems.

* (13:40)

He also is a long-time leader and owner at Vidir vertical solutions, a company he's helped shape since 1986.

Thanks to Sid's vision, Vidir is recognized not only for cutting-edge innovation but also for its award-winning philanthropy, workplace excellence and deep commitment to community.

Faith, service and social responsibility are at the heart of everything Sid does.

Together with his wife Bea, he has raised four children—Amber, Dean, Kyle and Stephanie—instilling them in the same values that define his legacy.

Please join me in thanking Sid and his family for their extraordinary contributions, not just at home, not just in the Interlake, but Sid's ripple effects are felt around the world.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Amarjeet Kaur

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): Honourable Speaker, in 1949, a baby was dragged by a jackal while her parents and farmworkers were busy picking cotton in Punjab. Thankfully, a worker noticed, shouted and scared the jackal away, saving her life. Twenty-five years later, that baby became a mother to a child you now recognize as the member for Burrows in this Chamber.

A big thanks to the jackal for sparing my mom's life and to my mom for giving me mine.

Amarjeet Kaur pursued education when it was uncommon for girls in her society. While boys typically chose math and girls were steered toward household subjects, she boldly chose math. Despite facing discrimination during her junior basic teacher training, she persevered, supported by her father's unwavering belief in her.

She began her teaching career at nine—married my father and started her bachelor of arts degree, which was briefly interrupted by my birth but completed later, when I let her.

As a student, she loved sports and theatre, passions she encouraged her students to explore. At home, she balanced roles as a mother, wife and farm supervisor. Her skill in knitting, crochet, embroidery and stitching was so remarkable that my brother and I believed tailoring was a mom thing.

Over 38 years, she proudly served as an educator, later becoming a block primary education officer supervising over 100 schools. She led with integrity, fought corruption and uplifted fellow educators.

Her achievements were bolstered by the support of her family, especially my father.

Dear Dad, please continue your decades-long tradition of serving her bed tea every single day.

I request my parents' names be added to Hansard.

Amarjeet Kaur, Mangal Singh Brar

Adult and Teen Challenge

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): I'm honoured to rise today to acknowledge the remarkable non-profit community organization, Adult and Teen Challenge. This organization does remarkable work in our community of Morden-Winkler, the city of Winnipeg and across Manitoba. They are a beacon of hope for individuals and families facing challenging battles of addiction.

Adult and Teen Challenge offers essential outreach services, including support groups, mentorship, addictions treatment and recovery programs. These programs and resources provide a path to recovery and also foster a sense of community and belonging for those who are struggling.

It is through this caring environment that many have found strength in—to reclaim their lives and rebuild relationships.

Adult and Teen Challenge's vision is to see addiction end, new life begin and freedom for all through Jesus Christ. Their mission is to offer a full range of addiction treatment and recovery services with compassion and excellence.

Yesterday, I had the honour of attending the Journey of Hope Gala put on by the Adult and Teen Challenge of Central Canada. It was inspiring—it was an inspiring event that shared stories from those that have overcome their addictions through the help of this organization. The resilience and strength of those that shared was inspiring. The gala served as a celebration of personal triumphs and was a powerful reminder to all of us of the desperate need to invest in treatment and recovery.

Teen Challenge is currently working on a project at 20—at 83 Kate St. that will open up 100 new treatment beds in inner-city Winnipeg. We desperately need treatment beds in our city. We should be supporting this project-ready facility. We must always put recovery and treatment first, helping our loved ones overcome their battles with addiction.

I ask my colleagues in the Chamber to rise and join with me, thanking the incredible leadership and staff here today. Your compassion, tireless efforts, are changing lives every day.

Thank you.

Kildonan-East Reivers Basketball Champions

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to congratulate our 2025 high school AAAA boys basketball champions, the Kildonan East Reivers.

To say the Reivers had a good season would be an understatement. They played an impressive season and were undefeated throughout the Trojan Classic and Nick Laping Memorial Varsity tournaments, and at the Kilcona Peguis Athletic Conference regular season and tournament play.

The Reivers defeated defending champions Vincent Massey 90-72 at the Trojan Classic and emerged victorious from the Nick Laping Memorial tournament with a final score of 78-71.

During the final showdown at the provincial AAAA basketball championship, the whole school community came together to cheer on the team who finished the season strong, winning 67-52 against the Dakota Lancers.

This incredible achievement for the Kildonan East Reivers is unbelievable, as the last time that the school brought home a provincial title was 35 years ago in 1990—not coincidentally, the last time that the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie) was at the school. This is only the second time that the school's history has brought home this provincial title, the true symbol of their extraordinary talent and their perseverance.

After winning game after game after game, the evidence of your hard work, of your dedication and of your commitment to your school and your team is clear. To all the players, I want to say congratulations.

All of your hard work, your dedication and your commitment to the game has truly paid off, leaving you with an incredible achievement that has made history in your community. Each of you is incredibly talented, and I wish you all the best in the future.

I'd also like to congratulate the coaching staff and the parents who supported and mentored the players throughout this season.

I would ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating the Kildonan East Reivers on their new title as Manitoba's High School Athletic Association's AAAA varsity boys' basketball champions.

Go Reivers.

The Speaker: Well, it's been pretty special to feel all of the love that's in the room. Let's see how long that lasts for.

Oral questions.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Oh, before we do oral questions, there is a guest that I would like to introduce. Draw members' attention to the loge to my right, where we have with us today, the honourable John Main, minister of health for the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and on behalf of—*[interjection]* All right, it's going to be that kind of day. Sorry. He's the

minister of health for the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

And we welcome you here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker: Now, the Leader of the Official Opposition.

Winnipeg Jets Playoff Contenders

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): It looks like we will continue the love for at least one more question, and welcome all the guests into the gallery today.

Honourable Speaker, we would like to wish all Manitobans who are 'observing'—observing Good Friday tomorrow and, of course, celebrating Easter this coming Sunday all the best in your observances.

* (13:50)

And of course, Honourable Speaker, Winnipeggers and Manitobans are going to be fired up for this Saturday, when we cheer on the Winnipeg Jets, who has nailed down home-ice advantage for the entire playoffs all the way to bring home the cup to Winnipeg. I know that we on this side of the House—and I'm pretty sure, everyone on all sides of the House, including the people in the gallery—are going to be cheering for the Jets this weekend.

I will sit down and allow the Premier (Mr. Kinew) to say a few words because I know that if we're not united, we're united on this. We're all cheering for the Jets. Go, Jets, go.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Just before recognizing the honourable First Minister, we have some more guests in the gallery.

We have seated in the public gallery from Waterford Springs School, 50 grade 5 and 6 students under the direction of Shaun Klan. This group is 'located' in the constituency of the honourable member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux).

We welcome you here today.

* * *

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Welcome to all of our guests, including our partners from Nunavut, who we signed on to a nation-building project this week to build up this country that we love so much.

Also want to give a small gesture of appreciation for our Clerk at the Legislative Assembly, Rick Yarish, on 25 years of service to this amazing province. It's not easy being the referee, but it's an important job.

And we're not even thinking about the strikes when we're talking about the Jets, the best team in the league, home to the best fans in the league. And the Stanley Cup is coming home to its rightful home, right here in the greatest country on Earth, Canada, this year.

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

Cost of Living Concerns for Manitobans Government Record on Hydro and Taxes

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, this past week during question period and debates, we've asked about education questions and, of course, we've mentioned, of course, the Premier's tax increases on homeowners and hard-working Manitobans.

He's raised school taxes and property taxes. He's raising income taxes. And now, he is raising hydro rates on Manitobans, breaking all of his promises from last year. He's broken his promise to keep the 50 per cent education tax rebate. He's broken the promise to homeowners, seniors, families, cottagers, businesses and workers. Then he stands up in question period and refuses to explain why he's breaking his promises. Matter of fact, he doesn't even answer any questions.

Why should Winnipeggers and Manitobans even trust this Premier if he breaks his word so easily and so often, Honourable Speaker?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): I'm the one that keeps my word.

I promised to cut the gas tax; our team cut it. I promised to search the Prairie Green landfill; we're bringing Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran home. We promised to fix health care; we've hired 1,500 net-new front-line health-care staff in Manitoba.

And questions. What questions? What questions? They couldn't even sustain question period yesterday. They get paid 110 grand each, and not one of them had a question nine to be able to stand up. They sat down and let somebody who was elected under our banner stand up.

What about the debate? What debate? They sit down after two minutes.

There is no opposition in Manitoba, just a government that's working hard for you.

Mr. Ewasko: Well, to the thousands of people watching today from their homes, Honourable Speaker, once again—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: —another set of questions that the Premier's refusing to answer.

But this is nothing new with you-know-who, the MLA for Fort Rouge. The Education Minister refused to answer simple questions about her bills during debate. The Finance Minister in the media is blaming and scapegoating the school divisions and municipalities for his raising of the taxes.

The Minister of Housing, Addictions, Homelessness (Ms. Smith) is misleading her own constituents on her plans for a lethal drug injection site. Premier will not even let his ministers answer in question period because he's afraid what they might say and who they might blame.

Will this Kinew government stop blaming school divisions and municipalities for their tax increases and stop making life more expensive for Manitobans, Honourable Speaker?

Mr. Kinew: We cut the gas tax to save you money. We're giving you a \$1,500 tax credit on your property taxes; it's going up to \$1,600 next year. And we froze hydro rates in Manitoba for one year, to save you money.

And what do the members opposite bring to the table? Well, the front-runner in their current PC leadership candidate calls them lazy. That's his platform. He's winning the PC leadership candidate campaign by calling them lazy, and if you showed up in the House this week to see them sit down and run out of questions during question period, to not have anything to bring forward in debate. The Minister of Education, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala), they're bringing bills here.

They have nothing to criticize, nothing to say. They support the legislation.

So the question that I have for the member opposite: Is Wally right? Are they lazy, or is it they actually support our government's agenda just like the vast majority of Manitobans?

Impaired Driving Legislation Increased Penalties when Children Present

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Honourable Speaker, the minister dismissed any suggestion—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Balcaen: —that his impaired driving legislation can be improved. He said he isn't bothered by impaired drivers who have children in their vehicles. Babies strapped in car seats have no choice, but we do. We can make the difference for all Manitobans.

Will the minister amend his bill to ensure drinking and driving with children present is not only wrong but illegal?

The Speaker: The honourable First Minister. *[interjection]*
Order.

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): The Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) is doing important work. He's brought in legislation that brings in stronger penalties and sanctions for impaired driving.

The member opposite, though, comes to the House each and every day with the plan to try and divide Manitobans by misrepresenting things. We think that that's wrong. We're here to debate in a straightforward way—apparently the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) is not. He's already tapped out after a few minutes here in question period. Got tired, just like yesterday evening.

The member opposite here—we know that during his time, working on the front lines, things went in the wrong direction here in Manitoba. So I'm very proud to stand with the Minister of Justice who's putting the public safety of Manitobans first, and is working hard to make sure that the PCs cannot obstruct our project of working with you to make our communities 'safer'.

Discarded Needles in Swan Valley Concern for Used Needles in Public Places

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Yes, Rayna Badowski, Honourable Speaker, of Swan Valley region shared a video with the comment, quote: The river is out and it's so much fun to play in the ice chunks that wash up on the bank. Right? Not when there's needles on the ice.

I table a picture of the minister's used needles in our waterways. Why does the minister find children playing with used needles acceptable?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Members opposite know full well that they started the needle program in Swan River. And that member collected a salary as an MLA for years as needles were being distributed, and how many times did he raise a concern then? *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: How many times did he raise a concern? *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: How many times did he raise a concern? Zero—zero.

Hundreds of thousands of needles were being distributed in his hometown by Heather Stefanson administration and there was never a criticism raised. Now, you have a minister who is moving people out of tents into housing, you have a minister who is bringing in public health-grounded policies and now he's criticizing.

I wonder if he's really criticizing based on evidence and policy, or is there perhaps something about this minister that he objects to on a more fundamental level? Perhaps he'll now take the opportunity to stand up and explain why he'd rather divide instead of working with a team that works with all Manitobans to make us healthier, safer and more prosperous than ever before.

Emergency Contraception Cost for Pharmacy Services

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): The NDP's promise of free emergency contraception is nothing but smoke and mirrors.

If a woman walks into a pharmacy needing Plan B, she'll still have to pay, unless she manages to book an appointment with her family doctor—if she has one—to get a prescription. And that's just not realistic when emergency contraception is most effective within 72 hours. And if she turns to her pharmacist, as most women in need of emergency care will, there's a prescription fee because the NDP refuses to cover the pharmacist's service.

Why is the NDP putting up barriers for women and expecting pharmacists to either charge patients or absorb the costs themselves, just to keep up the NDP's illusion that this medication is actually free?

The Speaker: The honourable First Minister. *[interjection]*

Order.

* (14:00)

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): I just want to give a shout-out to our Health Minister, with apologies from our guest from Nunavut, the best Health Minister in all of Canada.

