



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-Third Legislature**

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 24, 2025

*The House met at 1:30 p.m.***The Speaker:** Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.**Speaker's Statement****The Speaker:** Prior to routine proceedings, I have a short statement for the House.

I noticed in debate this morning that members on both sides were using language indirectly referencing members' honesty. I let it go at the time, but I see it's becoming a persistent problem. So I'd ask all members to please think about what you're saying and make sure we're not venturing into unparliamentary language.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS****INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 214—The Board Parity and Diversity Act****Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry):** I move, seconded by the member from Tyndall Park, that Bill 214, The Board Parity and Diversity Act, be now read a first time.*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Wasyliw:** I am pleased to introduce The Board Parity and Diversity Act, legislation that calls for more equitable and inclusive corporate leadership in Manitoba. Too often, corporate boards lack the diversity needed to reflect communities they serve. This bill sets clear achievable standards from gender parity to the inclusion of Black, Indigenous, racialized persons and people with disabilities and making sure that workers have a seat at the table.

This legislation is about shifting power, breaking down barriers and entering—ensuring decisions in the board room reflect the realities of everyday Manitobans.

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

Further introduction of bills?

**Bill 46—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2025****Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance):** I move, seconded by the Premier (Mr. Kinew), that Bill 46, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2025; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2025 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité, be now read a first time.*Motion presented.*

**MLA Sala:** I'm very proud to introduce Bill 46, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2025. The bill includes tax statute amendments and additional priority legislation to implement initiatives included in Budget 2025. This bill will deliver on key budget priorities to lower costs for Manitoban families, provide safer and healthier communities, grow our economy and build one Manitoba.

Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

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

Seeing no further introduction of bills, committee reports?

**TABLING OF REPORTS****Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I am pleased to table the annual report of the automatic repeal of act or provisions not in force.**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Yom HaShoah****Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology):** I rise today to solemnly mark Yom HaShoah, also known as Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Yom HaShoah, which began last night at sunset, honours the lives and heroism of the more than 6 million Jewish children, women and men, who between 1933 and 1945, were victims of the Holocaust.

As Manitobans, we come together to remember the lives taken, their brave resistance and to honour the countless families worldwide who were forever altered by the Shoah: both the 6 million Jews and the approximately 5 million more murdered because of their ideology, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation or mental and physical disabilities; all representing many tragic lost generations of dreams, loves and promise.

The first commemoration of Yom HaShoah took place in 1951, a mere six years after the end of World War II, the date itself marking the beginning of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Thousands of survivors of the Shoah sought refuge here in Canada, with many making their home in Manitoba.

Many of these survivors arrived in Winnipeg. The former B'nay Abraham Synagogue was one of the first to create a space for survivors to gather and one of the first synagogues in Canada to house a permanent memorial to survivors. As demographics have shifted, many of these community members and their families have moved to the south end of Winnipeg. They and their families have tirelessly worked with Manitobans of all backgrounds to build stronger, more inclusive, more welcoming communities. We pause to honour that today as well.

In 2000, the provincial government established an annual day of commemoration for Yom HaShoah and unveiled Manitoba's Holocaust memorial on the grounds of the Legislature, the first of its kind in Canada. I encourage all Manitobans to visit the monument and to reflect on our shared responsibility to ensure that that dark period of history does not repeat itself.

Unfortunately, as the years pass, fewer and fewer survivors remain to stand witness to the horrors of this time and to share their stories of survival. So it becomes even more important for us to share their stories for them to ensure that their lives are remembered and the lessons from that brutal time not forgotten.

Our government is stepping up in that regard. We have enshrined Holocaust education in the provincial curriculum. Only by learning from the past can we hope not to repeat it. And our government has listened to not only the Jewish communities but other communities of faith who have also faced discrimination, with a dedicated criminal prosecutor for hate crimes in Manitoba.

Honourable Speaker, we must ensure that we are all working together to combat the rising tide of anti-Semitism and Holocaust denialism.

I've been humbled to take part in a variety of Yom HaShoah services, including the reading of the Megillat HaShoah during an interfaith service at Congregation Shaarey Zedek last night and on the grand staircase of the Legislature a short time ago.

But Honourable Speaker, the most moving of these events occurred this morning here in the Legislature, during which the names of the victims of the Holocaust were read aloud. I am deeply privileged to have been one of those readers and to have shared that honour with so many of the honourable members of this Assembly.

When considered together, the reality of 6 million Holocaust victims is incomprehensible. To truly

understand the scope of that tragedy, we must consider them one individual name at a time; unto every person there is a name. I request that the names of the victims from my list be added to Hansard so they might be part of our Chamber's permanent record.

At a time in history when so many forces are seeking to pull us apart, when we see a rise in anti-Semitism, we need to now hold each other a little closer. Understanding the suffering of others enables us to move forward as a community. Today is one of those days on which we must commit ourselves to doing so and to solemnly pledge: never again.

I ask leave for a moment of silence to honour the victims of the Shoah.

*Adler: Hersh, Isaac, Sara, Zelik—Berezovka-Auschwitz;  
Alexander: Abraham, Manya—Treblinka;  
Altman: Golda, Hershel—Warsaw;  
Averbach: Herman, Mendle, Sara, Wilhelm—Zambrow,  
Zawichost*

**The Speaker:** Is there leave for a moment of silence after all other members have spoken to the minister's statement? *[Agreed]*

\* (13:40)

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** On this solemn day, we remember the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered by the brutal Nazi regime through the Shoah, as well as many millions of others.

The Holocaust was a calculated assault on human dignity. We must ensure this history is neither denied nor distorted. Yom HaShoah is an important day for all Manitobans to stand together and vow to never allow such horrors to take place or go unchallenged.

Many people today still face persecution for their ethnicity or religion. Less than two years ago, Israel experienced the worst attack on Jews since the Holocaust. This weekend, we saw a string of anti-Semitic vandalism plastered around the Jewish hub in the province.

Today is a call to action to not let such hate continue. We must foster a world where freedom, tolerance and security for all are not just ideals, but realities. We must take inspiration from the families of the Shoah, who whispered songs of hope, and the brave who resisted against impossible odds. Their legacy is not just sorrow, it is strength. It is the unbreakable will to live, to love and to be remembered.

With each passing year, the opportunity to hear survivors' first-hand stories become rarer. And so, as

time passes, commemorations like today become all more significant so that these stories live on through generations, next after next.

This is a responsibility that belongs to us all. It lives in our conversations and our courage to speak out. We are the keepers of this memory, so let's carry that meaning forward from this day. Let us be the light that refuses to be dimmed, the voices that refuse to be silenced. Let us carry the memory of the victims and survivors, not as a burden, but as a beacon, a light that guides us forward. And above all, let us conclude today with the promise: We remember. And never again.

Shalom and thank you.

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** I ask for leave to respond to the minister's statement.

**The Speaker:** Does the honourable member for Tyndall Park have leave? [*Agreed*]

**MLA Lamoureux:** Honourable Speaker, today we recognize Yom HaShoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day.

We solemnly remember the over-6-million Jews who were systematically and senselessly murdered during the Holocaust. We do so by reading aloud the names of those who died so that we may never forget them. It is very important that we memorialize each and every person who was killed or slaughtered in the Holocaust because it serves as a reminder of a very sorrowful chapter in the history of humankind.

