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of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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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

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

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

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

Please be seated.

Routine proceedings, private—orders of the day, private members' business.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY****PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** Good morning, Honourable Speaker. Could you please call, from 10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation act; and from 10:30 to 11 a.m., Bill 218, The Climate Action Month Act, commemoration of days, weeks, months amended.

**The Speaker:** It has been announced that we will proceed with second reading of Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act, from 10 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. We will then move on to second reading of Bill 218, The Climate Action Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

**SECOND READINGS—PRIVATE BILLS****Bill 300—The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act**

**The Speaker:** We will now go to second reading of Bill 300.

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** I move, seconded by the—right?—MLA for Transcona, that Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Fondation dénommée « The Winnipeg Foundation », be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of the House.

**Motion presented.**

**MLA Loiselle:** It's an honour to move this bill, Bill 300, The Winnipeg Foundation modernization act.

I'd like to take this opportunity by, first of all, setting the stage for this bill by recognizing that The Winnipeg Foundation is actually the oldest foundation in Canada and also the largest foundation in Canada. In 1921, actually, The Winnipeg Foundation, thanks to generations of thoughtful donors, has improved life in our city through gifts with us. William Forbes Alloway, a prominent banker, established The Winnipeg Foundation in 1921 with the gift of \$100,000. Alloway established Canada's first community foundation and fulfilled his vision of an organization built by everyday Winnipeggers that will support our community forever.

The second gift to the foundation: an anonymous donation of three gold coins worth \$15 at the time is a reminder that every act of generosity, no matter the dollar amount, makes a difference. Thousands of people from all walks of life have followed in these donors' footsteps. The collective power of their generosity has resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars invested in local, charitable projects that help individuals thrive, strengthen families and build our community.

And since 1921, I'd like to take a few moments to actually go through some of the most notable benchmarks of The Winnipeg Foundation, such as in 1922, when the foundation makes its first grant of \$6,000, equally shared by the Margaret Scott nursing home, Knowles Home for Boys, Victorian Order of Nurses and the Children's Hospital and the Children's Aid Society. In 1937, the foundation received memorial gifts for the first time. In 1950, during the flood, the Community Reserve Fund, built through surplus funds from 1945 to 1949, supports flood efforts here in Winnipeg.

Honourable Speaker, 1952, the Children's Hospital receives a large grant to address the polio outbreak which was predominant at the time. In 1972, the assets of The Winnipeg Foundation exceed \$10 million. In 1981, the assets exceeded \$20 million. In 1996, the assets exceed \$100 million. And in 2003, the foundation makes the largest grant in our history: \$6 million to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. I think that's very notable.

In 2012, cumulative toll grants surpass \$300 million with the assets of The Winnipeg Foundation in 2012 at \$500 million. In 2018, the foundation commits \$1 million to help organizations work towards our shared goal of reconciliation in our community with a new reconciliation grants program. In 2019, cumulative grants total \$500 million. And in 2021, the foundation celebrates its 100th anniversary.

So now, in 2025, The Winnipeg Foundation seems—seeks to modernize its act. In fact, The Winnipeg Foundation should be representative of all Winnipeggers and Manitobans. The foundation wants to create a community for all and this is why it's important that the foundation remains current in the work that it does so it can continue to meet the unique needs of each community. These amendments will support The Winnipeg Foundation in its modernization at accessibility efforts.

Removing the mayor from the board will support the foundation in its goal of being as apolitical and as inclusive and diverse as possible. Digitizing their financial recordings will allow the foundation to be more accessible to the people of Winnipeg by reaching more people electronically.

So The Winnipeg Foundation act is amended in two ways. The mayor of the city of Winnipeg is no longer required to be a member of the board of directors of the foundation, allowing for more inclusivity and other members to join the board. Audit information about the foundation's financial statements must be published on its website.

Currently, information respecting the audit must be published in a newspaper and copies of the auditor's report must be provided on request, and the goal of The Winnipeg Foundation is simply to be more transparent and reach more Winnipeggers and Manitobans.

\* (10:10)

So we all want the people of Winnipeg and across Manitoba to thrive in their communities and feel like they are part of one Manitoba. And The Winnipeg

Foundation has been a pioneer in helping make this a reality, Honourable Speaker.

The Winnipeg Foundation has put community at the foremost for over 100 years and has grown to be one of the biggest foundations, not just in Winnipeg, but in Canada. By promoting philanthropy, creating partnerships and supporting diverse, charitable organizations, The Winnipeg Foundation aims to be a leader in strengthening community well-being. The foundation shares important values with our government, supporting families, helping them thrive and building our communities.

The foundation wants to create a community for all, and this is why it is important that the foundation remains current in the work that it does, so it can continue to meet the unique needs of each community. So, Honourable Speaker, communities develop and change over time. Winnipeg's population has increased 'expodentially' and with that the city has grown to be a beautiful, diverse and cultural mosaic.

Established in 1921, The Winnipeg Foundation is the oldest foundation, at over 100 years old, and it has historically adapted to the city's evolving communities. The Winnipeg Foundation Act was amended in 1943, 1980, 1990, 2004 and again in 2011.

These proposed amendments to the act will support the foundation and the changes in their methods of governance, so that their board can be as representative of all Winnipeggers as possible.

So, Honourable Speaker, how do we achieve this? We achieve this with a more inclusive board at The Winnipeg Foundation. Removing the mayor from the board will support the foundation in its goal of being as apolitical and as inclusive and diverse as possible.

The Winnipeg Foundation board aims to be as apolitical as possible, and as we all know, the mayorship is a political position. The Winnipeg Foundation board also tries to be as inclusive and diverse as possible. The board of the foundation aims to achieve gender parity and include as many communities from Winnipeg as possible. The board also seeks specific skillsets from those in the legal, accounting, cultural or linguistic communities and beyond.

Winnipeg, as we know, is a wonderful, diverse and multicultural city. So, by removing the mayor from the board of The Winnipeg Foundation, it allows for more representation from Winnipeg's mosaic of cultures.

These amendments will support The Winnipeg Foundation in its modernization and accessibility efforts. Digitizing their financial records will allow the foundation to be more accessible to the people of Winnipeg.

Currently, audit information about The Winnipeg Foundation's financial statements must be published in the newspaper and copies of the auditor's report must be provided on request.

These amendments will require that audit information about the foundation's financial statements be published on its website. Winnipeg is home to over 850,000 people, Honourable Speaker, and not all of them read the newspaper. So publishing their financials on their website will actually make it more accessible to Winnipeggers and Manitobans. It will also help people learn more about the incredible work The Winnipeg Foundation does every year to better our community.

Lastly, Honourable Speaker, I hope that everyone gets behind this bill. It's important to support The Winnipeg Foundation. It's important to support our communities here in Winnipeg, and it's very important to help The Winnipeg Foundation move into its future, supporting our communities by moving this bill into the future as well.

Thank you. Miigwech. Merci, Honourable Speaker.

### Questions

**The Speaker:** A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from another party; this is to be followed by rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question. No question or answer may exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** Has the member or the government consulted on the removal of the mayor from the board of directors with the City of Winnipeg and the current mayor and councillors?

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** Thank you for that excellent question, Honourable Speaker.

So I am sponsoring this amendment, in partnership with The Winnipeg Foundation, which it has consulted with the mayor, the lawyers of The Winnipeg Foundation have consulted with the City of

Winnipeg. And the City of Winnipeg is agreeable to these amendments.

Thank you. Merci.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Portage—no, the honourable Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure):** Can the member of St. Boniface elaborate on what it was that inspired them to introduce this bill that amends the act related to The Winnipeg Foundation?

**MLA Loiselle:** Thank you for the excellent question.

The Winnipeg Foundation, of course, being the oldest foundation in Canada, wants to make sure that its act is progressive, that it's up to date and that it is flexible with the changing needs of Winnipeggers and Manitobans. So, by making its board more diverse, that's a great step into the future.

And by digitizing its reportings, its financial report, also makes its financials more accessible to all Manitobans. And removing the mayor actually allows the board to be more inclusive and diverse and less apolitical.

Thank you.

**MLA Bereza:** Will the mayor be able to appoint someone to the board to represent the mayor's office and the City of Winnipeg?

**MLA Loiselle:** That's an excellent question.

The goal of The Winnipeg Foundation is to remain as apolitical as possible and have a diversity of Winnipeggers on the board as well as a diversity of skill sets from all trades, all backgrounds, including the business community.

So I think that the goal of The Winnipeg Foundation is to represent all Winnipeggers and that, in doing so, will have, you know, links with the larger conversation of Winnipeg and governments as well.

Thank you.

**MLA Naylor:** The Winnipeg Foundation has a great reputation and a great relationship with the community as a whole.

Could the member explain to us how the changes they're suggesting would improve that connection to community?