And now why do I say that they are the best Health Minister in Canada? Because for people in Manitoba who need it, Plan B is now covered by the provincial formulary. Diabetes medication is now covered by the provincial formulary. And people—women experiencing menopause, hormone replacement therapy is also now covered by the provincial Pharmacare program. That helps seniors, women; that prevents surgeries, that prevents fractures; it's a great investment.

The member opposite, much like her colleagues, who are all tucked out after one single question each, can come to the House on only one thing: saying to our Health Minister, the amazing work you're doing is so wonderful, how come you can't do more of these things quicker, because my constituents are so happy with their NDP government.

Mental Health Supports Need for Workers in Rural Manitoba

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): The Altona Police Service recently shared with the media that officers spent a staggering 70 hours last week responding to just three mental health-related calls, time that pulled officers away from their core duties, policing and community safety.

The Altona police chief made it clear that while his officers are committed to helping those in crisis, they are being stretched thin due to lack of timely mental health supports in rural Manitoba.

Will the minister commit today to funding dedicated mental health support workers to assist rural police forces like Altona's so officers can focus on keeping our communities safe, all while ensuring people in crisis in rural Manitoba get the professional care they need?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Honourable Speaker, we're funding mental health workers; in fact, a commitment for 100 mental health workers being done in conjunction with my colleague, the Minister for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness.

This is the kind of transformative work that's going to make a real difference. But, of course, we're doing this in conjunction with law enforcement, and that's because they're true partners at the table with us. They understand that we will continue to fund their work, we'll continue to partner with them, we'll continue to listen to their needs.

Of course, the members opposite, seven and a half years of freezes. We're continuing to increase the funding to all rural police forces across this province. We're going to do that important work; they sat on their hands for seven and a half years.

Output-Based Pricing Impact on Small Business

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Honourable Speaker, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change has confirmed the existence of a Manitoba industrial carbon tax. We often focus on trade-exposed industries; however, all businesses directly and all consumers indirectly are impacted.

Honourable Speaker, small businesses are the backbone of our economy. Would the minister inform the House what impact the industrial carbon tax will have on a small business such as Zaytoon, a Middle Eastern restaurant just down the street?

Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): There is no provincial carbon tax in Manitoba despite the efforts of members opposite.

And let me be clear: there will never be a provincial carbon tax as long as the good people of Manitoba support our NDP government. I'd like to table for the House an article from the Beausejour Clipper that reads: our plan has a Manitoba-made carbon price of \$25 per ton beginning in 2018. You can only guess who that's—who wrote that. That was the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko).

Manitoba Housing Wait Times

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Manitoba currently has more than 5,000 people on the wait-list for public housing, and many families wait years before being offered a unit. Meanwhile, Winnipeg is ranked among the least affordable rental markets in the prairies, with vacancy rates dropping and rents rising significantly.

Budget 2025 commits to building 350 new social housing units, but experts estimate that we need thousands more to meet current and future demand. What is this government's plan to reduce wait-lists to

ensure that no one is left without a safe place to call home?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I want to thank that member for that question, and that gives me an opportunity just to outline. We've actually exceeded that number of 350; we're actually well-exceeded that number.

Your Way Home actually outlines our plan, which is to get folks into housing out of encampments, something members opposite didn't do. Members opposite continue to sell off social housing.

We're taking the boards off of social housing, getting folks into social housing. We've committed 20 per cent of our social housing as Housing First to make sure that people stay housed with the supports that they need, something members opposite didn't do.

They had a revolving door. They would house people; people would continually leave housing because they were cutting folks that would keep people—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Community Support Workers Turnover Rate and Low Wages

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Community support workers are the backbone of any successful housing strategy because they are the individuals doing the tangible work of meeting people where they are at to rebuild and often heal.

Despite their critical role, many front-line workers face low wages, high burnout and unstable employment. A recent survey found that most support workers earn less than \$20 an hour, creating high turnover rates.

What is this government doing to assist those on the front lines who are working day in and day out to solve homelessness?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): And I want to thank all of those workers who are on the front lines. I know they do that because they have a good heart and that they want to help folks in our province and they want to ensure that they have a home with the supports.

And I know a lot of those are coming from lived experience. I've met a lot of those folks. I know a lot

of those folks. I come from that, you know, lived experience myself.

And, you know, these folks are folks that are compassionate, caring; they're supportive and they're ensuring that these folks are getting from encampments right into homes with supports.

And like I said in this House yesterday, we're proud that we were able to house nine folks last week, clean up an encampment, and these folks were housed from Main Street Project, from Sunshine House.

And, you know, we had one folk that was kind of resistant to—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Homelessness Prevention for Indigenous People Culturally Appropriate Services

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): The majority of those experiencing homelessness in Manitoba is a clear and painful reflection of ongoing systemic inequities. Many organizations have called for culturally grounded supports.

What specific steps is this government taking to prevent homelessness for Indigenous people and youth aging out of care?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I want to thank that member for that question, and I just want to give, you know, the Families Department lots of, you know—uplift their department, because they're doing a lot of work, actually, with kids aging out of care, you know, in terms of housing them, increasing the amount of supports that those families are receiving, kinship care and making sure that families are staying together.

We're actually building housing to support families and kids coming out of care to get those supports. We're working with Spence Neighbourhood Association to make sure that when kids are aging out of care that they get those supports as well, and we're going to continue to provide those supports.

Unlike the members opposite, when they were in government, provided no supports. They were okay with kids aging out of care without—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Provincial Nominee Program Work Permit Extension

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): Honourable Speaker, the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program is a crown jewel for Manitoba. It has helped local economies thrive, communities grow and countless families and individuals establish roots and make Manitoba home.

Of course, we will always be a welcoming province, and that has been strengthened thanks to our government.

Can the Minister of Labour and Immigration please update the House today on an exciting announcement we made this week for folks who want to live and work in Manitoba for the long term?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I want to thank my colleague for that excellent and important question.

For seven years, failed Stefanson and Pallister governments depleted and destroyed our immigration system. They used folks who wanted to settle and work here as political pawns and, as a result, thousands—specifically 2,178 MPNP nominations lapsed and went to other provinces.

Our government does not take these folks for granted, and that's why we were thrilled to announce a two-year Manitoba-specific extension to facilitate work permits for MPNP candidates.

* (14:10)

Honourable Speaker, this will allow Manitoba workers to continue working while establishing roots that will keep them—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Education Standards for Teachers Request to Reverse Policy Changes

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): In October 2024, the media reported, and I quote: NDP take step backwards in cutting credit requirements for new Manitoba teachers. In March 2025, just six months later, the headline read, and I quote: Manitoba math scores hit new low. In April 2025, the NDP handed out \$610,000 for, quote, math supports based on the results of the 2023-24 provincial tests.

If we want to improve math scores, we have to start with ensuring educators have the best skills. Will this minister reverse its disastrous lowering of teacher education standards?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I appreciate the question from the member opposite because it gives me a chance to get up and celebrate the many, many incredible teachers and educators we have in this province on this week, which is education week in Manitoba.

Unlike members opposite who like to speak down to teachers, who didn't care about funding education, we have increased funding in education over the last two years by \$170 million, Honourable Speaker. And guess what else we're doing? We are build, build, building 11 schools across our great province so that students and their teachers can have the space that they need to learn. We are investing in that.

Thank you so much to the member opposite for sharing our great announcement about supports that we are putting directly into the classroom—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: And if I could get the clock stopped for a minute, we have some more guests that probably won't stay very long.

We have seated in the public gallery, from Girl Guides of Canada, seven rangers under the direction of Stacey MacVicar, and they're guests of the honourable member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Oxenham).

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

Manitoba Housing for Seniors Vacancy Rate for the Interlake

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): Members opposite, all they're doing is tax, tax, tax with no results. This is a—there is an extensive wait-list for Manitoba Housing units in the Interlake, especially for those geared towards seniors. Inword *[phonetic]* Manor has a 41 per cent vacancy rate and it's not because those units need maintenance or repairs. I'll table those documents.

Honourable Speaker, why are these homes for vulnerable Manitobans being left vacant?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): What I will say to that member is, I will ask that member was he okay when his—when they were in government selling off housing? Was that member okay when he was at—when they were in government leaving folks in bus shacks? Was that member okay when they were in

government leaving people in tents? Was that member okay when they were in government leaving social housing boarded up and slashing housing by—or, maintenance by 87 per cent?

We're not taking that approach; we're taking a different approach. We are supporting meeting Manitobans where they're at. We are housing people with supports. We're going to continue to do that because the safety of our community is important. We are working for Manitobans.

Manitobans sent us here with a mandate, which is to get Manitobans—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Park Community Centre Child-Care Spaces

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): Budget 2025 has an excellent plan to get Manitoba's work—Manitobans working and to build, build, build. Building is exactly what we're doing. After seven years of cuts by the PC government, Manitobans all over the province are excited to see what a government with a vision can do for them.

Just last week, we had a great announcement from the Westman region, and we know families out there are excited that they have a government committed to building this province.

Can the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning update the House on the exciting investment we announced for families in the Westman region.

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I want to thank my colleague, the amazing MLA for Seine River for that excellent, important question.

For seven years, the failed Stefanson and Pallister governments chronically underfunded education and child care in our province. They left families scrambling to find accessible child care. Our government is taking a different approach.

That's why, just last week, we were thrilled to be in Brandon with the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Simard) to announce a \$6-million investment at the Park Community Centre, which will create 62 new spaces and provide affordable daycare and services in downtown Brandon.

This project reaffirms our commitment to expanding affordable child-care access throughout our beautiful province, and we are proud to continue to invest in our

children's future after seven years of neglect by the previous government.

Oak Tree Towers Advocacy by Residents

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Honourable Speaker, after many, many unanswered emails to the minister and Premier (Mr. Kinew), the advocacy of the residents of Oak Tree Towers was to fight crime and it's paying off.

Honourable Speaker, why did this minister wait on this dire situation until the media brought this forward?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): What I will say to that member is that member should be ashamed of himself. What that member did is he used those residents to get 'publicity' for himself. He brought members of that—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Ms. Smith:—residence forward, called a media scrum and used those residents as props.

What I will say to that member: Why did that member ask our department to house people in that apartment if he thought that that apartment building was so unsafe?

Addiction Treatment Services Funding and Wait Times

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): Honourable Speaker, for the last three days, I've heard from many inner-city community members and organizations that provide treatment and care to people living with addictions. They're all very concerned about the amount of funding going to the NDP's proposed injection site at 200 Disraeli—\$6 million to the NDP injection site but just \$1.5-million treatment and recovery—funds to treatment and recovery.

When will this minister fund treatment and recovery and end the four- to eight-week waiting period for a treatment space?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I've said this for months in this House: We have not landed on a site.

That member continues to mislead Manitobans and this House. We are not rushing; we are listening to Manitobans; we are continuing to consult.

That member—again, she heard it in the media; she's heard it on the radio; she could open the newspaper. We made an announcement about Anne Oake—\$1.5 million with the Families Minister.

We are going to house that—mothers with their children so that they can get the supports that they need. We will continue to invest so that folks that are struggling with substance abuse in this province can get the supports that they need, unlike members opposite, who did very little when they were in government.

Government Services SpaceX Contract

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Speaker, this government talks a big game, but, once again, their actions do not match their words. Not only did they block a bill today to remove interprovincial trade barriers but, in fact, records show that this Minister of Transportation is Elon Musk's biggest fan.

Before the Premier removed them from government services, they signed an untendered contract with Musk's SpaceX, calling it, and I quote: purchase made under exceptionally advantageous circumstances. I table that untendered contract for the minister.

Why did this minister try and keep their Elon Musk contract a secret?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, I'm so happy I get a chance to grow our economy alongside this wonderful team.

We work alongside the Minister of Public Service Delivery (MLA Sandhu) to make sure procurement works to bolster our economy; we work alongside the member of transportation make sure we have the highways to power our roads; we have the work alongside the member of Labour and Immigration to make sure we have the workforce for the future; we work—side our long—Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) to make sure our budget is the backbone of a strong economy and works alongside our Premier (Mr. Kinew) to make sure we strengthen our trade relationships and break down those trade barriers, work we do all as a team to grow our one Manitoby [*phonetic*] that works for everyone.

Increase in Winnipeg Housing Prices Supports for Homebuyers Needed

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): While home prices in major Canadian cities like Toronto and Vancouver are trending downward, Winnipeg is bucking the national

trend, with the median price of a single-family detached home climbing 5.5 per cent year-over-year to over \$454,000, and inventory down 15 per cent compared to last year.

* (14:20)

Despite this, the NDP continues to do nothing to support homebuyers. They could have eliminated the land transfer tax for first-time homebuyers, but they refused. They could've reduced property tax bills, but instead they hiked them.

Home ownership is quickly becoming out of reach for young people in Manitoba. Prices are forecasted to rise another 4 per cent this year.

Why are the NDP standing by and doing nothing while an entire generation is priced out of the housing market?

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): You know what makes it more expensive to own a home, Honourable Speaker? When you keep jacking up energy costs and hydro rates on Manitobans. That's their record. What did we do with our first budget and our last budget? We're lowering costs for homeowners with a \$1,500 Homeowners Affordability Tax Credit, and next year, \$1,600.