As the number of Holocaust survivors decreases every year that passes, it becomes more and more important than ever that we ensure that the truths and stories are heard, that future generations learn about the horrors of the past and that we ensure that all of us continue to fight against anti-Semitism and to build better tools and systems to address and prevent racism and discrimination.

Honourable Speaker, it is devastating that daily, there are terrorist attacks in this world and overt anti-Semitism both here at home and elsewhere in the world. The remembrance of unimaginable loss and inhumanity faced during one of the darkest chapters in human history must never fade. The words never again must be top of mind as we consider how to work together for peace and understanding in our troubled world.

Honourable Speaker, each time we step up and speak out against anti-Semitism, we honour the victims and survivors of the Holocaust. And I continue to

stand with my colleagues and the many voices in the world praying for peace and an end to violence.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** As previously requested, if all could rise for a moment of silence.

*A moment of silence was observed.*

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

### **Week of the Early Childhood Educator**

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** I am honoured to rise today to recognize the week of the early childhood educator, which takes place next week from April 27 to May 3. This is a time for us all to celebrate and acknowledge the dedication and commitment of early childhood educators and the vital services that they provide to children, families and communities across our great province.

Established in 1992 by the Manitoba Child Care Association, the week of the early childhood educator has long been a tradition in our province, honouring the invaluable contributions of early childhood professionals who contribute in such meaningful ways to Manitoba's social and economic development. It's indeed true that Manitoba works because child care works.

As minister responsible and as a parent, I recognize how early childhood educators lay the foundation for childhood development and lifelong learning, preparing Manitoba's youngest citizens to reach their full potential in environments that foster hope, belonging, purpose and play.

To all ECEs across Manitoba, our government thanks you immensely for your invaluable contributions in your day-to-day work and lifts you up for your unwavering commitment to the betterment of our children's lives.

With extensive education and experience in child development and pedagogy, early childhood educators know how to build meaningful relationships with children and their families. ECEs across Manitoba thoughtfully design engaging indoor and outdoor learning environments that nurture growth, curiosity and well-being.

Through this work, Manitoba's early childhood educators help bring life to our government's vision: that across Manitoba, children and youth from every background matter, have the right to belong, to be respected, to be successful and to be safe.

Within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning, we are very proud to have many certified early childhood educators working directly in Early Learning and Child Care Division. These professionals contribute their expertise across a wide range of areas, including licensing, workforce development, capital development, curriculum design and the child-care subsidy program.

Our government is so grateful for your expertise in the department that helps strengthen and build our child-care sector across Manitoba for years to come. Your contributions will undoubtedly help us deliver on our shared goals to deliver high-quality, accessible and affordable child care here in Manitoba.

To complement the invaluable work of ECEs each day, our government continues to invest in supporting ECEs in their work and investing in our child-care sector here in Manitoba.

As part of that work, we've recently secured a \$1.9-billion extension to our bilateral agreement with the federal government so we can continue investing in strengthening our child-care sector across our province. We are increasing the number of qualified staff, investing in more training opportunities and building more centres to meet the needs of families and communities across our great province.

Our government is also proud to have finally implemented true \$10-a-day child care that includes non-school and in-service days and holidays to truly meet the needs of families in our province and deliver on affordability.

Our government is eager and committed to working in partnership with all ECEs, CCAs, directors, non-profit child-care providers, municipalities, First Nations, Métis and Indigenous governments to support the ongoing development and to create new child-care facilities across our province.

So, to all the ECEs across Manitoba, I want to thank you for the work that you do each and every day for Manitoba children and families. Your expertise and passion for early childhood education continues to make a meaningful and lasting impact, and on behalf of our entire team, I extend my sincere appreciation, not only during this week of celebration, but every single day. Our government is proud to invest in your ongoing professional development and training opportunities, so you are supported to have fruitful and long careers in the child-care sector.

Finally, Honourable Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to spend next week, our constituency

week, visiting their child-care centres, visiting ECEs to celebrate, honour and recognize their incredible work.

Thank you very much. Merci. Miigwech.

\*(13:50)

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the week of early childhood educators, which was established in 1992 by the MCCA.

This week can reflect—this week, we can reflect and recognize work done by our valuable early childhood educators who bring support to families and their children.

Our children are the future, and early childhood educators support our youth through different avenues: social, emotional and physically. With such an important job placed on their shoulders, we must also show these professionals our support and our gratitude for the profound impact they bring to society. Once again, Manitoba works because child care works.

Our former PC government was one of the first provinces to sign onto the Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, which will benefit early childhood educators, children and communities for years to come.

As part of the extended agreement, the former PC government introduced two new initiatives to support the ELCC sector, including a renovation expansion grant to provide funding for non-profit facilities to expand their existing spaces to meet their growing community needs. This increased opportunities for child-care assistant certification training by improving access to the required 40-hour course and expanded programming.

We were also the first to introduce the \$10-a-day daycare right here in Manitoba.

Early childhood educators are on the front line of our education system, helping develop the minds of our youngest learners.

We thank you, again, to the child-care professionals, student volunteers and all early childhood educators. We value and thank you all for your dedication and we continue to urge the government to support you as well.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** The honourable—before we get into member's statements, I have some guests in the gallery that'll leave before we're finished, so I want to take this opportunity to introduce.

We have, seated in the public gallery, from St. John Brebeuf 30 grade 6 students under the direction of Dexter Suban, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton).

We welcome you all here today.

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### U of W Wesmen Men's Volleyball Champions

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I rise today to celebrate a historic achievement for Manitoba sports. The University of Winnipeg Wesmen Men's Volleyball Team claimed the Canada West Championship on their home court, marking a momentous victory for the program and for our province.

Under the direction of Canada West coach of the year Chris Voth and rookie of the year Easton Dick, this championship win is a testament to their relentless hard work, dedication and perseverance of all of the players, coaches and staff who have poured their hearts into this season.

Competing in absolutely one of the most challenging conferences in the country, the Wesmen showed incredible skill, teamwork and resilience, proving they belong amongst the nation's best; defeating Alberta Golden Bears at the Duckworth Centre 3-0 in the final, a very, very exciting final to that championship.

This victory, Honourable Speaker, is not just about sport. It's about community, pride and inspiring the next generation of Manitoba athletes. The Wesmen success reminds us all that we can achieve what we dream to through passion and commitment.

As a former Wesmen athlete myself—basketball, of course—I know how hard these athletes have worked to make those memories on the court. And I know that those memories on the court are only surpassed by the moments, memories and friendship that are made off the court.

These athletes are leaders in our communities, in and outside of their sport. They set an example for excellence and academic focus that is to be admired.

I request the names of all the team members, staff and coaches be submitted to Hansard, and I ask that all members of this House join me in not only welcoming the Wesmen, the champions who are here with us today, but in congratulating them and their program on their well-earned Canada West Championship.

You folks have made your Union Station community, your city and your province so very proud. Congratulations.