**MLA Loiselle:** Thank you for that excellent question.

One of the goals of The Winnipeg Foundation is to make sure that its board is, first of all, inclusive of all communities, whether they be cultural communities, linguistic, et cetera. The goal of The Winnipeg Foundation also wants to have parity on its board, and, let's be honest, The Winnipeg Foundation was, you know, founded at a time in 1922 when not all Manitobans and not all Winnipeggers, not all voices were heard around the board table. It's 2025, The Winnipeg Foundation wants to make sure that all of those voices, voices that perhaps were not heard in the past, are now heard today.

Thank you.

**MLA Bereza:** What is the current makeup of the board of directors and who is currently required to be on the board?

**MLA Loiselle:** So, as I've mentioned earlier—and thank you for that question—The Winnipeg Foundation is one of the largest foundations in Canada. I believe their assets exceed \$2 billion now. So what they're looking for is, you know, a number of skill sets, including people that have certain expertise in the financial world. They're looking to seek parity on their board right now, which is not the case. And they're also seeking to have more diversity on their board.

As we know, Winnipeg has grown exponentially in the last, you know, 10, 20, 30 years. So it's important to have all voices around the table to make sure that when we look at the diversity around the table at The Winnipeg Foundation, around the board table, we see the diversity that we see in Winnipeg as well.

Thank you.

**MLA Naylor:** I'd like to ask the member how the dynamic between The Winnipeg Foundation and the mayor's office and the absence of the mayor as a mandatory member of the foundation, how that dynamic would change with this bill.

**MLA Loiselle:** Thank you for that question.

I believe the goal of The Winnipeg Foundation is for that dynamic to actually improve. The Winnipeg Foundation over the years has been successful in supporting, you know, a number of marginalized communities in Winnipeg, all communities.

\* (10:20)

And by making sure that that work is objective and based on facts and based on census information and whatnot, by making informed decisions such as those, I think that that's going to strengthen the

support of communities in Winnipeg. And I think the mayor will be happy to see that The Winnipeg Foundation is there to support all communities in Winnipeg.

**MLA Bereza:** A question for the member: How does the bill change the current reporting requirements for audit reports of the foundation?

**MLA Loiselle:** Thank you for that question. So, currently, the financial reports, the annual financial report of The Winnipeg Foundation has to be published in a paper. Unfortunately, as we know, we are in the digital age and not all Winnipeggers or Manitobans, for that matter, access—can access that report through the papers.

So the hope of The Winnipeg Foundation is to make the reporting digitized and accessible through the Internet and through their website so that more people can have access to it, therefore making their work more transparent.

Thank you.

**MLA Naylor:** Can the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle) explain how these proposed changes will support The Winnipeg Foundation and stay more current in the work that it does for our community?

**MLA Loiselle:** Thank you for that excellent question.

By ensuring that, you know, board members sitting around the table are more inclusive and representative of all of our communities here in Winnipeg, I think The Winnipeg Foundation will be able to have a greater impact with all of those communities that perhaps, in the past, didn't have their voice heard around the table, or perhaps, in the past, did not have access to some of the programs The Winnipeg Foundation were presenting, simply because they weren't as well represented as we hope it will be in the future.

Thank you.

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Can the member tell us more about how he came up with the bill, and did he consult with The Winnipeg Foundation, and were they the ones who had made these suggestions?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, I'd like to thank the member for that excellent question.

So, first of all, for eight years, I was actually a board member of Francofonds, which is the largest francophone foundation here in Manitoba. And through that work, I had the chance to work with

Endow Manitoba which is actually a wing of The Winnipeg Foundation that aims at supporting all 56 foundations here in Manitoba. So when I was elected as an MLA, when The Winnipeg Foundation reached out for—looking for someone to, you know, basically sponsor this bill, I was more than happy to do that work.

And yes, I did consult with The Winnipeg Foundation. I sat down at their board table. Their lawyers were present. And I'm very happy to do so.

Thank you.

**MLA Naylor:** I appreciate the member having to keep repeating his answers on consultation when opposition keeps asking the same questions.

So I hate to repeat anything that's already been said, but since this is probably the last question, I'll encourage the member to fill the time with sharing a bit more with us about how these proposed changes support The Winnipeg Foundation in strengthening its transparency with the community as a whole.

**MLA Loiselle:** The goal of The Winnipeg Foundation is to be as inclusive and as transparent as possible, moving forward. With assets of over \$2 billion, with the great needs of groups that are coming to The Winnipeg Foundation for support, The Winnipeg Foundation wants to make sure that the voices of all communities in Winnipeg are heard and supported.

We know that the work of building community is not always easy, and we know that since the pandemic, a lot of our groups here in Winnipeg need help more than ever. So The Winnipeg Foundation wants to strengthen the work they do; wants to go even further in supporting communities and we encourage the work that we do and we look forward to another great 100 years with The Winnipeg Foundation, here, as a great community leader.

Thank you.

**MLA Bereza:** Can the member please—you're required that the audit information must be published in the newspaper. Which newspaper, and what information in particular is required to be published?

Thank you.

**MLA Loiselle:** So I believe that up until now the financial audit of The Winnipeg Foundation is public—published in the Winnipeg Free Press. Not everyone reads the Winnipeg Free Press, so The Winnipeg Foundation wants to ensure that its audit is accessible to more people in Winnipeg.

We know the population of Winnipeg now is upwards of 850,000 people, so The Winnipeg Foundation wants to be more accessible, more transparent, more inclusive and wants to have more Winnipeggers engaged in its financials by making them available online.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The time for questions has expired.

### Debate

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

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** It brings me great pleasure to speak a little bit about The Winnipeg Foundation, as I was an appointed member of the Portage la Prairie and district foundation.

One of the things that we struggled with, with the Portage la Prairie foundation, was the question of getting involved with different types of projects that might be classified as public money or private money coming into a public situation. And again, I don't see in this where that has been reported, and we are seeing foundations like the Winnipeg hospital—or, sorry, the Winnipeg Health Sciences foundation, the St. Boniface foundation as well, too, being involved in improvements to the hospitals that they're dealing with or purchasing equipment, like the Portage hospital foundation as well, too. But the question comes into, is that private money going into a public project?

So again, with the introduction to The Winnipeg Foundation, it was established in twenty—twenty-one, it was created to help address community needs in Winnipeg, and over the years, it's grown into one of the largest community foundations in Canada. And again, there is so much great work that is done by community foundations out there. The foundation operates with the philosophy, for good forever, meaning it seeks to support community today and into the future, which is so important, again, when we are dealing with different people and different situations out there.

You know, its mission is to connect donors with causes that matter, supporting a wide range of charitable initiatives that improve the quality of life in Winnipeg. And again, like a lot of other foundations throughout the province, again, I think this test will show, you know, whether foundations are contributing to public projects or just to private projects. Values include community leadership, accountability, inclusiveness and collaboration.

The foundation strives to be a trusted steward of the community assets and a proactive partner in community betterment. The foundation pools and invests donations in a permanent endowment fund.

So again, some foundations are set up a little differently, that some can only spend a certain amount of interest. Some are set up as endowment funds where they can be used for certain projects only, where it could be, you know, a project to do with kids or that—so the income earned from the fund is then granted out annually to support charitable projects.

I know in talking about The Winnipeg Foundation, or the Portage foundation, it is very important that we look at different things that the foundations are most important for.

I know in Portage la Prairie, one of the things that we did was help during the Manitoba senior games of including a larger track for our facility as well, too. So donors can create their own funds to contribute existing ones and the capital is never spent; only the investment income is used for grants.

I know we're dealing with some issues in Portage la Prairie right now regarding the granting because—

\* (10:30)

**The Speaker:** Order, please. As previously announced, we will now be moving on to private members'—no, the second reading of private member's Bill 218, The Climate Action Month Act.

The honourable member for Portage la Prairie will have six minutes remaining when this is again before the House.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Just before moving on, there are some guests in the gallery.

We have seated in the public gallery Lieutenant Colonel David Cronk, Lieutenant Colonel Jack Nguyen, Chief Warrant Officer Eric LeClair from the Canadian Forces base at Shilo, and they are guests of the honourable Minister of Municipal, Northern Relations and the honourable member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz).

We welcome you here today.

## SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

### Bill 218—The Climate Action Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)

**The Speaker:** Now, as previously announced, we will move on to second reading of Bill 218, The Climate Action Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** I move, seconded by the MLA for Radisson, that Bill 218, The Climate Action Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended); Loi sur le Mois de lutte contre les changements climatiques (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

### *Motion presented.*

**MLA Loiselle:** It's a pleasure to rise today to speak in regards to Bill 218, The Climate Action Month Act.

But before, I would like to wish everyone a happy Earth Day across all five continents where, you know, humans live across the planet, all 8 billion or so of us. I think it's important that we recognize that this planet that we live on is beautiful, it's blue, it's special. And before I move on to speaking about Earth Day and before I speak about the climate action month, I'd like to, just for a moment, set the stage.