In addition to that, of course, our hydro rate freeze is going to make it even more affordable for homeowners, and not only homeowners are getting help; we're also hope—helping renters. For years, what did the members opposite do? They made their costs more expensive. They raised taxes on renters by \$175.

What are we doing? We're bringing in increases to the renters tax credit to make life more affordable for renters. We're going to make life more affordable for homeowners, and we're going to keep doing the work of making Manitoba—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Providence University College University Status Request

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): This morning, all members unanimously passed my private member's resolution recognizing and congratulating Providence University College on their 100th anniversary. And for that, I'd like to thank all members.

Now, all that's left is for Providence to receive full university status.

When will the Minister of Advanced Education and Training bring forward legislation to give Providence full university status that they so deserve?

Hon. Mike Moroz (Acting Minister of Advanced Education and Training): I appreciate the opportunity to get to my feet in response to that question.

Was a privilege to take part in the celebration of the university college this morning. Hundredth anniversary is not something that comes along every day. All of the good work that they've done over the course of their history, we wanted to celebrate that.

I do have a bit of a question for the member from La Vérendrye, though, and it relates back to a statement they made in response to the MLA for Fort Whyte's comments about team Canada. The most certainty that we could see from retaliation is that it's going to push the president to increase tariffs in the days to come. Your own constituents—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Manufacturers in CentrePort Provincial Exemption for Duties and Taxes

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): CentrePort, which the major part of it is in the constituency of Lakeside, is a federally designated free trade zone, meaning manufacturers located there have special exemptions and deferrals when it comes to duties and taxes. This allows them the ability to grow our economy.

Honourable Speaker, will the minister extend a similar provincial relief to CentrePort manufacturers?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, we're very happy about the work that's happening at CentrePort. It's a crown jewel of Manitoba's economy, allowing businesses to connect, to relate, to transport and export their products in the tri-modal way. And this is what Manitoba does well. We're in the hub of the continent and it allows us to go south to the States, our partners there, east, west, right across the country, and north to that Port of Churchill that we invest in so much. And this is what we do.

We're going to continue to work with companies to invest in Manitoba, to make sure that they have the tools to export and strengthen our trade relationships with partners right across the globe. This is what we do in—as Manitobans, as one economy that works united to strengthen so it benefits all of us here in the province.

Logging Companies in Eastern Manitoba Request to Reduce Crown Timber Dues

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Honourable Speaker, logging companies in eastern Manitoba are being put at a competitive disadvantage by this NDP government. Timber dues for logging have risen while neighbouring provinces have been actively reducing dues. This makes Ontario logs much more attractive to mills over the border in western Ontario. Unfortunately, the closest mills for eastern Manitoba are all in Ontario where Crown dues are now one third of those in Manitoba.

When is this NDP government going to reduce the Crown timber dues to put Manitoba logging companies back to work?

The Speaker: The honourable Minister of Municipal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Simard)—no, the honourable Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures.

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): I appreciate the question from the member opposite when it comes time to timber dues and the fortunate resources and the creating of partnerships. For us as a government, it is imperative for us to be able to create those partnerships with long-term sustainability in our timber industry.

So we were pleased, we were quite honoured to be able to partner with Indigenous Nations and industry as well, something that was unheard of under the previous government, to be able to bring really positive aspects to the logging and forestry industry here in Manitoba.

So we take great pride and we'll take no lessons from member—members opposite on engagement, on partnerships, on sustainability for our forestry industry. We'll take no lessons from members opposite because we're doing in a right way, with Indigenous Nations, with industry, with all folks at the table, something members opposite never did in all their years.

Government Contract with US-Based Company Canadian Company not Selected

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Speaker, untendered contracts seem to be a pattern with this NDP government. They seem to be taking a playbook out of the dark days of the Selinger government. The Minister of Innovation and New Technology recently signed an untendered contract with a California AI firm. I table those records.

That's how the NDP work: they say buy Canadian, but they do not practise what they preach. Why is this minister sending jobs to the US and allowing—not allowing Canadian firms to bid on these opportunities?

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology): Honourable Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity get to my feet and talk about this.

We've been in the process of working through our procurement policies over the course of the last number of months in response to the threats from south of the border, working very carefully to make sure that—making—very carefully to make sure that we're able to provide those opportunities for manic—Manitoba companies where we're able.

Violence on Winnipeg Transit Buses Request to Fund Dedicated Police Unit

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Chris Scott, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union, told media this morning, and I quote: It's becoming quite clear that we may have to start looking into the realm of a Transit division of the police department to deal with violence on Winnipeg Transit.

Just this month, a 21-year-old man was swarmed by violent criminals and stabbed near Portage and Main on Transit, and a Transit operator was attacked on the job with a hatchet. These aren't just isolated incidents; the union shared that operators are suffering psychological injuries, with 44 total drivers off work due to mental strain as of December.

Will the minister commit today to funding a dedicated Transit division of the Winnipeg Police Service?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Honourable Speaker, these members opposite have zero credibility when it comes to support of the WPS.

Not only did they preside over a government that saw the net loss of 55 WPS, Winnipeg Police Service officers in this city, but they also voted against our budget, when we increased by \$5.3 million, the biggest increase in history, to the WPS. They voted against that budget, and they continue to every single day.

We're supporting the work of our Transit safety officers, we're working with WPS, we're going to make our streets safer despite the efforts of the members opposite.

Wait Times for MRI Services Portage Hospital Foundation Funding

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Honourable Speaker, the amount of MRI waiting times in Manitoba has increased to almost 27,000 from 24,000, according to the government's own website. The offer from the Portage Hospital Foundation is still on the table to reduce the wait-times.

Honourable Speaker, why is this government punishing Manitobans when there's a solution right there—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Bereza: —right in front of them? *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Honourable Speaker, the member for Portage la Prairie has not yet stood in his place and apologized to members of our communities living in the North.

That member stood in this House not that long ago and said that the MRI, the first ever MRI that our government is making sure serves the member—the constituents of northern Manitoba, shouldn't go there, that they don't deserve an MRI.

What about Portage la Prairie, he said? That was shameful. Our government has made a historic investment, bringing MRI diagnostics and the people to staff it for the first time ever to the Northern Regional Health Authority. We stand by that investment, we stand by health care in the North and we're going to keep working very hard to address the wait-list that was untouched and only increased by the previous, failed PC government.

* (14:30)

Manitoba Housing Kennedy Street Units Request to Address Graffiti

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): The minister has stated that the—that she paints the walls every second day at 355 Kennedy to address graffiti. I table photos taken from this morning.

Will the—is the minister going to paint over this misogynistic, violent graffiti toward women today? *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order. Order, please.

I would just caution members to tone it down a little. And I would also remind the member for Morden-Winkler about using something you're tabling as a prop.

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): I just want to take this opportunity to say that the Minister of Housing is moving people out of tents into homes. Bravo to them.

And I'll point out something about the PCs: They've got an establishment candidate in their PC leadership contest right now. More than 20 questions asked by the members opposite, he couldn't rise to ask a single one.

Why are they going to give him a promotion when he doesn't even seem like he's showing up for work on a given day?

But on the subject of painting, I hope all the kids out there have a wonderful job painting the Easter eggs, painting the pysanky and painting the families' yards with colours of joy and happiness this coming Easter weekend.

And, of course, any time we talk about family, we got to give it up to the front lines. Thank you to the first responders, the firefighters, law enforcement, paramedics, who ensure that all of our families stay safe this Easter and forevermore.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Petitions? Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I rise to table responses to written questions.

The Speaker: The honourable minister has tabled responses to written questions.

House Business

Mr. Josh Guenter (Chairperson, Standing Committee on Public Accounts): I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 7 p.m. to consider the Annual Report and Public Accounts of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023; the Auditor General's Report, Public Accounts and Other Financial Statement Audits, dated December 2023; the Annual Report and Public Accounts of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024; and finally, the Auditor General's Report, Public

Accounts and Other Financial Statement Audits, dated December 2024.

The Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 7 p.m. to consider the Annual Report and Public Accounts of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2023; Auditor General's Report, Public Accounts and Other Financial Statement Audits, dated December 2023; Annual Report and Public Accounts of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024; and Auditor General's Report, Public Accounts and Other Financial Statement Audits, dated December 2024.

* * *

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): I would like to announce the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet Wednesday—what? Sorry.

Can you please call second reading of Bill 29, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act; followed by Bill 24, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; followed by Bill 43, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act; followed by Bill 36, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act; followed by Bill 34, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement); followed by Bill 38, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures).

The Speaker: So, as per subrule 2(11), today is the second deadline day for second reading of specified bills, and such—as such, at the beginning of—*[interjection]*

Order, please.

As such, at the beginning of orders of the day, the following provisions shall apply: for each such bill, the minister can speak up to a maximum of 10 minutes, followed by up to 15-minute question and answer period. Critics of recognized parties and independent members may then speak for a maximum of 10 minutes per bill, following which I will put the question on second reading of the bill.

If such a bill had previously called for—been previously called for debate, all remaining actions just identified will be dealt with before the question will be put.

For the information of all members, under the provisions of subrule 2(11), the House will not rise until the second reading question has been put on all remaining specified bills.

If the House is still sitting at 12 midnight, the debate will be interrupted to put any remaining second reading questions without further debate or amendment and the division bells shall ring for no more than one minute for each question.

The list of bills that will follow this process are as follows: Bill 29, Bill 24, Bill 43, Bill 36, Bill 34 and Bill 38.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 29—The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act

The Speaker: Accordingly, I will now call second reading of Bill 29, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act.

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), that Bill 29, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la sécurité et l'hygiène du travail, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

MLA Marcelino: I am pleased to arise to provide comments on Bill 29, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act.

This bill follows the work of the Workplace Safety and Health Act review committee, which undertook a legislated five-year review of the act from 2022 to 2024. Regular consultation and review ensure our laws reflect the current landscape of occupational safety and health.

We thank all representatives of employers, workers and technical and professional organizations with an interest in occupational safety and health who participated in the review for their extensive efforts. I am pleased that the newly re-established Ministers Advisory Council on Workplace Safety and Health will continue to provide this valued expertise as we move forward.

This bill addresses all 18 actuated recommendations of the review committee. The proposed amendments will bring clarity to several terms and interpretations using the act, modernize administrative processes, strengthen administrative penalties and related collection mechanisms and expand discretionary authorities of the chief occupational medical officer.

* (14:40)

Notable changes include: embedding psychological safety into the act's purpose to recognize the role employers have in preventing work-related psychological injuries, and position Manitoba as a leader in doing so; modernizing and streamlining appeal processes, including reducing the need for oral hearings where possible, allowing for costs to be awarded by the Manitoba Labour Board as is done in the Employment Standards Code and limiting the duplicative processes associated with filing the same complaints in multiple forums; recognizing associated activities under common control as business entity for the purposes of issuing orders and penalties to better address bad actors that try to aid enforcement and fly under the radar; introducing mechanisms to collect wages owed if an employer refuses to pay a worker in connection with orders issued, a gap that currently exists in the act; introducing a new administrative penalty for failure to report a serious incident to Workplace Safety and Health when required to do so; helping to ensure timely notice is given when there is a fatality or other significant occurrence in the workplace; expanding the chief occupational medical officer's authority to order employers to implement medical surveillance in workplaces where workers are suspected of being overexposed to a hazardous substance.

Robust surveillance is already required in the mining industry, and this change would extend similar protections to workers in other industries. These measures will ensure that Manitoba's laws keep up to date with the realities of workplaces and that workers are safe no matter where they work. It is our government's priority to keep Manitoban workers safe by taking steps to improve workplace safety and health and to always stand up for the rights of working people.

Honourable Speaker, I do want to make some comments and focus on one aspect of the proposed amendment, and that is a part where we're going to be trailblazers here in Manitoba. There is nowhere in North America—in a North American jurisdiction or anywhere in the world; the closest would be in Australia, where they have a small definition of what constitutes psychological hazards. But we will be the first in Manitoba to come up with a definition for psychological safety in the workplace.

So what is a psychologically safe workplace? Well, Manitoba is aligning its definition with the 2013 Canadian Standards Association, CSA, standard on psychological health and safety in the workplace. This CSA defines a psychologically safe workplace as a workplace that promotes workers' psychological being

and actively works to prevent harm to workers' psychological health, including in negligent, reckless or intentional ways.

Employers are not to be responsible for workers' medical conditions or mental health broadly. The term psychological safe workplace is used intentionally to help clarify employers' responsibilities as being specific to risks that the work or work environment present, rather than for mental health more broadly. Employers are expected to identify and address risks to psychological safety that the workers may encounter in the workplace. Certain workplaces are more likely to be affected by the need to implement psychologically safe changes.

Workplaces that are associated with higher psychosocial risks, such as health, corrections, police, fire, paramedics, social services, education and public transit, would be required to have systems in place. But that's not just the only list, Honourable Speaker; there's a lot more.

Regulations are anticipated later this year which are expected to include requirements for risk assessments, implementing of policy, control measures and training. We are continuing to consult with stakeholders on the regulatory framework as well as resources to support compliance.