*Coaches: Cam Johnson, Liam Allen; Canada West coach of the year: Chris Voth; Canada West Rookie of the year: Easton Dick; Players: Tristan Arnold, Carson Brennan, Thomas Bridle, Easton Dick, Morgan Eby, Jack Gard, Aidan Hruska, Thomas Kiesman, Paxton Koop, Alex Krykewich, Luke Lodewyks, Liam Markesteyn, Isaiah Olfert, Conor Rewniak, Jaxon Rose, Adam Thompson, Ben Traa, Levi Unger, Maxime Vermette.*

#### Dennis Nykoliatiion

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Today I rise to recognize Dennis Nykoliatiion, a legendary Ukrainian musician from the Interlake, being raised in Fisher Branch. He joins us in the gallery today.

Throughout his life, Dennis has made his mark on the music world. Dennis began his musical journey at just the age of 13, where he mastered an energetic and diverse repertoire.

He first played with the Regent Ramblers, blending old-time fiddle tunes, country and Ukrainian music, which is perfect for the legendary two-day Ukrainian weddings.

By the 1960s, Dennis joined the Interlake Polka Kings, recording seven albums while touring the prairies.

His next move was to co-found the Polka Drifters band, where he recorded four more albums and hosted the band's weekly radio show on CKDM Dauphin.

Despite his work commitments, music remains close to his heart.

He reunited the Interlake Polka Kings in 2002 and later formed The Dennis Nykoliatiion Band in 2008, bringing together some of Manitoba's finest musicians, producing four more albums.

In 2015, Dennis was honoured by the Ukrainian Musicians Association with the Lifetime Prestigious Award for his contribution to Ukrainian music and culture in Western Canada.

In 2017, he was inducted into the Manitoba fiddlers' association Wall of Fame.

Now residing in Barrie, Ontario, Dennis enjoys life with his wife Bette, their four children and nine grandchildren.

He will now officially retire from performing, playing his band's final show in Fraserwood, the heart of the Interlake, on Sunday, June 8.

His lifelong commitment to music and community is truly inspiring.

I ask all members to join me in celebrating this outstanding Manitoban. His legacy is one of talent, perseverance and passion.

**Belle Jarniewski**

**MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo):** I'm proud to share with you today an outstanding Tuxedo constituent, Belle Jarniewski.

Both of Belle's parents were Holocaust survivors. Her life shaped by her family's history of trauma and loss, as well as her parents' courage and proud identity as Jews.

Her upbringing initially instilled in her a desire to be a teacher, and Belle received her education degree from the University of Manitoba.

However, her passion for Tikkun Olam—mending the world—spurred her onto further studies obtaining her masters of arts in theology at the University of Winnipeg, which also led Belle to follow her call to teach people of all ages about the Holocaust and other genocides.

Through her work as the executive director at the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada, Belle brings education on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism to thousands of students, educators, administrators and professional groups each year. And she has also partnered with Manitoba Education and Training numerous times.

Belle is also a writer and has been published in Canadian, Israeli and European newspapers. Her 2010 book, *Voices of Winnipeg Holocaust Survivors*, documents the history of 73 local survivors before, during and after the Shoah Holocaust, and can be found in libraries in every secondary school in Manitoba and in university and national libraries in several countries.

Belle is an impressive person with many accomplishments, and I was honoured to present her with the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

In a time when anti-Semitism is on the rise, we must do what we can to combat it. Belle is doing this great work every day.

Today, on Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, I cannot think of a better person to celebrate and honour. Belle is a leader in Winnipeg and the globe.

Please join me in celebrating Belle.

\* (14:00)

**Jim Stinson**

**Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North):** Honourable Speaker, I rise in the House today to honour a great friend and Manitoban, Jim Stinson.

After three long and challenging years of fighting multiple melanoma, Jim passed away peacefully in the hospital in the early morning of Sunday, March 2 with his wife and soulmate, Darlene, lying next to him and his sister, Barbie, by his side. Jim had been admitted to the Health Sciences Centre to have a new treatment. He expected that he—in a few days he would be home and out ice fishing again. However, it was not to be.

Jim left southern Ontario to join the RCMP and was stationed in Manitoba. He fell in love with our province and hunting—the hunting and fishing it had to offer.

Jim was very proud of his 30-year career with the RCMP, his accomplishments too numerous to mention, but most of all he loved to help people. After retirement, he was asked to take on a role of emergency co-ordinator for the municipality of St. Clements, and shortly thereafter, received the emergency co-ordinator of the year award. Jim was a founding member of MAMEC, an association that provides emergency training to municipalities across the province.

Jim's incredible accomplishments did not go unnoticed. He was awarded the Queen's jubilee—Diamond Jubilee, the Platinum Jubilee and his latest recognition, the King's Jubilee Medal, which I was honoured to present this afternoon to Darlene, posthumously.

Jim had so many interests, including horses, for a while working with equine Canada, but his passions were hunting and fishing, especially hunting in the Carberry hills with his friend Henry.



Jim was an avid angler, fishing with his many buddies for channel cat in the summer or beautiful greenback walleyes in the winter. One of his greatest joys was taking kids fishing and helping them catch those large channel cats.

Jim had so much to live for. He touched so many lives. He—and he leaves behind a wealth of family and very good friends who have also loved him dearly.

Honourable Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Jim's loving wife Darlene, who's joining us here in the gallery today, for sharing him with all of us, and now he has earned his angel wings and golden fishing rod.

I ask for a moment of silence.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave for a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

*A moment of silence was observed.*

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

#### **Ted Wyman**

**Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology):** Honourable Speaker, it's my sincere pleasure to rise in this House today to celebrate the life of former River Heights constituent, Ted Wyman, who tragically passed away last year after a battle with cancer. In addition to being an unforgettable father, Ted made a name for himself in the world of journalism, which is how, I suspect, most members of this Chamber will know him.

He is leaving behind his wife Kim, son Christopher, and daughter Emily after truly living life to its fullest. We're joined in the gallery today by Ted's widow, Kim Fedick, and her son Christopher, and I know his many friends and colleagues in the world of journalism are following online.

He made a mark on everyone he met, and proudly called everyone he met his friend. He was passionate about writing, publishing a book and writing extensively about the Bombers and Jets. In his spare time, he was the commissioner for the River Heights sponge hockey league.

Ted was born in Brandon, but grew up in River Heights where he attended Kelvin High School. He cut his journalistic teeth in Westman and Saskatchewan, but returned home in 2003 to cover curling, the Olympics, Grey Cups, the return of the Jets and many other great sporting moments in

Manitoba and across Canada for the Winnipeg Sun. Ted also made his mark on his colleagues, with many of them sharing stories of his love of life.

Want to read one tribute from a colleague who shared: Teddy Wyman just enjoyed living; burned the candle at both ends like no other. Regaling with stories and laughs, he genuinely cared for people.

In honour of Ted's legacy, an award has been established at Red River College in his name for outstanding journalism students in the Creative Communications program, of which Ted was a passionate alumni.

On behalf of his friends and family and colleagues who have joined us in the gallery and online, I ask leave for a moment of silence in his honour.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave for a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

*A moment of silence was observed.*

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

#### **Introduction of Guests**

**The Speaker:** Prior to moving on to oral questions, there are guests in the gallery that I hope they're all still here. Draw attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today Tali Millo, Jeff Lieberman, Paula Parks, Gustavo Zentner, Kelly Hiebert, James Christie, Daniel Stone, Myron Love, who are guests of the honourable member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton).