As an Indigenous person, as a Red River Métis, every morning when I get up and I see the sun rise, I reflect on the fact that we are incredibly lucky to live on this little blue planet, which happens to be just at the right spot in our solar system; not too close to the sun, like Venus or Mars, and not too far away from the sun. And we live in what's called the Goldilocks zone, which allows life on Earth to actually be able to thrive.

Planet Earth is over 4.5 billion years old and, you know, we've seen life come and go on Earth. Honourable Speaker, 200 million years ago, 95 per cent of all life on Earth was wiped out, we think by massive volcanic eruptions; 65 million years ago, all life on Earth was nearly wiped out because of an asteroid. And now, where we are in our history, at this present time, life on Earth is once again threatened. And we as humans, and, in fact, every living species on this planet right now, is facing dire times because of climate change.

And, in fact, I was also reflecting on the fact that, you know, on planet Earth, if you look at the lowest



point of the planet, the Mariana Trench, to the tallest point of the planet, Mount Everest, we're looking at about 20 kilometres. And where do we live in that 20 kilometres? We live in about two kilometres of what's called the troposphere. And that's where oxygen is actually, you know, at allowable levels for us to breathe, for us to be able to support life on Earth, for us to be able to live a good family life, community life and have a good economy, have friends, enjoy our time off as we did just last weekend. And all of that happens on the third planet in our solar system.

So coming back to what this act gains at doing and, in fact, what Earth Day actually aims at doing, being April 22, the purpose of Earth Day is to teach people simple strategies to conserve energy and participate in environmental conservation and demonstrate how easy it is to conserve energy without causing any inconveniences. *[interjection]* And I hope I'm not causing any inconvenience to the members opposite who, you know, are heckling me right now and laughing and cheering me on and reflecting on that we're on, like, the third planet in our solar system, which is great.

But, Honourable Speaker, every year in Canada and across the world, we recognize April 22 as Earth Day, as we should, the day for us to reflect on the importance of preserving our environment. This bill, Bill 218, would extend the spirit of this day to the entire month of April, ensuring that we raise awareness on the impact of climate change on our environment and encourage everyone to protect our planet.

And I want to talk about climate change for a second, because what's interesting with climate change is that we are seeing some places on Earth becoming unlivable, too hot. During the winter, we're seeing our Gulf Stream—or jet stream, actually—collapse, and a few years ago, the jet stream collapsed so much that, you know, arctic air extended all the way down to Texas, and there were fatalities, and their electrical system almost failed because of climate change.

Every human on Earth will be severely impacted by climate change as it threatens not only our water, air and land but affects our vital infrastructure and our communities. Speaking of infrastructure, 2016, in Alberta, there were fires. And, in fact, if you look at, you know, the oil-producing city capital of Alberta, Fort McMurray, people were fleeing for their lives. I reflect, here in Manitoba, in 2022, Manitoba was ablaze. In 2023, Canada saw the worst forest fires in

its history. And just last summer, we saw Jasper in Alberta, 50 per cent of Jasper wiped out because of climate change and forest fires.

So, Honourable Speaker, it's up to all of us to take collective action to stop climate change, and we must act now. With this bill, and the help of every Manitoban, we can work together to save our planet for generations to come. So Bill 218, The Climate Action Month Act, recognizes that the time to take action is now. Climate change is an imminent threat to the future of our planet.

So let's take action, and the purpose of this bill is as follows: whereas climate change has contributed to alterations in precipitation and weather patterns, increasing the frequency of severe floods, drought and wildfires; and whereas climate change has a negative impact on Manitoba, contributing to adverse weather events and detrimental changes to agriculture, biodiversity and human health; and whereas climate change threatens the ability of Indigenous peoples to exercise their rights, customs and traditions; and whereas climate change affects permafrost and ice by causing thinning and thawing, which impacts the winter road network in Manitoba and undermines safe transportation to remote and northern communities; and whereas climate change requires action from all levels of government and the collaboration of urban, rural, Indigenous and northern communities; and whereas many Manitobans have voiced their support for action to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change; and whereas Earth Day recognizes the importance of protecting the environment and is observed annually in Canada and in many other countries on April 22; and whereas Manitoba is committed to reducing the impact of climate change through the production of clean energy and initiatives to protect biodiversity; and whereas observing climate action month will promote awareness of the impacts of climate change and the need for collective action to protect the environment for future generations, we would like to proclaim the goal of Bill 218 is to claim April as climate action month.

\*(10:40)

Because, Honourable Speaker, climate change is now. Climate change is a threat that is already on our doorsteps. Scientists have been warning leaders across the globe about the impending devastation that can be caused by climate change if we don't act now.

Climate change affects more than just the temperature. There will be more severe thunderstorms, increased risks of drought, warming and rising

oceans, increased risks of poverty for coastal communities and nations and puts all species at risk. If we don't act now, we'll have to pay for this in the future.

And, Honourable Speaker, in closing, I'm a father of two. I have one daughter who is in environmental studies at the University of Winnipeg because she fears for the future. I have another daughter who is studying biology at University of Winnipeg. We often say that, you know, our youth are our future and the future is now.

We know that Manitobans are worried about climate change. We know that farmers are worried about crop predictability. We know that, you know, Canadians and Manitobans are worried about the air they breathe, and we don't know what the summer fire season is going to look like.

So I hope that everyone, including members opposite, can support this bill.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

#### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Prior to moving on to the question period for this bill, we have some guests in the gallery that I'd like to introduce.

We have seated in the public gallery, from Dufferin Christian School, 15 grade 9 students under the direction of Marsha Bultena. The group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Midland (Mrs. Stone).

And we welcome you here this morning.

#### Questions

**The Speaker:** Now, a question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from another party; this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question. No question or answer may exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Well, good morning, Honourable Speaker, and I would certainly like to thank my honourable friend across the way for his passionate speech about Bill 218 this morning.

I'd like to ask my friend which organizations and environmental authorities he consulted with on Bill 218.

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** Thank you for that question.

We consulted with the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, Assembly of First Nations, Bike Winnipeg, BIZforClimate, Climate Action Network Canada, Climate Change Connection, ClimateWest; consulted with the City of Winnipeg, the Indigenous Chamber of Commerce, Lake Winnipeg Foundation, Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium.

And, let's be clear, all of Manitobans, all Manitobans are worried about climate change.

Farmers are worried about crop predictability; northern communities are worried about forest fires; communities in the south are worried about drought.

So yes, we did consult.

Thank you.

**MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson):** Honourable Speaker, the failed PC government refused to even say the words climate change and—is real. Even today, they heckle me and they've heckled the member opposite—or the member for St. Boniface. They've laughed at—the idea of talking about climate change in this hallowed Chamber.

While climate is changing, so must we. That's why we've been working hard to make sure that our government is prioritizing the environment and the future of Manitoba with how many different environmental initiatives we are taking.

My question for my colleague is, what's their favourite environmental initiative our government has undertaken?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, one of my favourite initiatives is our goal to transitioning 5,000 homes in Manitoba to geothermal heating.

In fact, I've had geothermal in my house since 2007, Honourable Speaker. We lifted up the home, we put a new foundation in and we put a geothermal system. So the lovely thing about the geothermal system is that it gives me—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Loiselle:** —nice, consistent, even heat all year long, cools my house during the summer and I pay 60 per cent less than members opposite on my hydro bill.

Thank you.

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** I want to wish my colleagues and, of course, all of Manitobans a happy Earth Day today.

Honourable Speaker, my question to the member would be, what would the benefits be to Manitobans if a climate action month were proclaimed and recognized every April, seeing as how Earth Day already exists during the same month?

**MLA Loiselle:** I thank the member opposite for that excellent question.

So yes, we recognize Earth Day today. But we also know that climate change faces, you know, our species in a way that it poses an existential threat to every human on earth.

So we know that if we were to make the month of April climate action month, we'd—able to reach more Manitobans and I think at the end of the day, what we want to do is educate Manitobans on the fact that our climate is changing, that we have tools available to help slow down that change and, you know, with Manitoba Hydro, we're the green province, but we could always do better.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**MLA Dela Cruz:** Our NDP government's commitment to our great province's health includes that of our land, of our skies and our waterways. It's no question that front-line workers such as nurses, doctors, pharmacists and more can see the direct impact that climate change is having on their patients' health.

Can my colleague for St. Boniface share more about the connection between climate action, community health and planetary health?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, I thank the member for Radisson for that question; that's an excellent question.

Obviously, in Manitoba, we have a great access to not only green spaces but great access to blue spaces as well: lakes, rivers, streams, et cetera. Manitoba has 100,000 lakes and we know that Manitobans love to go to the lake. We love to fish; we love to harvest; we love to spend time on the land. We also love to spend time in our provincial parks. And when we spend time outside with our families, when we spend time on the land, we know that that has a very positive impact on our mental health. We've now just made access to all provincial parks in Manitoba for the next year free, so I encourage all Manitobans to get out there and—

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

**Mr. Nesbitt:** How would Bill 218 enable the Kinew government to turn around its woeful record on environmental stewardship?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, I'd like to thank the member for his colourful question; definitely, he has a colourful question.