Honourable Speaker, in the gallery today we have many guests who are—which this bill means a lot to them. Here today we have Preston Heinbigner's parents, Robert and Elaine; Kevin Rebek, the president of MFL; Nick Kasper, the president of the United Fire Fighters of Winnipeg, he's also a chair of the mental health commission for—mental health committee for the UFFW; Chris Perry, president of Manitoba Professional Fire Fighters Association; Shane Wilton, president of Brandon professional firefighters; Ryan Woiden, President of MGEU local 911 paramedics.

And there's more firefighters and paramedics and other first responders that I'd like to be able to add their names to Hansard.

Honourable Speaker, last year we were gathered here after April 9 to really bear witness to what happened to many firefighters in Winnipeg when they were mourning the loss of their friend, their brother, their colleague, their family members, Preston Heinbigner. He was 40 years old, he joined the service as a firefighter in 2007 and he suffered from PTSD. There was a lot going on.

Firefighters here in Winnipeg—they've seen the highest call volume increases in the last four years

across Canada. They don't have enough resources in terms of apparatus or numbers of firefighters to deal with what's going on. They see so many unnatural things every single day. And it's not just firefighters, it's all the first responders. I know we have paramedics here, as well, and they suffer from a lot of the same things.

And we are a government that listens. We are a government that consults and works together with our stakeholders and make sure that we can make this place a better place for all workers across Manitoba, especially the people who we call our heroes. But sometimes everybody needs help, and there's nothing wrong with that.

And this bill that we're going to be bringing forward today, Honourable Speaker, will do just that. It's going to make employers pay attention to this concept of what psychological safety in the workplace means, and to be able to uphold that and to prevent future occurrences like that and to be able to lift up the workers that do this important job for us every single day.

I want to, with the few minutes that I have, just maybe mention something that Preston's widow said at—in a eulogy to Preston: April 9 should not be marked as a day of pain and sadness, but rather a day that caused everyone to pause, a day that started a discussion and a day that brought about change.

Shayda said this while she was pregnant with her second child and—at Springs Church during the eulogy. And Shayda has urged us all to do better.

And this bill—this amendment is the start of trying to create what a safe workplace would look like, even amidst a lot of challenges. And how we're going to do that is by doing that together, by listening to one another and coming up with, you know, proper policies in place. And we can do that as a province. We can do that and be leaders across Manitoba. And we're going to be doing that to start with in dedication of the—and to honour Preston's memory.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Names: Scott Atchison, TJ Belluk, Terry Browatt, Shelly Brown, Lionel Crowther, Keith Dixon, Laura Duncan, Brad Enders, Carla Jones, John Kuryluk, Rob Labossiere, John Lloyd, Ben Naaykens, Daniel Nix, John Normandin, John Peters, Troy Reedy, Chad Silvani, Adam Smithson, Chad Swayze, Rich VanDeMosselaer, Gauge Wood.

The Speaker: Before moving on to the question period, I have to make a slight correction in the state-

ment I read earlier. I had previously referenced subrule 2(11). The correct reference is subrule 2(13).

Questions

The Speaker: So now moving on. A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any opposition, 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 may be asked by any opposition members. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you to the minister for bringing forward this bill. I have tremendous respect for maintaining the safety, and psychological safety in particular, of workplaces in Manitoba.

My first question—my questions are just some basic clarification. It states in the bill that an employer who is required to conduct a risk assessment must ensure the assessment is carried out by a competent person.

How would this be established?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I thank the member opposite for their question and for their words of encouragement regarding the need for workplaces in Manitoba to be psychologically safe and healthy.

For his particular question, an example would be when there is a risk assessment of a training standard, for example, for confined spaces. That would be an example of something like that. You would have to say that a competent person is somebody who has some kind of training in safety and occupational safety to say that yes, the training standards for this confined space training is done well.

* (14:50)

So, it was just like a smaller, kind of clarification—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Narth: Within the bill, it also makes mention that an employer may be ordered to put in place a medical surveillance program.

Will this also specifically apply to psychological safety within the workplace, or an unsafe psychological workplace?

MLA Marcelino: That doesn't have anything to do with the psychological safety part of the bill.

This bill encompasses a lot of different components, a lot of technical issues, and a lot of it is just updating clarifications or definitions: for example, using the word incident instead of the word accident, because we think that accidents are actually preventable. There is a little bit about administrative penalties and things like that.

So, a lot of those other items are smaller types of changes in this amendment act, but the more significant one has to do with introducing the concept of psychological safety and health.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Narth: In—within the bill it also makes mention to multiple businesses will now be considered a single employer.

How exactly will that be set out, and is this a current issue in Manitoba, that businesses are functioning under multiple different names to avoid poor health and safety practices?

MLA Marcelino: I thank the member for that question. And just to kind of go back to his previous question about the role that the Chief Occupational Medical Officer would be playing, or the COMO. The part of the bill amendment would state that he, or that the medical officer, would be able to issue surveillance in a workplace. This is if we would suspect that a worker or workers at a workplace would have some kind of undue exposure to chemicals and then they could put in, like, an order to make sure that this workplace would be surveilled.

So that's a little bit of clarification about what that part of the bill was referring to.

Mr. Narth: So I'll just ask a question to that and then go back to the previous question that the minister wasn't able to answer.

So why is it, then, that this wasn't expanded to psychological unsafe workplaces, to have a surveillance program in those, if it's just the physical safety in workplaces?

MLA Marcelino: The part about psychological safety first, this is going to have to be steps; this is going to take steps to do this. We're the first trailblazing jurisdiction to do this. It's a big project, so this is a small step; it's a small first step, but it's a very important step. When we're introducing the definition of psychological safety and health in the workplace and, to this extent,

it's just about the definition. It's a 2013 CSA standard, and it's just the definition.

Down the road there's going to be more consultation with stakeholders, like the folks above, and there's going to be more regulations in place and, most likely, more legislative changes to ensure that we can do this.

So those are two separate topics as it relates to the chief occupational—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Narth: Thank you to the minister for clarifying that question.

Circling back to a previous question that I had is around making note in the bill regarding multiple businesses will now be considered a single employer.

Is this something that comes from current issues that are being seen in the labour market in Manitoba? And are there businesses that are trying to avoid safe work environments through multiple business entities?

MLA Marcelino: Thank you to the member opposite for that important question.

The purpose of allowing the director to declare multiple employers to be a single employer is because our Workplace Safety and Health branch has encountered enforcement challenges, where some employers have repeatedly been caught in contravention of a regulation, and then they open a new company in the same sector, doing the same work in order to avoid the penalties and enforcement.

So this legislative amendment would allow Workplace Safety and Health to hold those employers accountable despite their evasion efforts. And this mirrors current provisions in the Employment Standards Code and also aligns with the labour relations code.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Narth: So I realize now and recognize that the psychological safe workplace part of this bill has been established now as recognition.

That being said, would there be further monitoring of that, and who determines whether a workplace is psychologically safe under this new legislation?

MLA Marcelino: Again, Honourable Speaker, this bill is just a first step. So it's a first, small but important step.

And no one's even taken this step before. And we are, as a province, saying that we are going to be

adopting the current CSA—2013 CSA standard of what a psychologically safe workplace should look like.

And that definition is: a workplace that promotes workers' psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to a worker's psychological health including in negligent, reckless or intentional ways.

So it's just the first step. It's just the adoption of a definition. The next steps, which we've already started to do, is to continue and to—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Mr. Narth: Out of respect for the minister, I'd like her to expand on what the next steps that she foresees, moving forward, in additional regulation and other legislation.

MLA Marcelino: Thank you for your consideration, to the member opposite.

So the next steps would be to continue to engage with stakeholders, like the folks upstairs, the folks who live this and breathe this and see their fellow co-workers having such a hard time, and have a hard time themselves, and have some—nowhere to turn to, and sometimes even with their employers giving them, like, not even the ability to talk about this.

So we know that that's changing. So similar to how we expect employers to be able to have physically safe working conditions, we are now expecting employers to have also—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

No further questions?

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is open for debate.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): I'd like to thank the minister for bringing this legislation forward. I think, on both sides of the House, we can recognize and appreciate the importance of a safe workplace for all Manitobans.

I think it's something that all employees—all Manitobans deserve. They deserve to be able to go out and earn a living for their families, to provide for their families and contribute to their communities in a safe environment. There's no one that should be expected to go into an environment that is unsafe, physically or psychologically.

I welcome the guests in the gallery that are here today that represent those who work in some of the most challenging work environments. And we're more

recently realizing that that expands and extends past physical dangers in the workplace. And we recognize the psychological importance of safety and well-being in the workplace.

* (15:00)

Firefighters are those in our communities that I have utmost respect for. On my time in municipal government, I served as the liaison to the fire department and closely worked with their training and their expectations within the workplace. Although it's a volunteer fire department in a rural municipality, these firefighters see and deal with many of the same things that a committed, full-time firefighter must do.

The loss of Preston has hit many homes across our province. I know that some of his nearest and dearest friends are friends of mine as well, that serve as firefighters in the Winnipeg fire services, and the news of his passing last year had hit hard. These are people that live within my constituency and my community.

My predecessor, Dennis Smook, the previous MLA for La Vérendrye, his boys were close friends with Preston, and it hit them hard, it hit their families hard. And it made us take note and recognize what needs to be done to safeguard the workplace for all Manitobans, especially those that are in such demanding workplaces as firefighters.

The legislation, I do realize—and I thank the minister for a valuable bill briefing that allowed me to early on ask some of those hard questions. In fact, the minister was so kind to allow me two bill briefings, because we were called out early the first time, so I respect that. And I realize that this legislation being brought before us for the most part is a five-year review, so a lot of what is included in this thick Bill 29 is basically cleaning up wording, as the minister had earlier said.

What I want to make note of, though, is the importance to be mindful of businesses. I think there are the majority of Manitobans that work for businesses, for employers—not just in the private sector, but public sector—that do truly respect the work that their employers do to safeguard their interests within the workplace in regards to safety. And that's both psychological safety and physical safety.

I know that there are workplaces already, both in the public sector and private sector, that do have surveillance programs for the public or for the employees' safety within those settings. The member from Brandon West had just shared with me that within the police service in Brandon, there is a three-year review surveillance program that already exists. So,

many employers across our province are being proactive in this.

Further to that, I want the minister to be aware, as I'm hoping that she is, of the importance of attracting and retaining workforce throughout all industries in our province. We can't be hindering the ability for employers to attract and retain a workforce, and we cannot be adding undue hardship as far as responsibilities for employers that may be outside of their control.

I think we can all accept and appreciate the importance of an employer doing everything that it can to safeguard each and every one of their employees going home unharmed, and unharmed whether that be psychologically or physically. But what we can't be doing is putting in place boundaries for employers that, like I said, may establish undue hardship if we have a bad employee that wants to take advantage of some of the legal authority that is provided to them.

Another thing that I can appreciate, and I actually learned through reviewing this bill, is answer shopping; it's something that I didn't realize was a thing. I'd never heard the terminology before, and this bill sets out to eliminate that. And that's not so that an employee can go to their employer, workplace health and safety and the union and try to get the response that they're looking for. This streamlines their claim and does make positive impact in the ability to access a safe workplace.

So with that being said, I think myself and my colleagues support safe workplaces in Manitoba and we appreciate the hard work that many Manitobans do.

Thank you.

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

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 29, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act.

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

I declare the motion carried.

**Bill 24—The Workers Compensation
Amendment Act**

The Speaker: As previously agreed, we will now move on to second reading of Bill 24, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act.

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), that Bill 24, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

MLA Marcelino: I am pleased to rise again to provide comments on Bill 24.

This bill will expand the eligibility for the Workers Compensation Board's lump-sum fatality benefit to a deceased worker's estate, to better support workers' families following the loss of a loved one.

Currently, the WCB pays this benefit to a spouse or a former spouse entitled to benefits; and where a spouse is not identified, a deceased worker's estate cannot currently access this significant sum. This change better reflects the modern realities of today's families, and ensures access to critical benefits following a tragedy.

This bill also supports more balanced decision-making at the Workers Compensation Board; new benefit-of-the-doubt clauses provide consistency to decision-making in circumstances where evidence is equally balanced. And this will not only better support injured workers through the claims process, but it also provides fairness in WCB decisions relating to an employer's assessment costs.

The change of the annual reporting deadline for the appeal commission to May 31 each year aligns it with that of WCB and streamlines approvals, ensuring data in both reports are consistent. Changes to the annual reporting deadline for the WCB appeal commission to May 31 each year aligns the date with that required of WCB, ensuring consistent data in reporting to government.

** (15:10)*

This bill will ensure that the interests of all Manitoba workers are protected in and out of work, and also enables the Workers Compensation Board adjudicators to consistently take fair decisions.

Honourable Speaker, the reason why our NDP government is putting this bill forward is because a core mandate item for our Labour ministry is to always stand up for the rights of working people and to make sure that workers are treated with dignity and respect; and this didn't happen in a specific case of my constituent who was 19 years old. His name was John Lloyd Maaba Barrion, and he was killed at work on February 15, 2022. He was shot during a robbery while he was working at the Travelodge by the Wyndham Winnipeg hotel on Notre Dame Avenue, shortly around 3 a.m.