And we welcome you all here today.

Further, in the public gallery, we had with us today Darlene Stinson, Craig Basaraba, Colleen Sailor, Susan Cheadle, Charlie Cheadle, Larry Strauman, Gail Strauman, Ted Catchpole, Trevor Catchpole, Dennis Loupin, Jackey LaBossiere, Don Emes, James Bezan, Kelly Bezan, who are the guests of the honourable member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton), and we did welcome them all here today.

#### **ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act Request for Support for Bill 227**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, almost 19 months in this—into this NDP's mandate, the Premier has made many promises, claims and announcements for many years now, but what we've seen over and over again is the failure to actually deliver on something.

We've got a Health Minister failing patients, nurses and health-care workers. We have a Finance Minister raising school taxes, property taxes and hydro rates, higher food prices and a rising cost of living, and a Premier failing to bring forward a plan to conquer any of it.

And the Premier has been silent on whether he will introduce a Canada free trade bill like the premiers of Ontario, New Brunswick, PEI and Nova Scotia and they're—they are all showing leadership, Honourable Speaker.

Will the Premier stop stalling and commit today to a team Manitoba approach and support the member for Midland's (Mrs. Stone) Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Our government is one that keeps our word to you, the people of Manitoba. We said that we would cut the gas tax; we did. We said that we would reopen emergency rooms; we are. We said—because the PCs decided to wage an election campaign on this—that we would search the Prairie Green landfill; we have. And now we have recovered the remains of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran.

What was the response of the interim Leader of the Opposition? Well, he had the Riding Mountain MLA, ostensibly a good man under most circumstances, bring forward a very shameful question. It was the subject of the Brandon Sun editorial today, and I quote: The Riding Mountain MLA was way off the mark with his question. It was revealed shortly afterward that the counselling services were paid for in order to help those who had participated in the search for human remains at the Prairie Green landfill site work through the trauma caused by the involvement under that effort. End quote.

\* (14:10)

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

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

#### **Cost of Living in Manitoba Tax Increases and Inflation Concerns**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, unemployment has risen by 50 per cent in the past year and the Premier has failed to bring back these jobs.

Manitobans expecting help with the cost of living instead they've received higher property taxes, a record-high fuel tax hike, a fake-out on hydro rates

after his Cabinet approved four per cent increases and a 12 per cent in rate hike applications, record-high school tax increases, higher income taxes, and a—higher grocery prices, Honourable Speaker.

After the Premier broke his promise to reduce—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —grocery prices last year, Manitobans instead got some of the highest foodflation in this country. And now, Manitobans are going to face even more inflation with the 25 per cent Trump tariffs.

Will you reveal—will this Premier reveal any—the next steps he plans to deal with the tariffs, or is he going to just follow Jagmeet Singh's downward spiral, Honourable Speaker?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to thank the member opposite for reminding me of another promise kept: We said we'd freeze your hydro rates, and we did.

In response to the words that my colleague from St. Johns said, I also want to quote more from the Brandon Sun. Brandon, by the way, is a city in western Manitoba that they never ask questions about.

Quote: We agree with the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine). It was both inappropriate and offensive for the MLA for Riding Mountain to attempt to play gotcha politics via an unfounded allegation that the Finance Minister was receiving counselling. Even if the Finance Minister was receiving counselling, which he wasn't, it was nobody's business. And even if the government had been paying for the Finance Minister's counselling, which it wasn't, the reality is that counselling is covered under the health plan that is available to all MLAs, including the member for Riding Mountain. End quote.

They throw shade at the counselling for people who found human remains—human bodies—the same bodies that they staked their political fortunes on in the last campaign.

Why is the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) smiling?

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

### Crime, Health Care and the Economy Government Record

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, once again, the Premier stands up, puts misinformation on the record. He is not even close to—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —talking about anything truthful, Honourable Speaker.

So, how do we sum up the NDP's first 19 months? Failure and broken promises. Failing our students on their education standards and provincial exams, failing patients waiting for surgeries or hospital beds. NDP failure is affecting our health-care workers that are waiting for relief and support.

This Premier is failing families that are trying to make ends meet, put food on their table and pay their bills at the end of the month. He's failing to end violent crime. Unemployment's out of control. Recession is around the corner under this Premier.

He smiles at the camera, acts like he's going to throw down from his gangster rapping days, Honourable Speaker, and then fails to answer any questions on behalf of Manitobans that we're asking.

So I ask the Premier: On behalf of Manitobans, will he stop failing them on all these promises—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —and start delivering for Manitobans, Honourable Speaker.

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Just want to point out that the title for this editorial is: A cruel question, aimed at scoring political points.

Further from this one, again, the Riding Mountain—direct quote—MLA was wrong on both counts and he should immediately apologize to the Finance Minister.

That should not be the end of the matter, however. The Riding Mountain MLA's questions, which were defended as legitimate by the interim PC leader following question period, send a terrible message to all Manitobans.

His questions suggest that mental illness, and taking steps to address it, are things to be ashamed of, that they can be validly used as questions to embarrass and diminish others. That's not merely wrong; that's cruel.

It requires strength and self-awareness to acknowledge your mental health is suffering, and it takes immense courage to ask for help. If you are struggling, speak to your doctor or health professional. In the alternative, call Prairie Mountain at 1-855-222-6011. End quote.

How do you respond?

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

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

### Violent Crime Rate Bail Reform

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Honourable Speaker, it's simple: it's the disclosure of public contracts and it's our job in the opposition to ask questions on—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —any type of contracts—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:**—that are being funded by government dollars on behalf of Manitobans, Honourable Speaker.

The Premier's just covering up today for his incompetency of not only him but also his front bench, Honourable Speaker, for not being able to answer a simple question the other day. As he continues to stand up today—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —once again not answering any questions.

So this Premier, violent crime—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

I admonished everyone rather severely the other day about maintaining order and decorum in this Chamber. I would hope that you all took that to heart, so I would ask for order, particularly from the government bench at this point in time.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, a 15-year-old male of Winnipeg was arrested and faces the following charges: possession of a weapon, causing disturbance. Violent crime has risen under this Premier, and we are seeing evidence of this behaviour today.

When is the Premier going to, and I quote, direct the Ministry of Justice to implement stronger conditions on bail to keep you safe in the community, end quote, as he promised 19 months ago, Honourable Speaker?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to thank the member opposite for reminding us of another promise kept: bail reform, under this Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe). We promised it, we're delivering.

Just going to go ahead and repeat the words of the Brandon Sun editorial for the benefit of the members opposite, who avert eye contact at all times when called to account, I'll point out for the House. Again, that should not be the end of the matter. This is a direct quote. The Riding Mountain MLA's questions, which were defended as legitimate by the interim PC leader following question period, send a terrible message to all Manitobans. His questions suggest that mental illness and taking steps to address it are things to be ashamed of, and that they can be validly used as weapons to embarrass and diminish others. That's not merely wrong; it's cruel. End quote.

So what, then, are we to take of the fact that the member opposite defends these questions again? Well, according to the Brandon Sun editorial board, it's not merely wrong; it's cruel.

Will the next PC leader do better?