So, just the other day, we announced a new provincial park, the Lemay Forest, which I think is great news. We're working with the Seal River alliance right now, to preserve 8 per cent of Manitoba for generations to come, the Seal River Watershed.

We're moving forward in replacing turbines at Pointe du Bois, thus making them more efficient and creating more green hydroelectric power in Manitoba.

And, you know, and we're building Canada; we're helping build Canada. We're going to be sending 50 megawatts of green, electric power up north to Nunavut. And we're going to keep on building 600 megawatts of green wind power, more than the negative—

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

**MLA Dela Cruz:** Honourable Speaker, yesterday the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle) and I joined community members to witness the sacred fire ceremony at the Lemay Forest grounds, the final resting place of countless women and children. I'd like to take this opportunity to shine a light on the labour and advocacy of land protectors like the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) and the many who kept the Lemay fire burning.

How will climate action month work towards justice for those who've been defending this land for time immemorial?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, first of all, I want to take a few moments to recognize the excellent advocacy work that was done on the Lemay Forest for so many months and years. The fire-keepers have been there since December. The MLA from Seine River did an incredible work supporting the community, and our Premier (Mr. Kinew), just a week ago announced that Lemay Forest will become a provincial park.

We have a goal, 30 by 30, protecting 30 per cent of the land in Manitoba for future generations; that's our goal. And in fact, you know, working on the Seal River Watershed is going to help us get that much closer to that goal. And we're a listening government.

It's by listening to everyone that we are going to combat climate change.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**Mr. King:** My question to the member from St. Boniface would be, how would this bill allow the NDP government to prevent further catastrophic sewage leaks from Winnipeg sewer lines?

\* (10:50)

**MLA Loiselle:** I'd like to thank that member for that interesting infrastructure question.

In Budget 2025, we announced that we're going to invest in \$3.7 billion of infrastructure work here in Manitoba. And in doing that work, we're going to ensure that that work is climate resilient, is green. We're going to try to encourage as many builders to engage in geothermal power, heating and cooling.

And at the end of the day, not only are we a listening government, but we're a science-based government. So we're going to listen to the experts in trying to build a better Manitoba for futures to come, but also a climate-change-resilient Manitoba.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**MLA Dela Cruz:** To switch gears a little bit, because the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle) does such a great job in this Chamber reminding us that we are a bilingual Legislature, Honorable Président, je demande à notre député de Saint-Boniface de nous en dire davantage sur ce qui l'a inspiré à formuler ce projet de loi?

#### **Translation**

*I would like to ask the member for St. Boniface to tell us more about what inspired him to draft this bill.*

**MLA Loiselle:** J'aimerais remercier la députée de Radisson (DAL Dela Cruz) pour cette excellente question.

En tant qu'éducateur de longue date, je sais que, quand les Manitobains et Manitobaines font face à un défi, une des premières étapes c'est de s'éduquer sur quel est le défi et comment agir. Alors, notre gouvernement, qui écoute aux experts, qui écoute aux Manitobains, est en mesure d'agir avec 3,7 milliards d'investissements en infrastructure ici au Manitoba pour s'assurer qu'on développe une économie qui est plus verte avec 600 mégawatts de pouvoir à travers des éoliennes qu'on va bâtir à travers le Manitoba. Et d'ailleurs, je suis très fier de dire que ces nouvelles

éoliennes vont être en partenariat avec des communautés autochtones –

#### **Translation**

*I would like to thank the member for Radisson (MLA Dela Cruz) for this excellent question.*

*As a long-time educator, I know that, when Manitobans face a challenge, one of the first steps they take is to educate themselves about the nature of the challenge and how to respond. Our government is listening to the experts and to Manitobans, and we are in a position to take action with \$3.7 billion in infrastructure investments here in Manitoba, in order to ensure we develop a greener economy with 600 megawatts of power from the wind turbines we are going to build across Manitoba. I am also very proud to say that these new wind turbines will be built in partnership with Indigenous communities—*

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

**Mr. Nesbitt:** How do the members on the other side of the House take this bill seriously, let alone expect Manitobans to do so, in light of the NDP's environmental failures over the years?

**MLA Loiselle:** Well, I'd like to, you know, thank the member opposite for more colourful questions such as the one he's just posed.

In fact, Manitoba Hydro, the green electric grid that we rely on here in Manitoba, was built by our government. In fact, the members opposite, their governments, over the years, have built zero megawatts of green electric power here in Manitoba.

So we've built all of it because we've listened to Manitobans, we've listened to what their priorities are. We know that Manitobans want clean, reliable power, and now, we're going to ship 50 megawatts of that green electric power up north to Nunavut.

So I'm not sure exactly what the opposite member's talking about, but we're going to keep—

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

And the time for questions has expired.

#### **Debate**

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

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Bill 218 to proclaim the month of April every year as climate action month is an interesting one, mostly because, while it sounds noble, there doesn't seem to be any

point in adopting it, as Manitoba, like the rest of the world, marks and celebrates Earth Day every April.

And in fact, Honourable Speaker, today is Earth Day, and I'd like to wish everyone in this House and everyone across the province a happy Earth Day.

It's also interesting that this bill, The Climate Action Month Act, has been brought forward by a member of the NDP, a party that has a horrible record when it comes to so-called action for the environment. It's the NDP, after all, that has been in government in this province during two of the most severe spills of raw sewage into the Red River in Winnipeg. In September 2002, from the North End Water Pollution Control Centre, and again just over a year ago, from a broken pipe at the Fort Garry Bridge.

It's the NDP also that was in government in Manitoba when zebra mussels made their invasion to this province many years ago, all while the NDP, under then-premier Greg Selinger, and his environment minister did nothing at all to try to stop it. Pardon me, then, Honourable Speaker, if I have difficulty taking the NDP's so-called climate action bill seriously.

Earth Day itself, however, is an occasion and, as I mentioned, long celebrated in Manitoba and world-wide that we should and do take seriously, as we do in this province. We can take pride in our support for Earth Day every April.

This year, the Earth Day theme is Our Power, Our Planet, with a focus on moving the planet to renewable energy sources and on tripling the global generation of clean electricity by the year 2030. This is about cutting greenhouse gas emissions, boosting air quality and advancing sustainable development around the world.

We, on this side of the House, definitely take environmental stewardship seriously in Manitoba, which is among the world's most beautiful and ecologically diverse places. We are a province with abundant resources and natural beauty, and Earth Day is a great opportunity to reflect on the important protection of our province's natural aesthetics and ecosystems that we need to take part in for Manitobans in the future.

We will protect Manitoba with investments in clean energy and with strategic conservation initiatives, among other measures, so generations to come can appreciate the same resources and beauty that we do today.

Considering, then, all the positives and benefits surrounding Earth Day every year, it appears the point of the NDP's proposed climate action month has to be much better explained than it has been in this Chamber today. In fact, really, the only kind of NDP action on environment that I'm aware of is failure and irresponsibility. We certainly don't want more of either of those.

This NDP's government's failure on environmental front were clear a little over a year ago when the worst sewage spill in Winnipeg in a generation occurred, and 230 million litres of untreated waste water flowed from malfunctioning pipes into the Red River at the Fort Garry Bridge. The quantity of sewage that flowed into the river in that incident in early 2024 would fill more than 90 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

And that was the largest sewage spill in Winnipeg since September 2002, when a malfunction at the North End Water Pollution Control Centre, also while the NDP were in government, sent 427 million litres of untreated sewage into the Red River.

So, Honourable Speaker, that is a few of the failures I mentioned moments ago. Now we can look at the other issue I'd mentioned, the NDP's irresponsibility on the environment.

When that spill of sewage into the Red River occurred last year, this NDP Premier (Mr. Kinew) and minister of Environment and Climate Change, who is now the Minister of Education and childhood learning, utterly failed in their responsibility to adequately address it immediately afterward and since it happened.

This Premier and his NDP government vacated their responsibility as well, in their lack of proper and effective notification of affected municipalities and Indigenous communities when that disastrous spill early last year was discovered.

Manitobans must be kept informed as soon as possible of any dangerous spills of untreated waste water and of releases of other pollutants and in cases of imminent releases of pollutants. But the NDP, with all of its irresponsibility, has failed them.

A separate NDP government bill before this House is aimed at this same government's failures on the environment, but it appears to be too little and too late.

Honourable Speaker, because of the NDP's record of utter failures on environment and climate-related action, our side of this House finds it difficult to take

an NDP climate action bill seriously. And there is questionable purpose in proclaiming a climate action month when Earth Day falls during the same month.

Honourable Speaker, I'd now like to give some time to my other colleagues to speak on this issue. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** I thank you for the opportunity to stand today in the Chamber and talk about protecting our environment. And I thank the member opposite for encouraging Manitobans to protect our environment around us.