My constituent, John Lloyd, was a recent graduate of Tech-Voc High School. He was the middle child. He used his earnings at the beer vendor to directly support his family and save money so that he could put himself through culinary studies. His siblings include three brothers and one sister, and one of his brothers is here with us today—it's John Christian Barrion, and also John Lloyd's mom is here today—Maria—and other family and friends.

And I thank them for being present today at this second reading, because this bill amendment was done directly in response to what happened to your family so that this doesn't happen to any other family ever again in Manitoba.

John Lloyd was such a good kid, he actually shared his earnings with his parents. He wanted to support his family as much as he could. He would buy his siblings food, clothing and even shoes.

After John Lloyd was robbed and killed at work during his shift as a beer-vendor attendant, the family and the community held vigils; we held a funeral; and the WCB paid an amount for the funeral costs. But it was very unfair that John Lloyd's family was not eligible for the lump-sum death benefit cost, because John Lloyd did not have a spouse or a former spouse.

So going forward, this bill changes that. The lump-sum death benefit will go to the deceased person's estate or—the WCB will be able to make a determination who the lump-sum benefit goes to, and that would have made a huge difference to John Lloyd's family.

It's part of our mandate, as an NDP government, to always stand up and fight for the rights of workers, and this is just a small example of how we're going to do that. But it would be a big deal to families like John Lloyd's, and it's never going to happen to any other family again because of your advocacy.

And I commend your family's strength in the difficulties that you've had over the last two years navigating—more than two years—navigating his loss, and I really appreciate the help that you've given me in drafting this so that we can stand up for other workers.

So thank you again, especially to his mom, Maria, and to his brother, John Christian.

Thank you, everybody.

Questions

The Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed in the standard rotation. No question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is open for questions.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you to the minister for that explanation and her remarks. During the bill briefing, the explanation was never shown to myself, so I appreciate that.

I was wondering, though, how many other cases are like the example that the minister brought forward? Is this a one-off that we're closing a potential hole in the legislation, or is this something that happens more frequently?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board): Thank you to the member opposite for their question.

I'm going to assume that he was speaking about the lump-sum—lump-sum death benefit in this case. And I would just update the House that the WCB's analysis on the system implications on expanding benefits determined that between 2019 and 2023, 15 per cent, or 22 cases, of the 143 fatality claims would've been impacted by the proposed requirements, providing the lump-sum benefit to a deceased worker's estate.

So, in regular words, that means this has happened to 22 other families since 2019.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Narth: Thank you for that clarification. Fifteen per cent of the cases or 22 families, yes, I think that clarifies that well enough; I can do the math.

But maybe to clarify: The lump-sum payment right now currently in Manitoba is \$102,130, is that correct?

MLA Marcelino: Yes, that's correct.

Mr. Narth: In the case that this does need to happen, and I think the example that was used, of the family that we have with us today in the gallery, is quite clear-cut. It is his family that would've been the beneficiary.

Other cases out of those 22 may not be as clear. So how will the WCB determine the appropriateness of the other person or entity that they may transfer the death benefit to?

MLA Marcelino: I thank the member for that question.

So currently, if the worker who died had a spouse, that lump-sum benefit would go to the spouse. If that worker who died had even a former spouse, there's calculations in place. Like, if that—if the worker was providing maintenance payments to the previous spouse, even that person would get that—a portion of the lump-sum benefit as well.

So now with this bill, this bill amendment, this lump-sum benefit could go to the worker's estate. An estate—it doesn't matter if you have a will or not.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Narth: I did realize that the next line of payment would be to the estate, but many people, especially younger people, may not have an established estate. So who other than the family could be deemed as beneficiaries?

MLA Marcelino: So I had to learn about this from lawyers, and, actually, everybody has an estate, even if they don't have a will, because an estate is the total of belongings, property, assets and liabilities of a person at the time of their death.

Now, beneficiaries of an estate are set out in a will, but even if there is no will, that estate is distributed to the deceased person's closest living relatives in accordance with The Intestate Succession Act. If you do have a will, it will go to the executor that will deal with the 'estate,' and if you do not have a will, the court may appoint an administrator to fulfill the same role that the executor would. So—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Narth: I think that clarification has been strong enough, unless it was to extend past an estate, and that's—that was my top question, is to clarify that it's a spouse, previous spouse, common-law partner or the estate. And then it would go into the legal system after estate. Is that clear?

* (15:20)

MLA Marcelino: There is a part of this amendment that also gives the WCB discretion to pay the lump sum fatality benefit to someone other than the worker's estate, and it would be giving the WCB discretion. But the WCB already has this type of discretion to pay beneficiaries or family members directly for the interment benefit.

So similar policy can be put in place and similar safeguards can be put in place that kind of mirror what the WCB already does when they give an interment benefit, and that's just about \$14,000 or so, and we can do—and the WCB can do this as well for the lump-sum benefit to put criteria in place and a policy later on to outline how it can utilize this decision—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Mr. Narth: Would that discretion ever include somebody or a corporation outside of the person's estate or family?

MLA Marcelino: I don't have that information.

The WCB will be, in the future, outlining this type of policy and more criteria and the safeguards in place, but I'm just going to say that it would—they already have this ability to do that now with the interment sum, which is a much smaller sum, because families often have the immediate needs for these funds on the death of the worker, and it can take time to obtain these letters or probates of letters of administration for the worker's estate. So it makes sense for the WCB to have this type of discretion to pay someone other than the worker's estate.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Narth: Does legislation like this being brought forward today exist in other jurisdictions outside of the province of Manitoba currently?

MLA Marcelino: Across Canada, the jurisdictions—almost every province is different. I wouldn't be able to—there's no, like, clear pattern similar to other parts of—like, other parts of this legislation. There is, like, for example, the benefit-of-the-doubt clause. We're one of only two other provinces that don't have one. But as far as this, almost every province does it differently.

Some provinces have smaller amounts; some provinces have, like, double the amounts. So this is a—I think, a fair—but, I think a fair way of dealing with this kind of—difficult kind of case.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Narth: Would the minister say that we are now unique in the disbursement of the lump sum payment in comparison to other jurisdictions across the province, or is the lump sum similar and also paid out to the family and estate or the spouse?

MLA Marcelino: I can find it in my notes. I do have, like, a jurisdictional scan of how everybody does things differently.

Again, the amounts are very different and how they do things is different. But I can certainly find that and start listing them off, all 12 provinces and jurisdictions and other territories for the member opposite.

So, for example, in Newfoundland, the lump-sum payment goes to the spouse or to the common-law partner. It's 26 times the worker's average weekly net earnings, or \$24,000, whichever is greater.

In Prince Edward Island, 100 per cent of the maximum annual earnings in a year of death can go to a worker's estate. In Nova Scotia, the lump-sum payment is \$15,000 that can go to the worker's estate. In New Brunswick, it's \$25,000–\$641–\$25,641.50 that goes to the worker's—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Debate

The Speaker: Seeing no further questions, the floor is open for debate.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you, once again, to the minister for bringing forward this legislation and with the intention to safeguard the interests of Manitoba employees in a variety of different workplaces.

There—for the most part, again, this legislation, Bill 24, is a housekeeping piece of legislation. It sets us in line with jurisdictions, sets us in line with the WCB. An example of that is the deadline for the appeal commissions to submit its annual report to the ministers extended from April 30 to May 31.

So these are examples of parts of the legislation that are straightforward, and just work to streamline legislation on a review basis. The lump-sum payment is really the only thing that is added to this legislation and the only thing that would make this legislation unique. I thank the minister for answering the questions that I brought forward during the question period, and I think that clarifies much of this legislation for myself and for Manitobans.

I look forward to the committee's process where Manitobans are able to ask some questions of im-

portance, but I am comfortable and confident that the minister had consulted stakeholders, as she had outlined with family in the gallery today. So I can appreciate that.

I think it's an important addition to the legislation. Basically, the only concern that I'll flag and highlight is the amount of independent discretion that the WCB has with the lump sum payment. That's concerning, that we weren't able to clearly outline in legislation the order of priority for the lump-sum payment. I think examples can be used, like they say, the family who had to experience such a terrible and tragic loss deserve that lump-sum payment. Nobody here and nobody in Manitoba would stand to dispute that.

Past that, I'm not a hundred per cent confident with the minister's response that the WCB is not able to use additional discretion to award that lump sum to people that they so see fit, and in fact, it outlines that in legislation now. And that only has concern because when you allow an independent entity to have discretion over the benefits that are rightfully those of a family or individual, it can raise concern.

And I think this potentially can raise legal concern in the future that I wouldn't want to see the Province of Manitoba being put into that predicament, the Workers Compensation Board as well and definitely not the grieving family or beneficiary.

I know many people's personal situations are unique, or I should say everyone's personal situation is unique. We realize that people may not have a spouse, and something tragic could happen. Then they may not have an established estate. The first response by the minister saying that everyone has an estate, and the lump sum would automatically just be provided to that estate, gave me some peace of mind.

But the legislation isn't written that way, and her question—or answers following that had provided me some additional uncertainty that the discretion could not be abused by—not intentionally, even, by the WCB, but putting the WCB in a difficult position where they may be requested to provide the lump-sum payment to somebody who is of extended family and a caregiver or a provider for that individual, just to use that as an example.

* (15:30)

Potentially, the beneficiary of an estate that may not be entitled to these types of payments. They could be the beneficiary of an estate with clear outlines on what they're the beneficiary of, and there may not be any monetary funds in that estate and clearly set out

in the estate that no monetary funds should be given to the beneficiary. In this case, it would put the Workers Compensation Board in a tough predicament on who, then, would be the beneficiary of the lump sum.

So I think there are many considerations to be made and should've been made during the drafting of this legislation. So I'd like to highlight that, but not discredit the intention of the minister or this legislation. I do feel that the minister has drafted this legislation with good intentions and I can appreciate that.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

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

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 24, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act.

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

I declare the motion carried.

Bill 43—The Human Rights Code Amendment Act

The Speaker: We will now move on to Bill 43, second reading of Bill 43, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, that Bill 43, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Wiebe: I'm pleased to rise in the House today for second reading of Bill 43, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

This bill will amend The Human Rights Code to include gender expression in the list of protected characteristics. At present, the code prohibits discrimination against individuals based on numerous specified characteristics such as age, sex, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity and physical or mental disability. This amendment would add gender expression to the list of protected characteristics.

Gender expression refers to how a person presents and communicates their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair,

makeup, body language and voice. This is distinct from gender identity, which refers to a person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender. Gender expression can be a distinct aspect of their lived experience.

Without this explicit protection, individuals who challenge traditional norms of masculinity or femininity remain vulnerable to discrimination in workplaces, in housing, in services and in public spaces. Our government believes that all people should be able to express their gender in a way that feels authentic to them. Recognizing gender expression in human rights law affirms the freedom of all people to do so without fear of prejudice or harm.

Human rights laws in almost all provinces and territories in Canada prohibit discrimination based on gender expression. This proposed amendment would align the protected characteristics in Manitoba with the laws of other jurisdictions and with the federal Canadian Human Rights Act.

Our government stands with the 2SLGBTQIA community and believes unwaveringly in the rights of individuals to be who they are, to proudly be who they are, unapologetically, to live the—live their lives free from all forms of harassment and free from all forms of discrimination.

Of course, we saw a very different approach from the members opposite during the last election campaign when their party ran an ad campaign that targeted the 2SLGBTQIA youth in our province, some of whom are the most vulnerable members of our society.

They campaigned on limiting youth from expressing their true selves. And they have never explained that position; they've never accounted for it or apologized for the divisive ads that they ran.

And, of course, honourable Speaker, the face of that divisive and disgraceful campaign—well, it was the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan), who's now running for the leadership of that very party. It's something that he has never explained, something that he's never accounted for. He's never apologized for being the face of that campaign.

And that's not leadership, honourable Speaker. That's not accountability.

So while members opposite would rather sow division and discord, and use the rights of others as a political dog whistle, our government will work each and every day to stand up for those rights. The good

people of Manitoba, well, they rejected the politics of division, and instead, they elected a government that's focused on bringing people together.

It's simple: on this side of the House, honourable Speaker, we stand for equality; we stand for human rights; we stand for the rights of everyone, and we stand for one Manitoba.

By expanding the Human Rights Code to cover gender expression, we are protecting more people from discrimination. And we're sending a clear message to the 2SLGBTQIA community that our government has your back.

This amendment is an important step forward and will protect vulnerable individuals in the workplace, in our schools and those who are seeking services in our—in public spaces. It's about ensuring that everyone, no matter how they express their gender, is treated with respect and the dignity that they deserve.

I look forward to the support of all members in this House and moving this bill past second reading.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed in the standard rotation. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Seeing no questions, is there—the floor is open for debate.

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 43, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act.

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

Bill 36—The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act

The Deputy Speaker: We'll now move on to second reading of Bill 36, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister for Infrastructure and Transportation, that Bill 36, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

* (15:40)

Mr. Wiebe: I rise in the House today for second reading of Bill 36, the drivers and vehicles and highway traffic amendment act. This act makes changes to MPI services and improves customer protection and road safety in several areas.