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

#### **Government Ministers Possibility of Cabinet Shuffle**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** So, Honourable Speaker, two days after these—the said questions were actually asked, the Premier decides to stand up in his place and tries to change the dial. He tries to deflect. He tries to dodge the questions. He tries to deflect and dodge the fact that he is not very accountable to you, Manitobans.

That's simply the job of the opposition—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —to ask questions to the government and trying to get some answers on Manitobans' behalf.

But we know that under the last 19 months, Honourable Speaker, violent crime has risen. He continues to pat his failed Justice Minister on the back, but he's not doing the job.

We're asking the Premier, will he call for a Cabinet shuffle after constituency week?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Let me make this very plain: what do the PCs do all the time? Just like they did with the landfill ads, what they do again this week: they throw the stone and then they hide their hand. They knew intentionally, the Riding Mountain MLA

intentionally knew that he was trying to peddle in what the Brandon Sun is calling cruel questions to score political points, to undermine questions about mental health for one of their colleagues here in this Chamber.

And then, when they were confronted by the vile nature of these questions, they tried to come in here with a little soliloquy about how they, in fact, were the victims. Every single time, throw the stone and then hide the hand. And they don't have the good sense to abandon this.

I invite them and whoever their next leader is—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** —to continue down this path. We'll continue to defeat them and stand with you, the good people of Manitoba to bring people together and build a brighter tomorrow.

So will the members opposite do what the Brandon Sun asked? Will they apologize?

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

#### **Interim Leader of the Official Opposition Acknowledgement to Colleagues**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Once again, all this Premier is doing is he's covering up for the incompetence of his front bench, Honourable Speaker, who could have simply stood up and answered the question, but once again they're losing their mind—[interjection]

\* (14:20)

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —they're talking way too loud. They can't even hear themselves talk over there, Honourable Speaker, and if they just would have listened to the question two days ago, they would've been able to answer it, which I knew that they couldn't. They needed time out after session and then finally come out with the answer when the staff provided the answer to them.

Honourable Speaker, I want to thank everyone in this Chamber, my colleagues on my side of the Chamber, for allowing me and giving me the privilege and the honour to represent them as the interim leader—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Ewasko:** I want to thank you, Honourable Speaker, for your guidance during my tenure, and I look forward to my new role in the next few weeks.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The honourable first—

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I've never seen an opposition waste so much time in question period. The member opposite raises a matter of privilege claiming that he needs time in question period—for what? So they can sit around here and try to justify their salaries, for which they put in zero work. Consider the fact that the establishment candidate in the leadership can't even show up for work on most days.

But, on a more serious level, I do want to thank my colleague. I do want to thank my colleague. It's an important role—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Kinew:** I do want to thank him for serving an important role. This is our democracy. The opposition does have the right to ask questions.

As he goes out in his final day in the role, I want to table one article from the start of his time in which he threw shade at trans children, and I want to table this most recent editorial from the Brandon Sun, titled, A cruel question, aimed at scoring political points, and just remind young people in this province: even when you support an important role, it's important to hold yourself to a high standard as you conduct that duty.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

#### **Foster Parent's Comment at Town Hall Minister's Response to Language Used**

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** At a public town hall in Point Douglas last week, the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness (Ms. Smith) scolded a concerned foster parent who shared that he and his wife had taken in two children rescued from a dangerous situation. I will table the transcript, a full interaction, for the House.

He spoke with pride about helping his two vulnerable children in a neighbourhood overwhelmed by addiction, giving them safety, love and a better life.

But the minister responded by saying, quote: You did not rescue two kids from a drug den. You were not rescuing them, so you need to change that language.

Why did the minister publicly shame a foster parent for loving and protecting children in his care?

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families):** I want to take just a short moment to actually say miigwech to our colleague, the Minister for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness and for all of the work that she's doing in her department.

And, again, I'll remind Manitobans that the work that she's doing is actually fixing up the mess that members opposite left after seven and a half disastrous years in a failed government. She's on the front lines, meeting with folks, listening to Manitobans, hearing the concerns that Manitobans are raising and actually working together collectively to address the issues that squarely fall on the shoulders of members opposite when they continued to have their heads in the sand—

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

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Byram:** So let's be clear with our language: the Oxford Dictionary defines rescue as, and I quote: to save someone from a dangerous or distressing situation.

Taking in a child in need out of a dangerous situation and giving them love and support sounds exactly like rescuing them. Is there anyone in this Chamber who actually disagrees—or, disagrees—that this is exactly what many foster parents do—rescue children from potential danger, give them safety, stability and a chance to thrive. Or are we at a point where even that truth is up for debate?

**MLA Fontaine:** Children in child welfare are not dogs or cats needing rescuing. The language that the member just put on the official record is so incredibly offensive and disrespectful to Manitoba children. [interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Fontaine:** Children don't need to be rescued. Children need to be cared for. They need to be shown compassion. They need to be shown—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Fontaine:** —love. I'm so grateful to Manitobans who step up in a good, kind way to work with families and to ensure that they're caring for children. And

I know that the member for Red River is moaning and doesn't care about children—

**The Speaker:** Order.

The member's time has expired.

**Ms. Byram:** Last May, during the review of The Advocate for Children and Youth Act, the Minister of Families heard from dozens of foster parents in written and verbal submissions. They pleaded with the NDP government for more support, more respect and stop dismissing their concerns.

Many felt unheard and still do, to this day. Now the NDP are questioning if these kids—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Byram:** —if these parents are rescuing their kids. In February, the president of Manitoba Foster Parent Association told media, and I quote, we are all almost drowning.

If the minister truly does respect foster parents, as she claims, will she continue to ignore their urgent call for help, Honourable Speaker?

**MLA Fontaine:** Either the member's not paying attention to what's going on here on this side of the government, but we raise foster care basic 'maintenant' rates by 10 per cent, something that hadn't been done in 12 years.

The other thing that we've done is that we are—we proclaimed kinship and customary care agreements. Kinship and customary care agreements in the province are transformative in the lives of Manitoba families and children, something that members opposite never did in seven and a half years. You didn't raise rates; you didn't proclaim kinship and customary care. You've done nothing on jurisdiction. So, the audacity of the member opposite and anyone on that side to get up and—

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

Order.

#### **Death of Family on Manitoba Highway Arrest Warrant for Out-of-Province Driver**

**Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland):** On November 15, Sara Unger and her eight-year-old daughter, Alexa, lost their lives in a tragic and preventable accident.

The next week, a Canada-wide arrest warrant was issued for the driver, a man from Brampton, Ontario, for his failure to appear. Since the driver was released from the hospital, there's been no sign of him.

What is this minister doing to ensure the driver is located?

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I thank the member for the question. This is a tragic case and one which I know law enforcement, here in the province of Manitoba, is working very hard to solve; one that they are co-ordinating with other jurisdictions and one that a number of resources, specifically provided by the Province of Manitoba, are going to support.

Of course, we have, within the province of Manitoba, several units that are dedicated specifically for searching for those who are being sought by police. We're giving more resources in order for law enforcement to have those additional resources, and we're going to continue to support law enforcement to make arrests in this case.

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

**Mr. Guenter:** A mother and her young child were coming home from a trip to the grocery store when their lives were cut short by an out-of-province driver who, police say, drove his semi-truck through a stop sign.

Manitobans need to know that every resource has been made available to bring him to justice.