I remember celebrating Earth Day years ago as a young man, 30-some, almost 40 years ago, and celebrating the very first Earth Day celebration as a member of my band where we sang a song by Alabama. And the tune—I don't remember the name of the song, but the words in it were: Let's keep that blue up above us and let's keep that green on the ground.

And to this day, Honourable Speaker—

\* (11:00)

**The Speaker:** Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have nine minutes remaining.

## RESOLUTIONS

### Res. 10—New Schools

**The Speaker:** The hour is now 11 a.m., time for private members' resolutions.

The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on New Schools, brought forward by the honourable member for Transcona.

**MLA Shannon Corbett (Transcona):** I move, seconded by the MLA for Lagimodière,

*WHEREAS Manitobans want the Provincial Government to be a partner in their kids' education; and*

*WHEREAS the previous, failed Provincial Government made a mess of education system for seven and a half years by slashing funding for schools; and*

*WHEREAS the current Provincial Government wants to build up the education system so that kids have the best learning environment possible; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government recently announced the construction of 11 new schools in Winnipeg, Brandon, Neepawa and Ste. Anne to help keep class sizes small; and*

*WHEREAS each new school will also include child-care spaces; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government is investing \$67 million more in schools in 2025/26; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government has added over 630 new educators to the system; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government banned cellphones in class so kids can focus on learning in all areas, including the new, mandatory sexual abuse prevention training requirements; and*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government is feeding hungry kids in schools with a universal school food program.*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to support the provincial government's efforts with the construction of 11 new schools across the province.

### *Motion presented.*

**MLA Corbett:** Honourable Speaker, as a former educator, isn't it—it is an absolute privilege to be able to rise in the House today, especially for my first private member's resolution, New Schools.

As an educator, it is always a joy to be able to stand behind our students and support them on their journey. I was fortunate enough to work in schools from kindergarten all the way up to grade 12.

It is an incredible experience watching students come into school for the first time when they start kindergarten. They are full of wonder and not sure what to expect. It is exciting to see them learn about what it means to be a student, and they start to understand how they fit into this world. Then they progress through the grades and start to understand, and learn about what is important to them and who they want to be.

It is always a proud moment to watch students receive their diploma at graduation and know the journey they have gone through to get to that moment. It is one of the ultimate experiences, to be able to see children grow into wonderful young adults and to be a part of their learning and development.

As educators, our job is to support our youth during their most vulnerable and formative years, and I, along with many other—of the other educators on this side of the House, are always proud to stand here and tell Manitobans just how much we support them.

And this government has already made such incredible progress in rebuilding our education system after cuts by the former PC failed government. Every day, we are proud to get up here and say that it is only after one and a half years of being in government, we've managed to hire 630 new educators—and with that, I just want to say—after seven and a half years of cuts, mismanagement and ignorance from the members opposite about just how important education is.

I'm so proud to be part of a government that truly cares about our children. And you know what the members opposite did instead of making sure that students had the resources they needed? They cut. They left Manitoban educators in—and students—in a big hole with less resources to support our education system.

In fact, they cut core operating funding for education by \$36 million over three years. For 28 of the 37 school divisions in Manitoba, funding was cut from where it was three years before the PCs took office. In 15 school divisions, funding was cut by 15 to 20 per cent. That is unacceptable. They had no vision or thought about what our students needed.

As an educator, I stand here feeling frustrated with the former PC government and their failures. Every day, I saw just how important it was for us to continue to fund every—education and was continually disheartened to see what they were doing to the future generation of our province.

Their funding cuts had real-life consequences that left people without the resources they needed to thrive. Staff members were cut. Class sizes were larger. Resources were cut—stretched thin. It was impacting students, teachers, school staff and caregivers. But on this side of the House, we are proud to keep on making progress to reverse the damage they've done to our education system.

Earlier this year, we announced that we'll be creating a new K-to-8 school in Devonshire Park that will address the 11 per cent student growth in the River East Transcona School Division. And that's the kind of government we are, and I'm so happy to see that one of these schools will serve the students in my constituency.

But we are not stopping there. There will be a total of 11 new schools added across the province. It is an exciting time in our province for education.

I was an administrator in a school that had undergone renovations. The joy on the faces of the

students, teachers and caregivers when they walked into that new classroom is one I will never forget. The planning and consultation that we underwent to ensure that everything was done to enhance the learning space was so worth it. Now, to be able to build accessible schools from the ground up is truly exciting.

While they were cutting the jobs of educators, we've been building them up, and our government made sure to help every child that comes into our schools. I'm so proud of our previous minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, Nello Altomare. He had a vision for the future of our province where no child will sit hungry—will be hungry and sit through a full day of learning. He understood that if we were—are to make sure every child thrives when they're at school, their day needs to start with a full stomach.

As the new MLA for Transcona, I will be sure to honour the memory and life's work of my predecessor, the late honourable Nello Altomare. And while the members opposite shamefully tried to make sure that students were—being fed was not a priority, we stood strong and gave kids, educators and parents the resources they needed. And that includes building the 11 new schools that Manitobans need.

Instead of cutting 13 librarian positions in the River East Transcona School Division or pledging to build nine schools that they never budgeted for, like the members opposite did, we are doing things the right way. And that includes reducing distractions in classrooms by limiting the use of cellphones.

When it comes to education in this province, it is also important to remember just how much danger the members put—opposite put kids in. I hope everyone here remembers their absolutely egregious bill, bill 64. This bill would've done extreme harm to education in Manitoba, and as an educator, I was appalled to see what they were trying to do to their—our students.

To name just a few things that they were trying to do, which included impacting teachers' ability to conduct free and fair bargaining, and cutting all the English language school boards across the province and combining them. This bill had educators in Manitoba outraged. That bill was an affront to the principles of public education in our province and I'm glad to see that it was never passed.

I attended a community forum on bill 64 to ask questions about how this bill would impact our

students and our schools. While attending the community forum, it was plain to see that when questions were asked about bill 64 and some of the ramifications, they had no answers. Even some of their so-called experts who were facilitating the various groups were unable to answer the basic questions. And while they were neglecting to build the new schools that our children needed to cut and—cut cap sizes on classes, we made sure we kept fighting for Manitobans. We are doing this by building 11 new schools.

While we are looking out for our children, I would like to take a trip down memory lane. The member from Fort Whyte put out an alarming ad that was more than just an attack on education, but an attack on the vulnerable and marginalized youth in our schools. This member said he would stand up for parental rights, a dog whistle to say he would allow the targeting and discrimination of transgender and gender-diverse students in schools.

I am proud to stand with a government that is taking the voices of parents, youth and community to heart. Instead of shutting down the possibilities, we must build them up. We need to open up the lines of communication. We are a listening government, and we will continue to listen and collaborate.

We are adding a new financial literacy course in our grade 9 classrooms. With this addition, we are giving our youth basic financial literacy skills that will only improve their lives. I understand all too well the pressure educators can be under teaching the next generation. I am proud to be a part of a government that recognizes those unique challenges. The previous PC government did not recognize or care about the challenges of our educators. Instead, they increased class sizes while the number of available educators plummeted.

To continue protecting the kids in our schools, we are bringing in sexual abuse prevention training. No child should feel unsafe at home or in our schools. They need to be able to trust the adults in their lives. We are making sure that this is the reality for our students.

\* (11:10)

With each new school, we are adding child-care facilities, ensuring families have inclusive spaces that meet the needs of all children, not just those ready for K to 12. We are supporting working caregivers, whose time has too often been overlooked, again making families a priority.

This government is committed to investing \$700 million for the 11 new schools, ensuring that children have the spaces they need to thrive. As an educator, I know how important it is to not only have the tools students need to learn, but also the spaces that meet their needs. With more students enrolling at a rapid pace, the demand for additional education spaces will not be ignored by this government.

To build a strong, resilient province, we understand the need to ensure our youth are getting the education they deserve so when the time comes for them to enter the workforce, ready to contribute to our provincial landscape, they have had the opportunities they needed to thrive.

This government is leaving no stone unturned when it comes to making our educational spaces the best they can be, building the confidence of our youth, encouraging them to lean on their brain power—

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

### Questions

**The Speaker:** A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held, and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: first question be asked by a member from another party; any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer may exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** I would like to congratulate the member from Transcona for bringing forward her first private member's resolution here and put a question forward to the member opposite here.

Will the NDP apologize to school divisions and municipalities and families who were left scrambling when these planned schools were pulled off of the budget without warning and then they take that and reintroduce it; can they—will the NDP apologize for those actions?

**MLA Shannon Corbett (Transcona):** Thank you for your kind words at the start.

I think what we need to focus on right now is that we are building 11 new schools. We are supporting our communities. We have listened to what the province needs, we have listened to what our municipalities need and we are building schools to make life easier for everyone.



**The Speaker:** And just as a reminder to the member, to always direct your comments through the Chair.

**MLA Billie Cross (Seine River):** Our team is full of educators and it shows by our investments. Our government values all areas of Manitoba and is making investments to meet the needs of growing communities, including by building new schools.