A certificate of inspection, i.e. a safety, which is issued by a qualified mechanic, is required to register a used vehicle in Manitoba, and it lets MPI and other drivers know that the vehicle meets safety standards and is fit to operate on our roads. It also provides confidence to consumers that a used vehicle meets safety standards.

Unfortunately, safeties presented to MPI have been revealed to be false or misleading or not issued by qualified mechanics. This represents a road safety concern, as these vehicles may not be road-worthy. In 2022, this House passed legislation which gave MPI the ability to issue tickets to a mechanic who issues a fraudulent certificate, a person who issues a certificate but is not a mechanic or a person who submits a fraudulent certificate to MPI.

This bill would build on that and give MPI authority to issue tickets to a person—to other persons who authorized permit or acquiesce in the issuance of a fraudulent certificate or one issued by a person who is not a qualified mechanic. This could be an inspection station that allows or participates in such a scheme, or that hires people who are not mechanics to conduct these inspections. Should this legislation pass, MPI could charge the inspection station itself.

The second item affected in this legislation is searchable database of drivers' licences. Legislation, again passed in 2022, authorized MPI to build a tool allowing individuals to enter driver's licence number on the MPI website and learn if a licence is valid or if there are any conditions or restrictions on it. No other information about the licence holder will accompany the licence status, and this tool will become available later this year.

The ability to verify the validity of a licence online already exists in Ontario and Quebec, and this been—has been requested by stakeholders in Manitoba, including car rental companies, trucking companies and the City of Winnipeg. The tool will allow them to ensure their drivers are valid, licensed, validly licensed and will help keep drivers with a suspended licence off the road.

However, the legislation from 2022 doesn't allow the tool to disclose or—the class or stage of the licence

being searched, so this new legislation will add licence class and stage to the list of information provided, which will make the tool much more useful. The database is only searchable for a licence number, not a name, and won't have the number unless—and, of course, you wouldn't have the number unless the person being searched gives it to you.

The third key impact—area impacted by this bill is the age limits for driver licencing and vehicle registrations. Manitobans under the age of 18 cannot obtain a driver's licence or register a vehicle without the consent of a parent or guardian. The Drivers and Vehicles Act suggests that both parents need to provide approval, but this amendment will clarify that only one needs to sign, which will keep us in line with most other provinces.

If there is no parent or guardian or they cannot provide approval, then another adult who is an—who MPI considers responsible could also do so. If the person who provided the approval revokes it and the child is still under 18, then MPI cancels the driver's licence or vehicle registration; this will continue to be the case.

Finally, we're taking the opportunity through this bill to improve the wording of several other provisions related to driver's licencing. A person who is convicted of impaired driving offence or is issued some types of licence suspensions at a roadside by a police officer must complete an impaired driver's assessment and possibly additional programming through Shared Health. The person cannot become licensed again until they have completed this requirement, but the legislation is not clear about this, so we're making those sections of the act clearer.

In conclusion, Honourable Speaker, I'm confident that this bill will increase road safety by keeping unsafe vehicles and drivers off the road, all the while keeping driver licensing accessible to all Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed in the standard rotation, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): My first question is, this legislation allows a minor to acquire a licence with only one parent's approval.

What is the process should a minor not be able to secure this approval, for example, if they have very poor parental relations?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I think we covered this in the bill briefing that we had with the member opposite. Happy to delve into it a little bit deeper if he'd like. We could set up a meeting and talk a little bit more through this.

The point here is that we're making it easier for those families to be able to obtain that permission and be able to grant that to a minor.

Mr. Balcaen: I repeat the question, honourable Speaker, so that all Manitobans can hear an answer from this minister, not just me personally in a bill briefing. And I think the thousands of people that are watching online today deserve an answer.

So will ask again: If a child doesn't get along with their parent, what is the process for them to move forward under this bill?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, again to the—I would suggest maybe tens of thousands of Manitobans that are watching along the debate here this afternoon. The point that we are making here with this bill is to make it easier for those parents to give that consent.

I also would suggest that this is, of course, bill stage at second reading. And so by passing this at second reading, we're going to have an opportunity to call those tens of thousands of Manitobans in to ask questions at committee, and I look forward to hearing the member's further questions.

Mr. Balcaen: So with that answer, I guess I'll ask: How will it make it easier for children who have poor relationships with their parents to get a driver's licence?

Mr. Wiebe: Well—and I think I mentioned it in my opening comments, that MPI does have some discretion when it comes to how they obtain the permissions that we're talking about. So there are some circumstances where they are able to find an additional, responsible adult who can grant these permissions.

So there is some flexibility, and that is part of the legislation that we're presenting here today.

Mr. Balcaen: I guess third time was the charm. Appreciate the answer from the minister.

Providing additional information in a database, while welcome, can also increase the susceptibility of that data being breached.

What steps will MPI undertake to ensure that only qualified individuals can access the validity of a driver's licence?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, of course, as I said, this tool is currently being built, ready to roll out, and, of course, the cybersecurity, and the security concerns more broadly, of drivers' information is paramount in this process.

So I know that MPI is taking this—taking their time to ensure that they get this right. They've been developing this tool for quite some time, and, as I understand it, it's ready to roll out very shortly.

Mr. Balcaen: Does the minister have any data on the number of fraudulent safety inspection certificates that have been issued over the past five years?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, again, I don't have those figures in front of me, but I'm happy to have this if this is a question that, of course, again, members of the public are bringing forward at committee stage. We'd be happy to delve into that.

What we know is that the industry has been asking for this kind of support, because they're asking for us to clamp down on those who are acting in a fraudulent way, to ensure that those who are doing it in the right way are supported and that industry is protected.

Mr. Balcaen: Under this legislation, the registrar must cancel the registration issued to a person under 18 years of age if the registrar receives a written request from the person who approved and signed the application.

What is the process and time frame for such a cancellation, to ensure that a minor's licence is not disrupted, impacting their work or studies?

* (15:50)

Mr. Wiebe: Well, I think the member opposite is on the right track, and that is ensuring that we're streamlining the processes as best we can. That is the goal of this.

If this is a—just picking up on this, it might be a specific casework issue, a specific instance that the member is bringing forward. I'd be happy to sit down and support his constituent if they have a specific question about an instance that they've run into.

Mr. Balcaen: No, it's not a specific casework. Otherwise, I would follow the process and have a discussion with the minister or send this in.

I was asking for the tens of thousands of Manitobans that are watching us here today so that they understand, especially those youth that are coming up and becoming active drivers, what would happen if they're in this situation.

Mr. Wiebe: Well, again, and that's why we're making sure that, you know, we're getting information for those hundreds of thousands of Manitobans who are following along this debate here this afternoon. What I will say is if there is a very specific circumstance that the member opposite is referencing, I'm happy to get him additional information.

Otherwise, the point of this bill is to ensure that there is no disruption and streamline the process for those kinds of drivers.

Mr. Balcaen: Once again, I appreciate getting up and asking a question for the 1.4 million people who are following along today in Manitoba.

Under the bill, an impaired person's driver's licence must not be returned to them until the person has provided the registrar with an impaired driver's assessment from a recognized agency.

How many drivers have been required to undertake an assessment over the last five years, and what is the successful completion rate?

Mr. Wiebe: I have to apologize. There was some chatter in the room, maybe even some laughter from the member's previous question.

Can I just ask him to repeat the question so that I can get all the details?

Mr. Balcaen: Well, it's my pleasure, again, to ask on behalf of the 1.4 million Manitobans that are following along today to the minister.

Under this bill, an impaired person's driver's licence must not be returned to them until the person has provided the registrar with an impaired driver's assessment from a recognized agency.

How many drivers have been required to undertake an assessment over the past five years, and what is the successful completion rate?

Mr. Wiebe: It's a very good question and, of course, I don't have those numbers in front of me. But, again, I look forward to committee. We can delve into some of the details that the member opposite is bringing. I'm sure some of those—at least some of those 1.4 million Manitobans will come to our committee and, of course, we'll be able to get all that information for those folks that come to the committee.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further questions, the floor is open for debate.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): You know, I certainly don't want to hold up this bill getting to second reading, so I'm just going to put a few words on the record regarding Bill 36, the drivers and vehicles amendment and highway traffic amendment.

I think this kind of dovetails a little bit on to Bill 5, which talks about The Highway Traffic Amendment Act, specifically to impaired driving legislation, because one of the areas in this bill is that a person who is obligated to provide an impaired driver's assessment is not eligible to hold a driver's licence until they provide the assessment and complete any required education or treatment program.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this could actually be more severe than somebody who's involved in an impaired driving incident or an impaired-driving-causing-death incident. They could have their licence sitting there longer than a person who causes death through impaired driving.

Bill 5, which dovetails on to this, amendments were brought forward by this PC government—PC Party to look at severe consequences. And we really have to make sure that, you know, when we're looking at drivers and vehicles amendments and The Highway Traffic Act amendments, we really have to make sure that people are kept safe.

And, you know, when we talk about safety, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) moved this bill and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure (MLA Naylor) was the one that seconded this, yet at committee, on Bill 5, which talks about this, they both denied any sort of changes to make the road safety. The minister who is responsible for Justice and the minister who is responsible for road safety both denied this and said we don't need any changes.

So I find it funny that road safety is spoken about as being paramount in our province, yet it's empty words and no action is ever actually taken by this NDP government.

My other concern is adding extra work on to MPI, building this tool. I'm wondering if that's caused some of our 5.3 per cent increases that we've seen after this government is touting and guaranteeing that there was going to be rebates brought to the 1.4 million Manitobans that really could be impacted by this, because whether you pay for driver's licence for your

child or MPI rates, it affects your affordability and ability to have that extra cash here in Manitoba. And this NDP government robbed us of 5.3 per cent of those funds, Honourable Speaker.

So I would like to add just a little bit of an article that was wrote in the Brandon Sun. Just read it very quickly here and then I'll end my comments: As you're crossing a street with traffic approaching, don't assume the driver is going to stop. And if you're approaching oncoming traffic while driving, don't assume that they will stay in their own lane. In either incidence, don't assume that the driver is paying attention or is unimpaired. That's the message we gleaned from three recent reports regarding road safety in Manitoba.

Last month, as part of national impaired driving week, and this article was from the 12th of this month, Manitoba Public Insurance revealed that in 2024, 15 people died and 118 were injured while some sustained life-altering injuries in impaired driving collisions in Manitoba. Over the previous five years, 91 people died and more than 350 sustained injuries.

It goes on to state, yesterday it was reported that 47 per cent—97 of 207—of Winnipeg drivers screened for drugs as part of the Winnipeg Police Service's don't drive high campaign tested positive for cannabis consumption. The tests were performed between January and March of this year, and this year's numbers are roughly consistent with last year's test results for the same time frame, which found that 43 per cent of drivers tested positive for the drug. Surprisingly, the majority of positive drug tests this year occurred between 3 and 6 p.m.

These three reports combined to create a disheartening picture of the dangers of driving on Manitoba roads, let alone being a passenger or a pedestrian. Despite years of advertising and other information—sorry—information awareness campaigns aimed at convincing Manitobans to not drink and drive, to not drive while high and the dangers of distracted driving, too many drivers are still getting the wrong message. In fact, this issue—situation may even be getting worse than the statistics suggest, given that many impaired drivers or distracted drivers are never caught in the act.

The article goes on to say too many drivers still think that drinking or getting high doesn't impair their driving skills. They are wrong and there are 34 fresh graves in the province to prove it.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I think the NDP government needs to do much, much more with road

safety. This bill is a start, but expanding the Bill 5 to make sure that impaired drivers are sentenced appropriately would also be a start.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

* (16:00)

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further debate, is—are members ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 36, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act.

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

I declare the motion carried.

Bill 34—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement)

The Deputy Speaker: We will now move on to second reading of Bill 34, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement).

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), that Bill 34, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Point of Order

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for—before recognizing the minister, the honourable member for Brandon West.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): On a point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: On a point of order.

Mr. Balcaen: I just would like to table the documents that I read from—for the Brandon Sun for the House.

* * *

The Deputy Speaker: And now the honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

MLA Naylor: I am pleased to rise today to speak on Bill 34, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement). This bill is an important step toward improving safety for our government employees,

motor carrier enforcement officers who inspect heavy commercial vehicles on Manitoba highways.

The bill also strengthens provincial oversight of heavy commercial vehicles and motor carriers. These operators play an important role in transporting essential goods and services for our economy and it is critical to ensure that they operate safely and in compliance with rules and requirements.

The first change in the bill will clearly define motor carrier enforcement officers as those who enforce The Highway Traffic Act. While this may seem straightforward, it is an important clarification that lays the foundation for other amendments which clarify their roles, powers and duties.

Currently, under The Highway Traffic Act, the powers and duties for motor carrier enforcement officers are not adequately outlined. Other types of provincial enforcement officers, such as conservation officers, have their duties, responsibilities and obligations explicitly defined in legislation and regulations.

Bill 34 aligns motor carrier enforcement officers with other enforcement officers in Manitoba by formalizing their duties, obligations and aspects of their operations, such as equipment and training in regulation, ensuring clarity and transparency.