Can the minister give Manitobans that assurance?

**Mr. Wiebe:** As I said, Honourable Speaker, we have been partnering with law enforcement every step of the way to ensure that they have the proper resources in order to conduct exactly this kind of work. Specifically, in this case, I know, as the member opposite has said, this is a nationwide warrant, and so this is where co-ordination between law enforcement, not only within the province of Manitoba, but of course, across the country, is so key.

We've given additional resources to ensure that the intelligence-gathering capabilities of law enforcement has been enhanced. That will go a long way to helping to solve this case, and we're going to support law enforcement every step of the way.

\* (14:30)

### **Out-of-Province Semi Drivers Certification Concerns**

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Honourable Speaker, there's a concerning trend regarding out-of-province semi drivers.

In January, my colleague asked the CEO of Manitoba Public Insurance about a CBC Marketplace investigation into alleged unqualified drivers being certified in other jurisdictions and then driving through other provinces, including Manitoba.

It is deeply concerning that the highest level of leadership at MPI was unaware of this investigation.

Has the minister followed up with the CEO of MPI about this alarming revelation?

**Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure):** I appreciate this question from the member opposite. It gives me an opportunity to highlight some of the important work that our government has been doing since we came into government, addressing issues with chameleon carriers and other challenges with licensing and how semis are operated across the country.

I brought this issue to the attention of other ministers at federal-provincial-territorial meetings. I also, in a sign-in a MOU meeting with Saskatchewan and Alberta, enhanced the MOU between our provinces, to focus on road safety, and included this as an important part of the work that we're doing—

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

**Mr. Narth:** Manitobans need to know they are sharing the road with safe operators, whether this government is aware of the fraudulent activity or not.

What has been done since January to ensure that those operating class 1 vehicles in Manitoba are safe and also that they are qualified?

Thank you.

**MLA Naylor:** Our motor carrier enforcement officers, I think, are some of the best in the country. We have given them new tools as well as new abilities, with the law that we're looking at tonight on committee allowing them to make arrests, so I'm looking forward to that being fully supported by the members opposite. We're continuing to do that work.

The challenge is when we shut down an operator in Manitoba, they can go open up shop in another province. So we are doing the work to communicate

with other provinces and try and shut down that process that's damaging for all of us.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for La Vérendrye, on a final supplementary question.

**Mr. Narth:** Unfortunately, Manitoba has become that safe haven.

To quote from the whistle-blower who spoke to CBC, I quote: these people who took the bribes and gave licences for a murder weapon—in any incident for a transport truck versus a car, more than likely the person in the car is not going to walk away. End quote. And I table that article in case the minister still has not looked into it.

When the RCMP recover the driver who fled justice in November, does this minister intend to pursue how he was granted a class 1 licence and whether individuals are knowingly negligent?

**MLA Naylor:** The driver that we're referring to was not licensed in Manitoba. So again, this is part of a broader Canadian conversation that is happening across the country.

I know that members opposite had a different approach. I know that the member for Borderland (Mr. Guenter) thought the way to address the issues with that driver was to take to Facebook and write abhorrent racist comments.

That is not how we work with people in Canada who have come here to work, and we will continue—  
[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Naylor:** —to use the justice—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Naylor:** —system to pursue those challenges.

### **RCMP Investigation in Northern Manitoba Park Inquiry into Break and Enter and Caribou Hunting**

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** Yes. Honourable Speaker, media is reporting on an RCMP investigation in a provincial park in northern Manitoba in relation to break and enter and the hunting of caribou. This is very concerning not just for the nature of the allegations, but because the season for caribou closed months ago.

What is the minister doing to get to the bottom of these very serious allegations in the—in a provincial park?

**Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures):** I appreciate the question from the member opposite on the topic of the day.

And knowing full well they're getting their question in the newspaper: we are aware of the situation. Conservation officers and RCMP officers are working also with the lodge owner, and people in northern Manitoba as it comes to wildlife management, and they are on this issue and they are all—have details to follow.

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

**Mr. Wowchuk:** The RCMP report that, quote, the suspects appear to have camped out over the winter months in the property while hunting caribou. I table the police press release. This creates fear that not only was this not a one-off incident, but there is substantial risks of long-term ecological damage from the mass harvesting from a caribou herd.

Have Manitoba conservation experts been dispatched to assess the extent of the damage?

**Mr. Bushie:** Again, I appreciate the follow-up question from the member opposite when it comes time to conservation officers and the work that they do.

The great dedication—even though members opposite decimated that service, cut that service and now they want to stand up and talk about the support for that conservation officers. We do that each and every day. We're staffing up the Conservation Officer Service so they can have that ability to get out all across Manitoba—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Bushie:** I know members opposite are chirping while we talk about support for conservation officers, yet he stands there, tries to throw shade at the organization that they, in fact, cut. Rest assured, Honourable Speaker, conservation is on this situation and they are dealing with it each and every day.

**Mr. Wowchuk:** They—this government needs to match their actions to their words. They talk about supporting tourism, but an outfitter's lodge was broken into and occupied.

What resources are being allocated to ensure the guilty parties are brought to justice?

**Mr. Bushie:** Absolutely, our actions are being matched by our words. When we come time to being able to say we're investing in Manitobans, we're investing in

the conservation officers, we are doing it each and every day.

The hole that they left, we're not only filling that hole but we're helping to grow the conservation officers service in a way that was unprecedented on members opposite. They sit there and they talk about being able to say exactly what conservation officers do across Manitoba. They sit there and they throw shade. I want to thank—I'll take this opportunity to thank conservation officers for all the work that they do, including the work they've done at the border when members opposite do nothing but criticize, criticize, criticize.

Here we are being able to build, build, build up the conservation officers service.

### **New Personal-Care-Home Beds Needs-Based Location and Staffing**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Across our province, families are doing everything they can to support their aging loved ones. While we are encouraged by the government's recent announcement of new personal-care-home beds, it is essential that we take a close look at where these investments are being made.

Many rural and northern communities continue to experience long wait times for personal-care-home placements. These are Manitobans who have contributed to their communities and deserve to age close to home and near loved ones.

Can the Minister of Health provide a detailed regional breakdown of where these new personal-care-home beds will be located?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I really appreciate that question from the member for Tyndall Park because it allows me to highlight that the—one of the first places we're starting in rural Manitoba is in the home of the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko).

Brand new personal-care home, right there in his own backyard. And while the member for Lac du Bonnet, had seven and a half years to deliver on that promise that they made when they had government, he failed to do it. On this side of the House, we were happy to work with the community—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Asagwara:** —to deliver that personal-care home. I cannot wait to go back to Lac du Bonnet and not only do some more construction work—I put up the sign—



but to be alongside members of the community with the pompoms as we see the work really come together.

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

**MLA Lamoureux:** Honourable Speaker, we can't talk about expanding long-term care without talking about the people who make the care possible. From support workers to nurses and maintenance staff, our long-term-care system relies on a workforce that is currently stretched thin and under tremendous pressure.

We continue to hear from families who are grateful for the compassion that workers are providing; however, there is a strong concern about short-staffing and inconsistent quality of care. If we're going to invest in more beds, we need to ensure we are also investing in the workforce that supports them.