Can the member please tell us, where will these 11 new schools be located?

**MLA Corbett:** I thank—I'd like to thank my—the honourable member from Seine River.

We are building a school in Devonshire Park, Prairie Pointe, Meadowlands, Brandon southwest, Brandon division scolaire franco-manitobaine school, Ste. Anne, Bridgwater, Neepawa, highland, Winnipeg northwest, and there will also be a DSFM school in St. Boniface.

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** I would also like to congratulate the member from Transcona on their first private member's resolution you brought forward here.

And I just wanted to mention one of the quotes that you said in your opening remarks is that you are a listening—sorry, one of the quotes, Honourable Speaker, that was mentioned was that they are a listening government.

I'm wondering if they're listening to the screams from all of the people regarding the rising taxes that are being placed on all of the school boards and all of the ratepayers of this fine province?

**MLA Corbett:** I think it's important that we are in consultation. Our Minister of Education has done a wonderful job of working with our school divisions, of talking with our school divisions, of listening. We have collaborated as a team. We collaborate with our—within our party, with—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Seine River and the honourable member for Brandon West will come to order. I can't hear what's being said.

**MLA Corbett:** We are working across our departments to ensure that we are looking at the whole system—*[interjection]*—so that all needs—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

The honourable members will quit hollering back and forth at each other.

The honourable member for Transcona (MLA Corbett). *[interjection]*

Order, please. Order, please.

The honourable member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton) and the honourable member for Seine River will come to order.

**MLA Corbett:** As I said, I am—we have been working together as a team. All our ministers work together to ensure that we are looking at—

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

**MLA Cross:** Manitobans can be proud of their government, because we're upstanders and we're always going to stick up for you. When the PCs were in office, they scrapped small-class-size legislation, cut education funding. Our government's taking a different approach by making robust funding investments and building new schools.

Can the member explain, how will these new schools keep these class sizes small?

**MLA Corbett:** I thank the honourable member for Seine River for asking that question.

Honestly, it was a scary time under the PC government. We did not know what was coming next. We had no idea where the cuts were going to be. So adding these new schools, this is going to make life so much easier for teachers, for students, for caregivers. There's lots that happen in a—in classrooms, and this just adds to the creativity and it adds to the supports and it adds to the one-on-one support students can get from the teachers in the classroom.

**Ms. Byram:** I just want to ask the member, going back to the list that she read out earlier of the schools and the projects that are coming forward, is that a prioritized list? And can she tell me specifically when the ground is going to break for the Neepawa school?

**MLA Corbett:** As I say, our government is a build, build, build government. We are focusing on the future of the entire province. We will focus on the entire province, not just one area, and our focus is to ensure that everyone is supported across the province.

**MLA Cross:** Manitobans can count on our government to build, build, build, unlike the PCs, who tear everything down every chance they get. The previous PC government misled Manitobans by claiming they would build nine new schools, without bothering to budget for them. Our government is taking a different approach.

Can the member explain, how will these 11 new schools be funded?

**MLA Corbett:** Yes. We went to the Treasury Board and we put it in our budget, because we prioritize Manitobans. We prioritize education; that is an important thing. That is important to us, ensuring our youth are taken care of. So we are using government dollars, and these schools will be owned by the public.

**Mr. Balcaen:** I have a very simple question here for the member opposite who brought this resolution forward.

The fact that Manitoba taxpayers are paying double-digit increases in the school boards and the areas that are being underfunded by this government: How much more is the two-year delay that this government has put on the building of schools now costing the taxpayers through this tax, tax, tax government?

**MLA Corbett:** Well, it's interesting, just—I wasn't a math teacher, but we could not have been delaying things by two years if we've only been in power for a year and a half, so that would be a bit of a question for me.

\* (11:20)

So I think, again, just getting back to—we are working across our departments to ensure that we're using that wraparound effect to ensure that everyone is taken care of and all aspects of their lives are being taken care of. We are adding more supports and services all across our departments, from health care to education. We are building things up in this province; we are not tearing them down. We are focused on the future. We are focused on ensuring that Manitobans have all they need to live their best lives.

**MLA Cross:** Our government respects teachers, students, staff, parents, community and, because of that, in just one year in office, our government has rolled out a universal nutrition program. We banned cellphones. We invested in small class sizes. We added 630 new educators. And we made strong investments in education funding, something that didn't happen under this government. I was a front-line teacher; I can attest to that fact.

Can the member tell us how this differs from the PCs' approach to education, which was to cut and divide?

**MLA Corbett:** I thank the honourable member from Seine River.

Again, I would agree with the honourable member from Seine River. Education was a scary time for seven and a half years. We walked into our buildings every day not knowing what we were going to face, not knowing what—how the—that was also going to impact our students. It—*[interjection]* We are—again, we are focused on the best for our kids. We want them well fed. We want them well taken care of. We want them educated in all aspects of life.

That's why we're also bringing in the literacy program, financial literacy in grade 9. The—and we're also ensuring that students—and we are bringing in areas to educate—

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

And the time for questions has also expired.

### Debate

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

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** It's always a privilege to stand in the House and talk about bills or resolutions or anything that is brought forward and put some honest words on the record, some indicators that Manitobans don't always get to hear with the hype from this government.

And really, sad times, this last year and a half for Manitobans and particularly in the education world. You know, when I look at what's happened on year-over-year taxes regarding school taxes and rising costs for families, we've seen double-digit tax increases year over year the last two years that this government has been in power. And that is certainly affecting middle- and income families and those that struggle to make ends meet, increasing those taxes disproportionately for individuals who are just trying to make the ends meet and trying to feed their family.

It's no wonder that this NDP government had to start a nutrition program. It's because families can't afford to eat at home, based on the taxes and the costs that keep going up under this government.

And I know that there's the touting of new educators that have been hired, but nothing about the number of people that are abandoning the profession under this NDP government because they're not getting the supports that they need and the work that is required for each of these individuals in their classrooms.

So, much like, you know, the health-care profession that's struggling under this minister and

under this government, educators are finding the same impact and we're hearing it constantly.

*Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

Seeing double-digit increases, you know, the member from Seine River talked about making sure that the students are well fed, but that's coming through the taxes placed on each and every one of the ratepayers within this province.

And I'll remind this government, who loves to tax and spend and tax and spend and then tax some more and spend some more, that that comes out of the ratepayers' pocket. And there is only one ratepayer; whether it's provincial taxes, whether it's school board taxes, whether it's municipal taxes, they all come down to the one person that has to pay it or the one individual, and that's hurting Manitobans.

I know on this side of the House, we support individuals and we support the growth of our economy, which pays for a lot of this, not making individuals pay for it out of their pocket and effectively breaking them and making sure that they are reliant on the government for all of the help that they can get.

This year, the NDP plan on adding \$182 million more in taxes across the board in Manitoba here. That is unbelievable amount of tax increases that is happening here, and really, everyday Manitobans are the ones that have to pay for this. They're the ones that have to struggle. They're the ones that have to take on second or third jobs to try and support their families, try and support their kids outside of school in any of the sports or extracurricular activity that they're being involved in.

It's not cheap raising a family nowadays, and I know up in Thompson and up in the North area, it's particularly expensive because of the cost of northern living and making sure that those kids are taken care of in there, and more and more people are struggling under this government, honourable Deputy Speaker.

We're looking at—the NDP failed to fund the schools that were already put into place by the PC government. That is going to cost Manitobans millions of dollars more. We're looking at additional costs for infrastructure, the supply chain, as the NDP government continues to cut different areas and different laws, including the one-to-one ratio that's been imposed. It's going to cost much more to have these professionals come out here and work on these infrastructure builds, whether it be electrical trades, whether it be carpenters, some of the professionals

that are in there in the plumbing trade. They're going to have twice as many people, because they're not going to have to have—or they're not allowed to have their two apprentices with them, and so, double the cost.

This is going to cost all of the ratepayers, including all of us in here, and to me, that's quite atrocious to look at that and know that this government should have and could have done much better by continuing the PC plan to build those schools.

And if they want to take the credit for it, go ahead, make your media—they can make their media splashes, they can go out and do their interviews. But Manitobans that follow this know that this was a PC plan, and once again, another time that this NDP government has taken the credit for the work done by this government.

A year and a half that the NDP have been in power, and I'm wondering when they'll start having some of their own announcements coming forward. I'm hoping it's fairly soon, because, you know, 18 months is quite a time to be in power without any new announcements and just continuing to percolate the PC announcements up to the top. And we know the cream rises to the top, and so we're happy over here to be the cream that continues to rise and helps you down the road and make your announcements.

You know, we're looking at the costs that school divisions keep coming to us with each year and saying, lookit, our schools are starting to have problems, especially in the last year, year and a half, our critical infrastructure is really starting to need some improvements. And again, this hasn't been funded by this government.