Another key amendment introduces liability protection for motor carrier enforcement officers when performing their lawful duties. We want to make sure that our employees are not personally held liable, either financially or criminally, for the essential work they do to keep our provincial roads safe.

This protection, of course, does not apply in cases of misconduct, in which case officers would be held accountable. Rather, this amendment protects officers who perform their work responsibly in accordance with their duties and obligations.

Additionally, this bill will establish the legal authority for MCEO officers—for M-C-O officers—to arrest individuals if they encounter criminal activities in the course of their duties enforcing The Highway Traffic Act.

While their primary responsibility is inspection of commercial vehicles, there are instances when officers unexpectedly come across criminal behaviour during their duties. This bill ensures that officers will have the legal authority to detain and arrest individuals engaged in criminal activity and transfer them directly to police custody, reducing risks for both officers and law enforcement partners.

I do want to clarify that the bill does not change the fundamental duties of motor carrier enforcement officers. Rather it will provide them with the appropriate legal authority, protections and tools to carry out their responsibilities effectively and safely.

In addition to the motor carrier enforcement officer changes, the bill will also modernize administrative penalties under The Highway Traffic Act to enhance safety compliance among motor carrier operators, particularly those with poor safety records.

Administrative penalties serve as an effective compliance tool because they are simpler to enforce and prevent infractions from unnecessarily burdening the court system. The bill removes the current maximum cap for administrative penalties under the act, allowing for larger administrative penalties, serving as stronger deterrent for motor carrier operators who fail to meet safety standards or regulatory requirements.

The bill also makes amendments that will require motor carriers to report damage-only accidents valued at \$2,000 or over to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure. Currently, the act sets out requirements for certain types of accidents for tracking safety records. This amendment aligns Manitoba with other Canadian jurisdictions and the National Safety Code.

This requirement does not apply to passenger vehicles.

Another change this bill makes is to ensure that certain bylaw convictions will impact a carrier's safety rating moving forward. Currently bylaw infractions, such as overweight violations on municipal roads, do not affect their safety rating. The bill addresses this by ensuring that any bylaw convictions related to the weights or dimensions of regulated vehicles on highways or required routes of travel to regulated vehicles will impact a motor carrier's safety record.

Honourable Speaker, I am very proud to bring this bill forward, as it reflects our government's commitment to protecting Manitoba families on our roads and highways while safeguarding our critical infrastructure. These amendments provide clarity, improve enforcement capabilities and strengthen compliance measures, making our transportation network safer for all. And I look forward to moving this legislation forward.

Thank you.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed in the standard rotation, and no questions or answers shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you to the minister of highways and infrastructure for bringing forward this legislation. I know it's an ongoing struggle throughout all of Canada to safeguard our highways, and that includes commercial vehicles.

Some of the legislation that changes here are in subclause 318.9, where a motor carrier must ensure that the driver who drives or tows the regulated vehicle on the motor carrier's behalf is accounted for.

Is this going to change—drop shipment—

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

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I'm not sure that question was completed. I'm not sure what the member was asking.

Mr. Narth: So I'll expand on it and sorry for running out of time.

So currently it's common turnpike type transportation where a motor carrier is transporting a trailer from another motor carrier and they switch off, and that's commonplace. Now the motor carrier is responsible for any of the drivers, including the trailer, as it's set out in legislation.

So will this discourage that type of operation?

MLA Naylor: I'm not aware of any change that's being made here that would change any current operations of motor carrier operators.

* (16:10)

Mr. Narth: Along with that, it includes additional reporting for those motor carriers that are carrying out the duties for another motor carrier.

This adding—added reporting, has the minister heard from industry if this is going to have implications on efficiency?

MLA Naylor: There is no additional red tape, if that's the implication being created by these amendments.

These are amendments to improve compliance with The Highway Traffic Act and improve overall road safety. And furthermore, Manitoba Transportation Infrastructure consulted significantly with Manitoba Trucking Association on this bill. They are

very supportive of the changes and provided helpful perspective and input into the development of this bill.

Mr. Narth: So I just quickly want to clarify—no additional red tape. So section 318.1: a person engaged by motor carrier to drive or tow a regulated vehicle must, within 30 days after the event, disclose in writing to the motor carrier.

So this additional reporting, does the minister not see that as additional red tape?

MLA Naylor: No.

Mr. Narth: Okay, so slightly concerning, and I don't even know how to actually interpret the legislation now, because if we move on just one subclause to 318.9: the motor carrier must ensure that the driver who drives or tows a regulated vehicle on the motor carrier's behalf complies with sections 318.2, which I just previously read out, and 318.4.

So licensees now responsible for those that are towing the vehicles comply and towing—or, the truck hauling that trailer also comply, which seems like additional reporting. Am I wrong?

MLA Naylor: I'm not sure that the member is focused specifically on the changes that Bill 34 introduces.

Mr. Narth: Then would the minister be able to clearly outline what those changes in fact are, if the subclauses that I've outlined that are clearly outlined in the bill do not—are not included as changes to reporting and regulation?

MLA Naylor: I did spend a good five or six minutes outlining the changes that are being introduced in this bill, but I'm more than happy to spend my answer time to review some of those changes.

This bill does strengthen provincial oversight of heavy commercial vehicles and motor carriers, the goal of which, of course, is to keep our highways safer. It does clearly define motor carrier enforcement officers as those who enforce our Highway Traffic Act, and those are important clarifications because they speak to the other roles and powers and duties that are being brought in by Bill 34.

The—we find that, at this point, those duties are not clearly articulated which is why we're doing that—

The Deputy Speaker: The minister's time has expired.

Mr. Narth: Thank you to the minister for now starting to go down the path that I was looking for, the answer that this only clarifies what is already common practice within legislation, but not outlined.

Is it safe to say that—I don't want to create an answer for the minister, but when I look at a number of different subclauses, it looks like additions.

MLA Naylor: I believe that the administrative pieces that the member's referring to, there are some small administrative changes to the bills, but there are not—there is no significant expansions; there's no additional red tape. This bill is so much more focused on the role of motor carrier enforcement officers and their abilities to enforce The Highway Traffic Act as it should be enforced.

Mr. Narth: Great. So—and I appreciate that last response from the minister.

I'll move on to a focal point in this bill, which is the change of name for motor carrier enforcement officers and the title of others who—throughout this bill. Can the minister advise if the term motor carrier enforcement officer is one that's used across jurisdictions? And if not, is there an opportunity to align ourselves with other provincial terms from other jurisdictions?

MLA Naylor: I think that the member misunderstands. There is not a change of title to motor carrier enforcement officers; there is a clarification in the bill of what their oversight is and an expansion of duties and responsibilities as well as expanded protection for motor carrier enforcement officers.

Mr. Narth: Yes, I completely understand—just, we're changing the terminology, and my only question is, as we strive to create consistency across borders throughout Canada, is motor carrier enforcement officer the terminology used in other jurisdictions?

MLA Naylor: The title of motor carrier enforcement officers was in place before I came into this role. It hasn't—it isn't even part of the discussion of this bill, so I can safely say that I have not done a jurisdictional scan on the title of that role from before I came into this role, or what it is now, because there is so many important changes that are being brought in with this bill, complete—I—clearly there's no interest in those changes to be asked about or discussed in this room today.

But I'd be more than happy to talk about some of the things that we are introducing today if I have the opportunity to do so.

Mr. Narth: So it outlines that operators of regulated vehicles are now referred to as motor carrier instead of an operator. So is the motor carrier enforcement officer something that has been in place, as the minister has outlined that it has, and if so, motor carriers, is

that new terminology—which is clearly outlined in the bill—is that common across jurisdictions throughout Canada?

MLA Naylor: I think I understand now, that the member is talking about the truck drivers, not our enforcement officers. Although this bill doesn't actually—it isn't really about that. But my understanding is that there is changes in this language to motor carrier versus operators—motor operators, or some language like that. It's some minutiae that the member is really focused on.

I'd really love to talk about some of the changes that we're doing to make our highways safer, if there was any interest from the member to do so.

Mr. Narth: Well, we'll move on from that because obviously the minister isn't comfortable answering these questions, for whatever reason, which is fine; we'll let it go to committee.

But speaking in regards to the changes to a motor carrier enforcement officer, what training and equipment will a motor carrier enforcement officer now be given with the expansion of authority?

* (16:20)

MLA Naylor: Our motor carrier enforcement officers will maintain the same equipment that they have already had, which is—has included—when—I assume that we're referring to the arrest component of Bill 34—and they already are equipped with handcuffs, with batons, with mace, and there are some—there's new training and there is new support for motor carrier enforcement officers, similarly to conservation officers, to use tasers. But that is not included in this bill.

Mr. Narth: Thank you to the minister for that answer because that's exactly what I was looking for. Reference often has been made to same authority as a conservation officer, which we know conservation officers have tasers and guns, so would that not be included in this legislation for motor carrier enforcement officers?

MLA Naylor: This bill enhances the motor carrier enforcement officer's scope and practice in terms of being able to make an arrest, but it does—there's nothing in this bill that addresses the training or the tools because we have already addressed those through policy; it's not required. We don't need the legislation to address those changes. So our officers are already being trained in the use of tasers; they will not be carrying guns.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further questions, the floor is open for debate.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): I'll make my comments brief, but do want to highlight some important parts of this legislation and important parts of keeping our highways safe across Manitoba and how that does involve commercial transportation.

We've really got a divide in Manitoba, and I think we're seeing that divide between safety regulation and safety of our highways. So I can appreciate the minister bringing forward legislation that streamlines enforcement and allows for enforcement officers to have additional jurisdiction to be able to fulfill their role of keeping commercial vehicles safe on our highways and, most importantly, controlling unsafe practices that we see in administration through commercial transport companies.

You know, there's, unfortunately, been recent examples of where commercial transport companies have tried to avoid current legislation and have exploited loopholes in legislation, not only in Manitoba but across jurisdictions, and Manitoba seems to have been a safe haven for many of those companies. They exploit those loopholes through our system of goodwill and honesty, which we have upheld in Manitoba for decades.

The problem that arises, and why I was asking very specific regulatory questions within this bill, is because, like I mentioned, we have a divide. We've got a divide between companies who come from other jurisdictions to exploit loopholes in our system in Manitoba, and then we've got long-standing, honest motor carriers in Manitoba that provide good jobs to good people that are responsible and carry out the activities of transporting commercial goods across our province and our country in a responsible way and in a way that hasn't harmed anybody for, like I say, decades.

So we need to be careful when we create new regulation through new legislation that what we're doing is we're targeting these loopholes. And that's what I'd like to see is that we don't have a poor operator that's running under 15 different names across the country, operating out of Manitoba, abusing our public insurance system and abusing our roads and the citizens of Manitoba.

So that's what I'm looking for in new legislation and that's what I think all Manitobans, including the private business sector within the motor carriers

industry, are looking for. So, I just—I'd like to state and reiterate that when we bring forward new regulation, it may be with good intention, and it may be a quick response to fulfill a need where it's definitely seen as needed because safety has deteriorated throughout the industry.

But we don't want to impact undue hardship on the industry that is currently operating responsibly and safely, so enforcement is welcomed. Expanding the authority of motor carrier enforcement officers is welcomed. But we need to have a focus on that. We need to make sure that the system allows for motor carrier enforcement officers to really be on the ground, keeping an eye out on unsafe practices on our roadways. And unsafe practices are not just the safety of the vehicle, but more importantly, the safety of the driver. The vehicle is nothing without the driver behind the wheel.

So that's why I asked the questions regarding the expansion of authorization—or, authority, I should say, for those officers. And I think the member—the minister has given me a satisfactory response to that.

So, all in all, I support legislation moving Manitoba forward to be on a level playing field with our neighbouring jurisdictions; that Manitoba is no longer a safe haven for unsafe operators. But at the same time, we're not punishing the farmers; small, independent trucking companies; independent construction companies; and construction and, you know, trucking companies across the board in Manitoba, that we're not punishing good operators for taking safety at the forefront of utmost importance.

So, I look forward to committee and seeing what operators and businesses across Manitoba have to say about this legislation.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any further members wishing to speak in debate?

Seeing none, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 34, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement).

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

I declare the motion carried.

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

The Deputy Speaker: On House business.

MLA Fontaine: Honourable Speaker, could you please canvass the House for leave to allow the Government House Leader to rise on House business after the question has been put on the second reading of Bill 38, despite rule 2(13)(f), to announce four standing committee meetings.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to allow the Government House Leader to rise on House business after the question has been put on second reading of Bill 38, despite rule 2(13)(f), to announce four standing committee meetings? [*Agreed*]

Leave has been granted.

Bill 38—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures)

The Deputy Speaker: We will now move on to second reading of Bill 38, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act.

* (16:30)

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (MLA Moyes), that Bill 38, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures), be read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

MLA Naylor: I am pleased to rise today for second reading of Bill 38, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act, traffic safety standards. I'm very, very happy with this proposed legislation. This bill includes three interventions to protect workers and vulnerable road users, and these amendments are long overdue.

Bill 38 amends The Highway Traffic Act to increase the safety of people on our roadways and highways by clarifying the responsibilities of drivers. These changes are specifically intended to help create a culture of safety when it comes to workers and improve protection of vulnerable road users.