\* (14:40)

Can the minister share what concrete steps the government is taking to recruit, retain and support long-term-care workers?

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Asagwara:** Really appreciate that question from the member for Tyndall Park.

You know, while the member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook) and members on that side of the House were busy advising Heather Stefanson and telling her to cut health care, close emergency rooms, fire hundreds of nurses and close personal-care-home beds, our government is fixing the damage that they did to the health-care system. We have hired a net-new 1,509 health-care workers to front lines of our health-care system.

And I want to be very, very clear: we have a long way to go. We have much more work to do. I know things are still very challenging in health care. Seven and a half years of disrespecting health-care workers and trying to destroy the public health-care system takes years to repair. But our team is committed—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Asagwara:** —to doing that work, listening to the front lines and working with—

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

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

**MLA Lamoureux:** Honourable Speaker, public trust in health-care planning comes from transparency. People want to know that decisions are being made fairly and based on need. If this government is serious about equitable health care, then it must be transparent in how it's allocating resources and which regions remain underserved.

Will the minister commit to publicly releasing the data used to make these decisions as to where personal-care homes are being built and how staff are being attained?

**MLA Asagwara:** Honourable Speaker, because the former PC administration, under the advisement of the member for Roblin and members on that side of the House, cut health-care workers and fired them all across the province, cut and closed beds all across Manitoba, we are working tirelessly to make sure we're hiring front-line staff absolutely everywhere, trying to fill every single vacancy that is in existent in our health-care system.

We are listening to experts, working directly with clinicians to determine the best places to build more personal-care homes. We started with Lac du Bonnet. We're moving forward with Park Manor in Transcona, and we're making sure that rural Manitoba has more beds, not less, by reopening the hundreds of beds that were closed by members on that side of the House for years.

We're doing this work. It's what Manitobans deserve—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Asagwara:** —after seven and a half years of a failed and shameful and callous PC government.

### 2023 Election—PC Party Campaign Director Inquiry into Child-Care Contracts

**MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface):** Honourable Speaker, Manitobans expect that taxpayer dollars go to government services in the proper way. There are serious concerns that the former government, under Heather Stefanson, and MLA for Lac du Bonnet, directed millions of dollars in contracts to the PC Party 2023 campaign director that did not follow the proper process.

Can the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning tell this House what she has done to protect the interests of Manitobans and ensure contracting is done properly?

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** Honourable Speaker, Heather Stefanson and her Education minister, the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) awarded child-care project deals to Boom Done Next, an event company whose owner and director is the PC Party 2023 campaign director Marni Larkin. These contracts, they were awarded while she was running the PC's election campaign. All told, Mrs. Larkin received \$2.8 million in taxpayer dollars.

When we became aware of the irregularities of these contracts we cannot in good faith ignore the political overlap. That's why we have written to the Auditor General asking him to investigate and provide reassurance to Manitobans. I table that letter now.

I wonder, Honourable Speaker, will the member for Lac du Bonnet, the former minister of Education explain these irregularities and his role in awarding these contracts.

**Funding Supports for Agricultural Producers  
Concern for Business Risk Management Programs**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** Honourable Speaker—

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

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

**MLA Bereza:** Honourable Speaker, yesterday I asked the minister about a \$6-million cut to the Business Risk Management program. He was not able to answer. I table the Estimates of Expenditures for his benefit.

I'll ask the question again: Honourable Speaker, can the minister explain how they justify cutting \$6 million from programming designed to support farmers during this very difficult time?

**Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture):** Yes, I will educate the critic across from Portage la Prairie. By all means, I think that's part of the learning curve of being the critic of Agriculture.

The business risk program is—depends on factors as far as commodity prices go and as far as costs of production. That is part of the equation of the reduction, which is in partnership with the federal government.

And so that is why the \$6 million. It is actually an accounting figure—not, as the member was trying to criticize—the fact that we as a department are short-changing. Not like that government, when they were

in power, chose to put a 300 per cent tariff on our Crown land representatives.

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

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

**The Speaker:** Order. Order. Order.

**MLA Bereza:** Honourable Speaker, AgriStability is a good program; that's why it's been around for 20 years. A program that was cut by \$16.4 million—or is that just a clerical error—in this year's budget.

Honourable Speaker, can the minister explain how—how—a \$16.4-million cut to AgriInsurance will benefit producers in this day and age?

**Mr. Kostyshyn:** Definitely a subject of conversation. All of a sudden, the member opposite of agriculture takes an interest of agriculture, where they set precedents to the opportunity of a 300 per cent tariff—first ever in Canada, let me tell you before.

And I'm beginning to wonder whether they've got the same mentality of President Trump does based on two of their individuals that sit in the backbench, supporting tariffs and making things challenges for the people in the province of Manitoba, including the agriculture producers that bring value, bring food and a chance or prosperity to our province in the province of Manitoba.

And I want to assure the member opposite: You can be guaranteed this side of the House will—

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

**MLA Bereza:** Honourable Speaker, I want to let the minister know that there is more than cattle farmers when it comes to farmers out there.

AgriInvest is another tool that farmers can use to protect against declines in income—[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Bereza:** —manage risk and increase market income.

To summarize: Business risk management programs received a net cut, an increase that this government would have you believe. It's a cut. Honourable Speaker, Manitoba farmers have been left out in the cold and are worse off under this government.

What are you going to do to fix this, Honourable Speaker?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** You know, as we head out for constituency week, I just want to take this opportunity to thank our Ag Minister for the amazing

job that he's doing, standing up for farmers. Standing up for farmers, that's what you get when you got more farmers on the NDP side of the House than on the PC side of the House.

But on a more serious level, Canadians are about to go exercise that sacred responsibility of choosing our next federal government. And so I hope that everybody is safe this weekend as they go out next Monday to cast their ballots and choose our next prime minister. This is an amazing responsibility and a great opportunity, and I encourage everyone to vote.

With that in mind, I want to share some words from Pierre Poilievre. Quote: He's a very impressive person, Poilievre said of Manitoba's Premier. Quote: He's very knowledgeable and he has a very ambitious set of goals, and I share a lot of them, end quote. I just thought they'd like to know what Mr. Poilievre thinks before they all go out and vote for him, what he thinks about their Premier.

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

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

\* (14:50)

I just—the time for oral questions has expired.

But I just noticed, towards the end, a couple of members—one on each side—were addressing their questions and answers directly to each other, rather than through the Chair. I just have to remind everybody again to make sure questions and answers come through the Chair.

Orders of the day—

**Some Honourable Members:** Petitions.

**The Speaker:** Petitions. I don't want to do petitions, apparently.

## PETITIONS

### New Neepawa Health Centre

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

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

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

equipment, but specifically the addition of a CT scanner.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Allan Onyschak, Brian Pederson, Isobel Carruthers and many, many more Manitobans.

### Supports for Manitobans with Learning Disabilities

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Neurodivergent persons who struggle, struggled to learn literacy skills in public schools deserve to be taught these skills.

(2) Marin, an autistic adult with learning disabilities, face significant challenges in learning literacy skills in Manitoba's public schools. Marin's teachers were trained in and expected to teach balanced literacy.