\* (11:30)

There is huge needs across the province, and I can speak in Brandon alone where there's probably 10 or 12 schools that are waiting for major infrastructure upgrades that they put on last year and again this year. And they're not hearing great things, and it's just hold off, hold off, you know, a few more years while we're in government; allow us to allow you to raise taxes a little bit further on your ratepayers.

We'll keep allowing you to do that so that, you know, we can fund that millions of dollars that we haven't come to the table with, and we'll continue to do that because that's the method of the NDP government, is to tax, tax and more tax. You know, it's no wonder that in past years our costs have continued to rise exponentially under this government.

And let's look at even how this government is impacting people that want to enjoy their recreation time. People that have worked very hard, and scraped together their nickels and dimes and bought a cottage or a cabin somewhere and now—I'll use Victoria Beach as an example. This year, they're going to see their tax bill go from \$641 to \$1,621 and that's just absolutely asinine, Deputy Speaker.

It's unbelievable that people that want to enjoy their recreation time, their time with family, their time away to decompress, now they have to shell out another thousand dollars under this NDP government who continues the double-digit increases.

So, wrapping up, honourable Deputy Speaker, I know that this government wants to take the credit where credit isn't due, but you know, I'm just hoping that they come to their senses and cut—

**The Deputy Speaker:** And the member's time has expired.

**Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, I'm really happy to be here today and you know, I'll have to say, my blood was boiling during the end of that speech.

We were there. I was there for 30 years in the classroom. And I can tell you the difference from the last seven years to the previous 23. It's night and day, and I know this. I lived it. My colleagues lived it. My community lived it. And to sit here and talk about, oh, it's our great ideas.

My question through you to them: Why didn't they build them? Why did nothing happen? Why were we sitting there as teachers, waiting for them to make a move, not only on wages but on infrastructure?

Stand here and say, oh, these were all our great ideas—great ideas. It's like you're sitting at a coffee shop, drawing on the back of a napkin all the things you're going to do, but nothing happened—nothing.

So we're here; we're gathering on a moment of transformation. After years of uncertainty, of cuts, neglect, we have turned a page. And now, together, we write a new chapter, one rooted in hope, in equity, in the firm belief that education is a single greatest investment we can make in our future.

Manitobans want their government to be more than a funder of education; they want a true partner, a government that listens, a government that lifts, a government that leads. For too long, they did not have that.

Les Manitobains veulent que leur gouvernement provincial soit un véritable partenaire dans l'éducation de leurs enfants. Mais pas un gouvernement qui coupe. Pas un gouvernement qui ignore, mais un gouvernement qui bâtit.

### **Translation**

*Manitobans want their provincial government to be a true partner in their children's education: not a government that cuts and ignores, but a government that builds.*

### **English**

For seven and a half years, the PC government dismantled what so many educators, families and communities had worked so hard to build. They slashed school funding. They abandoned their responsibility to students. They turned their backs on me, on teachers. They let class sizes spiral out of control. They took valuable support away from students who needed it most. They left school divisions to make impossible choices: cut programs for our educators or go into deficit. That is their legacy.

Mais aujourd'hui, c'est différent. Nous avons changé de cap. Un nouveau gouvernement est en place; un gouvernement NPD qui croit que l'éducation est un droit, et non pas un privilège.

### **Translation**

*Today, things are different. We have changed course. A new government is in place: an NDP government that believes education is a right, not a privilege.*

### **English**

We are taking action, real action. We have already announced the construction of 11 brand new schools across Manitoba in Winnipeg, Brandon, Ste. Anne, Neepawa and beyond. Each of these schools will reduce class sizes, include child-care spaces and respond to the real needs of growing communities.

We are investing over \$700 million into our education system, not just to build new schools, but to maintain the ones we have, to make sure that every student, from kindergarten to graduation, learns in an environment that is safe, modern and inspiring.

Ce n'est pas seulement un investissement dans les briques et du ciment. C'est un investissement dans l'avenir de chaque enfant manitobain.

**Translation**

*This is not just an investment in bricks and mortar. It is an investment in the future of every child in Manitoba.*

**English**

Just look at what we've done in our first year: We've hired over 630 new educators. We banned cellphones in classrooms so students can focus. We implemented mandatory sexual abuse prevention training. We increased school funding by \$67 million to respond to enrolment growth.

We launched a universal school nutrition program so no child leans—learns on an empty stomach. These are not small steps. This is not nothing. These are transformational.

Aucun enfant manitobain ne devrait avoir faim en apprenant. Chaque estomac plein est un esprit prêt à réussir.

**Translation**

*No Manitoba child should be hungry when learning. A full stomach is a mind ready to succeed.*

**English**

We even introduced Nello's Law because we believe so deeply in school nutrition that we made it permanent. No future government can take that away, not on our watch.

We also expanded \$10-a-day child care to include holidays and weekends, saving families thousands of dollars each year. Where were they on that? Because we know that when we make life better for parents, we make life better for children. We know education doesn't just happen in classrooms; it happens when families are supported, communities are strong and every child feels seen.

Nous investissons dans chaque élève, dans chaque enseignant, dans chaque salle de classe, parce que nous croyons en leur potentiel.

**Translation**

*We invest in every student, every teacher and every classroom, because we believe in their potential.*

**English**

We are bringing back dignity to the teaching profession. We are putting tools back in the hands of students. We are building schools, hiring educators and empowering communities. And we are doing all

of this facing the shadow left by the previous government.

Let me remind you what they actually did: They cut funding by \$36 million over three years. They reduced the Province's share of school operating costs. They gutted supports; they gutted them. I taught those kids without the supports. They weren't there and they were before, so how did that happen?

They eliminated programs that served thousands. They proposed bill 64, a law that would have scrapped every English language school board and centralized power in the premier's office. I think it's been called the worst proposed bill ever.

Et pendant qu'ils prétendaient moderniser l'éducation, ils ont essayé de supprimer la démocratie scolaire locale. C'était inacceptable. Et nous l'avons arrêté.

**Translation**

*While claiming to be modernising education, they tried to abolish local school democracy. It was unacceptable, and we stopped that attempt.*

**English**

They said they wanted better outcomes, but they never listened to the people who know education best: teachers, parents and students themselves. We listened; we acted. We believe that education is how we build a fairer, stronger society. We believe that the child in a small town should have the same opportunities as a child in suburban Winnipeg.

We believe in the freedom to be who you are that every student—whether they're from the LGBTQSIA community, Indigenous communities—deserves a school where they feel safe, respected and valued.

\* (11:40)

Lorsque les PC ont mené une campagne sur les soi-disant « droits parentaux », ils ont mis en change — mis en danger les élèves les plus vulnérables. Nous avons dit non. Nous avons choisi l'espoir plutôt que la haine.

**Translation**

*When the PCs campaigned on so-called parental rights, they put the most vulnerable students at risk. We said no. We chose hope over hate.*

**English**

We chose hope instead of hate. Friends, rebuilding takes time, but we are doing the work. With

every school built, every educator hired, every meal served, every student supported, we are providing that public education is worth fighting for. Because we are not just building schools, we are building futures.

So today, I ask you: Stand and stay with us. Continue walking with us on this journey. Speak up. Show up. Support your local schools. Celebrate the educators who make a difference every day.

Ensemble nous pouvons assurer un avenir où chaque enfant reçoit les outils pour réussir, où l'éducation est forte, inclusive et publique.

### **Translation**

*Together we can ensure a future where every child is given the tools to succeed, and where education is strong, inclusive and public.*

### **English**

Where education is strong, inclusive and public. Because when we invest in our children, we are securing the future, today.

Thank you. Merci. Let's keep building together.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before I move on to the next speaker, I'll just remind all speakers that comments should come through the Chair.

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** I'm happy to rise today and put a few words on the record in relation to the private members' resolution put forward today by the member from Transcona.

One thing that stands out in the statement I just heard is that we did nothing; the PC government did nothing for education. And that is absolutely wrong. What we did do is we built 14 schools and I was present at one of those openings. So just to straighten out and put some facts on the record, we built 14 new schools.

And I also want to put a shout-out to the teachers and the educators that staff our schools across Manitoba. I have many friends in the classrooms, teaching young people. And I want to say that they do a phenomenal job and it's not always an easy job in today's world. They educate our young ones and bring forward many success stories from the classroom.

I want to thank the superintendents and as well as the many school board members who have to make decisions and sit around the table and look at budgets and classroom sizes and have to determine and make some tough calls when the decisions have to be made. Again, not another easy task, but one that has to be

done, and I just want to say a thank-you and a shout-out to those board members who are tasked with those decisions.

Education, we know, is a crucial for the development of our province and it's important of education and the role of new schools in shaping our future. It's the foundation which we build our communities on or around, it fosters new growth, innovation and equality. It empowers young people of all ages to pursue their dreams and equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate in an ever-changing world.

In our province, we're fortunate to see many schools that are not merely buildings, they're beacons of hope and opportunity. They provide safe, nurturing environments where children can learn, explore and develop their potential.