This bill includes three road safety initiatives. First, it establishes clear rules for motorists approaching and passing snowplows and other winter maintenance vehicles. Right now, The Highway Traffic Act outlines general rules for drivers when overtaking and passing other vehicles on a highway, but it does not specify the measures a motorist should take when

driving around winter maintenance vehicles working to clear snow on a roadway or at an intersection.

With these amendments, drivers must not be closer than 100 metres for snowplows on roadways with a speed limit of 80 kilometres an hour, or 30 metres on roadways under that limit.

Sometimes when operators are doing their work to clear our highways, drivers become impatient and pass them when it's unsafe to do so. There have been instances in the recent past when drivers have collided with other vehicles or snowplows, risking injury and damaging costly equipment.

The amendments will require drivers to stay back when traveling behind plows and other winter equipment, and drivers must not enter an intersection if doing so will interfere with maintenance vehicles. These amendments include protections for graders and loaders, trucks with nose and wing attachments, as well as salting and sanding trucks. These rules will apply when maintenance vehicles are operating actively with warning lights flashing.

While equipment operators take precautions when doing their work, these are large vehicles and they frequently are on the road in poor weather. It can be difficult for operators to see surrounding traffic on the road in blowing snow, and creating a buffer zone for operators does make everyone safer.

A long list of stakeholders were consulted on this aspect of the act, including the Cities of Winnipeg and Brandon, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, police forces and the Manitoba Trucking Association.

The second safety initiative in this bill will authorize tow truck drivers and other roadside assistance vehicle operators the option to place cones and signs on roads to alert approaching drivers and create a safe work zone while working in traffic.

Tow truck drivers are frequently the first to arrive on collision scenes, and until now, they have not been legally permitted to put pylons on the roadway to protect themselves and others attending a scene.

We want workers, all workers, to make it home safely every day, and this amendment will align the HTA with workplace safety standards and improve the safety of road assistance operators when they're attending to people who need help.

This portion of the bill will ensure that going forward, tow truck and other roadside assistance vehicle drivers will have the option to legally place

temporary traffic control devices when assisting vehicles, stranded drivers or attending a collision.

Similar stakeholders were consulted on this aspect of the bill, in addition to CAA and workplace health and safety.

Finally, the third aspect of this bill will provide drivers with new clarity when passing cyclists. Currently, The Highway Traffic Act merely states that drivers are required to pass cyclists at a safe distance. That is clearly subjective, and what feels safe from a driver's perspective does not necessarily feel safe for a cyclist—or, as a vulnerable road user.

Now one metre will be the minimum amount of space required for drivers to leave on the roadway. Further, and listening to the cyclists in my community and those I've met with, they need space on the road to safely maneuver around debris, potholes and other hazards often found close to the curb. The introduction of a one-metre buffer gives cyclists more room and is prescribed to drivers, rather than relying on perceptions of what is safe.

The cycling community has demanded better protection for many years, and the number of cyclists on roadways has been steadily increasing over the past five years, as have driver-cyclist conflicts. There have been tragedies in Winnipeg and other municipalities, and we want to create a culture of safety.

This amendment is intended to reduce those conflicts, and finally catches Manitoba up to most other jurisdictions in Canada. I hope this amendment will help make our roadways safer for everyone and encourage more citizens to enjoy cycling in our beautiful cities and towns.

Consultation—in addition to the previous mentioned organizations, consultations were held with Bike Winnipeg, the Manitoba Cycling Association and police agencies. This bill supports government's commitments to keep Manitobans and families safe when traveling on our roads and highways, regardless of whether a person is driving a vehicle or a bicycle, assisting with winter maintenance activities or providing service to stranded drivers on the roadside.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed in the standard rotation, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): To start with, around the changes to a tow truck being able to place temporary traffic control devices on the highway, are these controlled in any way, or to the discretion of the operator?

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): Thank you for—thank you to the member opposite for that question.

The devices—there is controls in terms of what types of devices can be used. These are about, you know, the use of signs or cones—and it depends, of course, on the situation, whether it warrants it or not.

So, you know, a vehicle breaks down in a parking lot or a driveway, that wouldn't be warranted. But the intention is to create a safe work zone. Some—that would happen if emergency vehicles were on site, but in some situations they are not, or the tow-truck driver may be the first vehicle on site. So, the opportunity is there for them to create a safe workspace.

Mr. Narth: In regards to the tow trucks controlling the traffic, as well as the setback requirements for snowplowing equipment, who has been consulted?

MLA Naylor: Consultations for both those parts of the act were done with both the Municipality of Brandon and Municipality of Winnipeg, both police services in both of those regions. CAA was consulted on the tow-truck portion of the act—thought I had it all memorized but I think there's a couple more here that I haven't referenced—oh, the—in addition to Association of Manitoba Municipalities, Manitoba Trucking Association, Manitoba Public Insurance and the RCMP.

Mr. Narth: So just for clarification, in regards to the snowplow equipment setback requirement and the tow truck motorway control, there was no one from the industry—for example, a tow truck association outside of one company, CAA—and construction associations for snowplow equipment?

MLA Naylor: Forty-five seconds isn't that long to answer questions.

* (16:40)

So, in addition to all of the vast amount of consultation that was done in this, we also did consultations with Champion Towing Limited, Dr. Hook Towing services, On the Move towing, Virden Towing, Heavy Equipment Aggregate Truckers Association of Manitoba, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, and I think I've covered all the rest.

Mr. Narth: That makes me feel much better.

Next question would be: Can the minister advise the consequences of a driver failing to maintain distance? Are the consequences monetary or demerits or other?

MLA Naylor: There will be fines and demerits proposed for not following the rules. There's still regulatory work that has to be carried out to determine the exact offences, fine amounts and demerits, how they fit into, you know, the system that exists now, and that regulatory work will be carried out when this bill passes.

Mr. Narth: Do the distances suggested in this legislation conform with other jurisdictions?

MLA Naylor: Yes. I mean, there's three different parts to this legislation, but I mean, when we start—let's start with the cyclists part of this, honourable Speaker.

Across the country, all provinces, with the exception of Alberta and Saskatchewan, have adopted the one-meter regulation, in particular, for roadways under 50 kilometres. Some of them have adopted a wider zone. And in the provinces that haven't adopted the meet—it has been adopted by bylaw in the cities of Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon as well.

Mr. Narth: What is the minister's plan in terms of making drivers aware of these changes?

MLA Naylor: That is a great question. We have some exciting opportunities coming up to do education around this bill. There will be definite roll-out. There's different components, so they will be—the education component will happen in different way.

It may surprise people to know that within driver training, even though it was not laid out in law, drivers are currently being trained on the one-metre piece around cyclists. So we will—but we know that older folks like myself, who have been driving for a long time, may need education roll-out around that, similarly to the other pieces.

We have some good opportunities coming up for that education.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further questions, the floor is open for debate.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you to the minister for clarifying many of those questions in Bill 38. That was welcomed.

So, when addressing this legislation, I think a lot of it is, again, housekeeping, and I welcome that.

What's important, though, and that's why I asked the question on who, within the industry, was consulted, especially around the traffic control for additional or new traffic control authority for tow trucks, and also set-back requirements for snowplowing equipment, because both of those are done in the private sector as well as the public sector.

So many Manitobans think that Manitoba Highways control and own and operate the equipment that's on our highways clearing the snow, but in fact, much of it is bid-hourly work in rural Manitoba that's done by private operators.

So it's important that everyone is included in the changes specifically, right? You can make all the changes you want, but if you need to contact people through a dozen different industries, that's half of the accomplishment.

So, when speaking about traffic control and the safety for tow truck drivers, this is something that's near and dear to me. We own a tow-truck company—a towing company—that's part of our automotive dealership. And my dad—my elderly father, 72 years old, is the one who primarily operates the tow truck.

So definitely, this is something that's been asked, you know, potentially silently and not publicly for years, but I think we can all see the importance of additional safety measures for tow-truck operators in Manitoba. Similar to what the minister had said, tow truck operators are often first on scene, and first on scene in some of the poorest driving conditions that we can imagine in Manitoba.

Harsh winters and extreme weather of all seasons create hazards on the highway. And many times, depending where we are in the province, response time for law enforcement—whether that be police officers, whether, you know, in—municipal police or city police or RCMP across the province—their response time is often much slower than that of the tow trucks. So they're there clearing off the highways and regaining safety to those scenes long before anybody that's specifically trained for controlling those scenes.

So I welcome those changes in legislation; I think it's overdue. But, along with that, it is important that this is communicated and messaged appropriately to the operators. Many people don't realize, but the type of lights that are used on a tow truck and when they're used is regulated in Manitoba. So if we're changing that now for those operators, that needs to be effectively communicated, but welcomed.

The setback legislation for snowplowing equipment, again, is something that I think needs to be put into legislation. I'm not the largest fan of just blanket additional regulation for the sake of adding regulation so that you say that you're doing something. But this is something that is needed, obviously, as common sense amongst drivers becomes less common.

A concern that I do have is some of this being very subjective. You're now stating that drivers are only to pass when it's safe, and that's set out in legislation. And these are things that are going to be to the discretion, obviously, of law enforcement and not clearly outlined on what exactly that is for drivers. We've got a setback that's broken down for various distances for various speeds, but it doesn't outline what, you know, safe conditions for passing may be.

So I think when you bring in additional legislation that would also include demerits and monetary fines, it would be important to also outline clear parameters in that legislation. But I welcome it.

The setback for cyclists, I think, is important. And I think we see it—you know, me representing a mainly rural constituency in Manitoba, it's not something that you often see. But definitely, spending more time now in the city of Winnipeg and in this great building, we see the interaction that motorists have with cyclists on a daily basis. And the roadway needs to be safe for both the driver and also the cyclist.

* (16:50)

Unfortunately, you know, again, I welcome that, but the legislation does say, and the bill mentions, that the driver must maintain the distance. So the wording in legislation is somewhat concerning. I know we share the roadway. Cyclists share the roadway with the motorists; the motorists share the roadway with the cyclists. This should be the responsibility of both a cyclist and the motorist.

The Speaker in the Chair

I—like I said, you know, through most of my life, haven't seen active interaction between the two on a busy street. But cyclists try to use their size to their advantage in navigating the roadway, which I can appreciate.

An Honourable Member: Their size. Those big cyclists, those massive cyclists.

Mr. Narth: And the member from St. Boniface makes comment to that, that the cyclists aren't large, but in fact, I'm more so referring to that they are more nimble so they can navigate their way through traffic much

more easily, so they can come up on a number of different motor vehicles on the span of a street.

So I think it needs to be shared responsibility, and I look forward to the committee process for more Manitobans to have input on that. I definitely support it, support that we need to keep our distance, motorists from cyclists and vice versa, but the responsibility needs to be shared.

So all in all, I welcome additions to—making additional legislation that makes our highways a safer place, but caution the minister on legislation that doesn't have teeth.

So thank you, honourable deputy—or, Honourable Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: No other speakers?

Seeing none, is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

The Speaker: Sorry about that; let's do that again.

Seeing no other speakers, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: Question before the House is second reading of Bill 38, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures).

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

I declare the motion carried.

House Business

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): I would like to announce the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 6, The Public Schools Amendment Act; Bill 16, The Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Amendment and Public Schools Amendment Act; Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes); Bill 18, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Indigenous Languages of Instruction); Bill 19, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Safe Schools); Bill 20, The Community Child Care Standards Amendment and Education Administration Amendment Act; Bill 39, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Campaign Financing for School Trustees).

Do—can I just keep going?

I would like to announce the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 3, The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment and Planning Amendment Act; Bill 4, The Planning Amendment Act; Bill 14, The Insurance Amendment Act; Bill 15, The Real Estate Services Amendment Act; Bill 27, The Income Tax Amendment Act; Bill 28, the Manitoba Hydro amendment; Bill 37, the Manitoba financial services authority act and amendments to other various acts.

I would also like to announce the Standing Committee on Justice will meet Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 9, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act (2); Bill 13, The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2025; Bill 32, The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (Measures to Address Unlawful Activities); Bill 35, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act; Bill 36, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Bill 43, the high-The Human Rights Code Amendment Act.

I would also finally like to announce the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 7, The Human Tissue Gift Amendment Act; Bill 33, The Public Health Amendment Act; Bill 34, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement); Bill 38, The Highway

Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures); Bill 41, The Reporting of Supports for Child Survivors of Sexual Assault-trained health carers and evidence collection kits-Amendment Act.

The Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 6 o'clock to consider the following: Bill 6, Bill 16, Bill 17, Bill 18, Bill 19, Bill 20, Bill 39.

Further, it's been announced the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 3, Bill 4, Bill 14, Bill 15, Bill 27, Bill 28 and Bill 37.

Next, it's been announced that the Standing Committee on Justice will meet on Thursday, April 24, 2025 at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 9, Bill 13, Bill 32, Bill 35, Bill 36, Bill 43.

And, finally, it's been announced that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 7, Bill 33, Bill 34, Bill 38, Bill 41.

* * *

The Speaker: This concludes the business before the House today. And in accordance with rule 2(13), the House will now adjourn and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday next.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 17, 2025

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