New schools bring fresh ideas, innovative teaching methods and a commitment to inclusivity and they're designed to cater to the diverse needs of our students, ensuring that every child has access to quality education.

I have heard from many of those that are in the classrooms. Teachers do not have the supports in place for the students that are in their classrooms. They're tired and exhausted; they need more assistance in that. And they're not only tired of—they're tired of the NDP government and their tax hikes and what this is going to cost us, the ratepayers, here across Manitoba.

I'm going to redirect for just a moment and reflect on my own journey and take this in a little bit of a different direction on a personal note. My family home where I grew up was actually a school at one time. My parents purchased a one-classroom home—or school, rather, sorry—thank you, which was likely shut down by the NDP some years ago. But it was—they purchased this school, moved it to the farm where they, obviously, renovated it.

But growing up, there was interesting things that were still within the home when it was a school. We kept the desks, so some of these older desks were there; there was chalkboards and novels. So growing up, it was always an inspiration to, you know, pull out the chalkboards that were once in place, read from those novels where students would be learning how to read at a very young age. And it just always created some fun memories. Even now, going back to my family home, there's still pieces of chalkboards in—hidden away and a desk that still stands.

Where I was going with this, of course, is in relation to new schools and, you know, preserving some of that history. The essence of education lies not just in the classrooms, but also in the stories and experiences that shape us. By integrating the lessons of the past with the promise for the future, we can create a more vibrant educational landscape.

As we talk about new schools, I must talk about the schools within my constituency of Agassiz. There are four school divisions. Not all schools within the divisions are within the boundaries of Agassiz, but we do take in four different divisions, and all—and each of those having very unique needs.

We have Pine Creek School Division. It has 13 schools: five elementary, two high schools, six Hutterian colony schools. Prairie Spirit School Division has six schools: four colony schools, one elementary, one collegiate. Beautiful Plains School Division is one of the largest school divisions and is within—all schools are within the Agassiz boundaries. It has 14 schools: seventy-seven colony schools, four elementary, one middle-year and two collegiates. And we have Turtle River School Division; it has three schools.

And each of those divisions, like I mentioned, has a unique—have unique needs. And some of those, specifically, are the colonies, which, again, they have unique classrooms, as well as teaching. I have attended many of those colonies for I Love to Read Month, as well as many of the schools across Agassiz. I know in some of these schools that I have visited, they have expanded their classrooms to be outside, in the hallways, in the libraries. They've had to transform some of their lunch rooms to accommodate for these larger classes.

And I know in Neepawa, specifically, where they are bursting at the seams, and I know that there is a—Neepawa is in the queue for a new school, and I just hope that this NDP pull through on that and don't cut that.

It was our government that announced that initially in—I believe it was 2023 that announcement went out, but the NDP had cut that. And the school—cutting many of these schools that they slashed also impacted the availability for child care. It would be interesting to learn what those numbers were, the child-care spaces that were eliminated with that.

You know, member from Brandon West was talking about the increase in tax hikes, and again, this is a time when families are really struggling here

across our province. Whether it's buying groceries, paying rent; we are all struggling. And what this NDP has done is increased the taxes right across our province.

\* (11:50)

You know, the Winnipeg School Division is seeing an increase of 15 per cent; St. James is 11.85; Pembina Trails, 13.63 per cent. Louis Riel is seeing an increase of over 16 per cent. You know, the delay tactics that the NDP did have not only exasperated the cost of these new builds, but it's also increasing the taxes that Manitobans are going to have to face.

I'm sure that we can all agree on one thing, and that education is a collaborative responsibility. It requires support of families, communities, governments and together we can advocate for the resources and policies that are needed to enhance our schools, to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed.

And please, let's—for just another moment here—let's celebrate the importance of education and the schools across our province, be inspired by the legacy of learning that shapes our lives and let us commit to building a brighter future for many more generations to come.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

**Hon. Mintu Sandhu (Minister of Public Service Delivery):** It is an honour to rise in the House today to put a few words on the record in support of this important resolution, building new schools.

Our government is investing in the future of Manitoba by investing in our children. As a government, we know that one of the most important responsibilities we have is to ensure every child in Manitoba gets this strong start in life. And that strong starts with education.

We are building new schools across the province to ensure every child has the space, food and resources they need to learn, grow and thrive. As part of Budget 2025, our government is making a record-breaking investment of \$3.7 billion in capital projects.

These investments are not just about infrastructure. They are about shaping the future of our province. We are proud to be building 11 new schools across Manitoba. They are necessary investments that will support our growing population and ensure the next generation has the resources they need to thrive in the life.

Honourable Speaker, we know that education is founding—foundation on which strong communities are built. It is the backbone of our healthy society and growing economy. By investing in education today, we are investing in the future of our children and the success of our province.

This is why the resolution before us today is so important. It speaks to the vision and commitment that our government has toward the long-term well-being of our communities. Our government is committed to making Manitoba a place where families want to live, work and raise their children. These new schools will help address capacity needs now and into the future, helping kids have a smaller class size and get the attention they deserve.

We are listening to Manitobans and delivering on what matters most to them. Honourable Speaker, let me share where these new schools are going. In River East Transcona, we are building a Devonshire Park school. In Pembina Trail, Prairie Pointe school and Bridgwater Lakes school are on the way. Seven Oaks will see addition of Meadowlands school and Highland Pointe school. In Brandon, we are building Brandon southwest school along with the brand new French language school.

And also, a new French language school in Winnipeg; a high school in the north-west corner of Winnipeg. In Seine River, we are building Ste. Anne high—regional high school and in Beautiful Plains, we are proud to be adding the Neepawa regional high school. These schools are being built in neighbourhoods where young families are growing, where student populations are increasing.

We have heard from the parents, teachers and the community leaders, and we are delivering on what they have told us. Honourable Speaker, as the Minister of Public Service Delivery, I'm happy to be working alongside the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning (MLA Schmidt) and delivering on these new 11 schools.

I am proud to be part of the government that's listening to Manitobans, and we know Manitobans will never forget how the previous PC government chose to cut, cut, cut. We have taken a different approach. Where they cut, we build.

As the Minister of Public Service Delivery, I am committed to delivering on our goals to build a stronger Manitoba. Honourable Speaker, we are committed to continuing to invest in our children, our

education system and the future of our great province by putting Manitobans first.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot):** I'd like to start my comments by referencing the myth machine that we just heard speaking where all kinds of myths are being put on the record, but I guess that is kind of part of this whole debating process on private members' resolutions and bills. When you hear members of the NDP get up and put one myth after the other—in fact, it's gotten so extreme that it's just to the point of being just ludicrous. I heard the member from Brandon East, the minister, get himself so caught up in his own verbiage and his own mythmaking that it just got—it just gets extreme.

And we know that there were many, many schools that were built after the dire and dark days of the NDP. There were many schools that were built, and I was beneficiary. We had that beautiful high school—*[interjection]* It seems to raise a lot of excitement. I'm glad to see that the lazy socialists across the way finally woke up. Good to hear that they finally woke up and now they all seem to have found their voices. *[interjection]* Now—there they go. There they go; they finally found—I woke them up. I woke them up from their daydreaming and their mythmaking that they love. Finally, they are awake and listening to some truth.

There were all these beautiful schools that were finally built under the Conservatives, and those that we didn't get done—first of all, they cancelled them all, and now they're going to build them all. And that's kind of—I think it was their Premier (Mr. Kinew) who said, it's like a pickerel on the dock. They're flopping around; first they cancelled all the schools we were going to build and now they're going to build some of the schools we were going to build, and thankfully, we had a Progressive Conservative government that believed in building new schools, and we're seeing the benefit of that.

However, after all the major funding we did of education—and we increased funding substantially; you can go back and fact-check it, not the myth-making machine we see across the way from our—my good friends, the lazy socialists across the way.

We can see that under them what we are seeing is unbelievably huge tax increases on ordinary, hard-working Manitobans, on families. They are allowing taxes to go up exponentially. In fact, as high—*[interjection]*



Oh, the member for Brandon East (Mr. Simard) now seems to have found his voice again. First he did the whole mythmaking machine thing when he got up and spoke, and now he wants another turn.

And maybe if he—maybe he wants to get up and ask for leave if he could speak again. We'd deny it, of course; there's only so much myth one can take from one member. And I apologize for the member from Brandon West for having to hear the member from Brandon East called out, but the member from Brandon East just spews myth and so we have to correct the record.

The amount of taxes that are being put on hard-working men and women is exceedingly difficult for families who sit around the kitchen table and have

to divvy up the budget. They have to decide where they're going to put their priorities. And with a 25 per cent tax increase—in fact, River East Transcona alone in one year—this isn't the—because remember, the calendar year and the budget year aren't the same—for one household, the average increase will be \$250 a home. That will eat into the family budget and is going to hurt families so they have to decide, you know, are they going to—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have six minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 p.m., this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

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