(3) Successive provincial governments, via the ministry of Education, failed to provide proper literacy instruction that has been known for a century to learning-disabled students. Marin also repeatedly incorrectly—was incorrectly diagnosed until a private diagnosis in 2024. Many students have been lost to suicide due to similar trauma that Marin experienced from public education and public health in this province. Marin did not get an IEP, as she is intelligent and non-violent.

(4) Marin's rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms were violated. The Manitoba public school system denied her the right to proper diagnosis and literacy instruction due to the policies and curriculums of various ministers of Education. The provincial government and the appointed bodies have defied Supreme Court of Canada rulings.

(5) Marin's principle, embodied in the request below, was created by her and her family because of perpetual and systemic harm caused by the Province's public education and public health systems.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government, including associated service providers, to adopt Marin's principle and to comply with Supreme Court of Canada judgments, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and The Human Rights Code.

(2) To urge the provincial government to ensure provincial public classroom teachers are fully trained in knowledge and approaches explicitly created for students with learning disabilities, with no restriction to a single program or product.

(3) To urge the provincial government to commit to funding for private literacy services for all who are currently learning-disabled, with no penalty of discontinued instruction in public school, so they can become functionally literate and gain knowledge and skills like their peers.

(4) To urge the provincial government to commit funding for private counselling so each learning-disabled

adult—diagnosed/suspected—has their choice of therapist to help overcome education trauma due to adverse provincial curriculum and policies, for private literacy instruction, at their discretion, to become functionally literate, for access to evidence-aligned senior year classes that were missed so they can graduate with the education they have always had the right to receive, and

(5) To urge the provincial government to provide compensation for harm and loss of income for Manitobans with learning disabilities who remain functionally illiterate—level 2—after the age of 18.

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

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

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

\* (15:00)

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This is signed by Lisa Malcolm, Arthur Malcolm, Adam Malcolm and many, many more Manitobans.

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

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate and decisive action on bail reform to address serious deficits in enforcement by utilizing all

available provincial mechanisms to strengthen warrant enforcement, increasing bail supervision, and opposing release of offenders, thus ensuring that repeat violent offenders are held accountable and that public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

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

Honourable Speaker, this petition is signed by Alana Morton-Brownlee, Darius Murray, Marlene Murray and many, many more fine Manitobans.

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

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Carol Lee, Ada McBride, Gloria Hill and many, many other fine Manitobans.

\* (15:10)

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

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

(3) Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on the No. 1 Highway in the Southern

Health/Santé Sud Health Authority. Currently, there is only one MRI machine in the RHA.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This has been signed by Colleen Clemieux [phonetic], Luanne Chimney, Catherine Moffit and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

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

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

**The Deputy Speaker:** No further petitions?

### **Phoenix School**

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** I do wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

\* (15:20)

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this petition is signed by Shannon Bridgeford, Eric Kulszycki, Shuli Cohen and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Medical Assistance in Dying**

**Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling

with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

This petition has been signed by Mary Reimer, Ann Wolfe, Lisa Penner and many, many Manitobans.

### **Morden Waste Water Project**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba:

Between 2021 and 2011 and 2021, Morden's population grew by an impressive 27 per cent, outpacing the national average by 16 per cent, according to Statistics Canada.

(2) While growth is welcome and encouraged, Morden has long faced a critical need for infrastructure upgrades to meet current demands and support future development.

(3) Morden's waste watch-waste water system has operated beyond capacity for years, prompting the Province in 2019 to halt property subdivisions due to insufficient winter waste water storage.

(4) As of 2024, after exploring all options, the City announced in July that the estimated cost for critical infrastructure upgrades has risen from \$70 million to 88 to now 108 million.

(5) These revised estimates leave Morden with a significant funding shortfall of \$13 million to \$33 million.

(6) Efforts to address the gap, including plans to raise utility fees for residents and businesses, such increases that have been delayed since 2017 due to the lack of approved capital project; taxation is not enough.

(7) The lack of waste water capacity has severely impacted economic activity and growth in Morden and surrounding communities. Without much-needed waste water infrastructure investments, growth and economic development will be hindered in all of southern Manitoba.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take immediate action and recognize the critical need of this waste water project for economic growth and environmental sustainability by committing to advocating and working with the federal government to close the gap with additional funding for Morden's waste water treatment system.



(2) To urge the provincial government to ensure all levels of government and regulatory bodies will expedite necessary funding and approvals necessary to advance the Morden waste water project with no further delays and ensure no hindrance of growth and economic development for Morden and southern Manitoba.

This petition has been signed by Monica Friesen, Robert Friesen and Leane Funk and many, many other Manitobans.

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

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Slowly move off the mic so I don't hurt Hansard ears.

Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

\* (15:30)

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

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

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

closer to their home communities and provide greater access to diagnostic testing.

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Floyd Hannah, Cassie Hannah, Cole Hannah and many, many, many fine Manitobans.

#### **Green Valley School Expansion**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

This petition has been signed by Candice Narth, Kitana McDougal, Lori Wiens and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Provincial Road 352**

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) Provincial Road 352 is an 87.5 kilometres, which is 54.4 miles—route where it begins at Provincial Trunk Highway 5, PTH 5, near Birnie, Manitoba, and terminates at PTH 34 near Arizona, Manitoba, intersecting with the Trans-Canada Highway.

\* (15:40)

(2) The route is gravel for most of its length, with two paved sections: one from PTH 5 in Birnie; and the other from PTH 16 to Arden.

(3) PR 352 has had considerable amount of deterioration over the years with little to no regular road maintenance and less—and has seen ruts and damage to the gravel sections, those are which featured online at CAA's worst roads.

(4) The promotion of PR 352 weight restriction to an R-C-A-T classification of 140,000-lbs weight

restriction has caused further damage, as the route was only built to accommodate the original 80,000 lbs and has not seen upgrades to accommodate the increase. The 1.5 mile stretch on PR 352 from the community of Birnie is the main access of PTH 5 to the community.

(5) Residents in the area were advised these weight increases to PR 352 were due to commerce movement, although there is no commerce in Birnie.

(6) Within this stretch, there is a bridge that is damaged structurally and rests only five feet above the creek, causing it to sit in the water and deteriorate. With increased agricultural traffic, such as heavier trucks hauling grain and livestock, the bridge may not have the capacity to sustain further neglect.

(7) Community members have reached out and have spoken to civil servants. The issue must be resolved before it becomes a bigger problem, someone gets injured or an accident happens.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to meet RTAC road designation by providing upgrades and regular road maintenance to Provincial Road 352 in Manitoba, specifically the 1.5 mile stretch from Birnie to Provincial Trunk Highway 5, and ensure the road remains paved with asphalt and not reduced to gravel.

(2) To urge the provincial government to reduce load weights on PR 352 until the upgrades can be completed.

(3) To urge the provincial government to replace or repair the bridge located on the 1.5 mile stretch from Birnie to PTH 5 and to provide an integrity assessment.

This petition has been signed by many, many, many Manitobans.

### **Teaching Certification**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications

Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teacher certification.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors in early-middle years.

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

This petition has been signed by R.D. Omenchuk, *[phonetic]* Rick Rivers, Bill Rivers and many more Manitobans.

\* (15:50)

#### **Construct New Personal-Care Home–Stonewall**

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

Now, the background of this petition is as follows:

(1) The Government of Manitoba funded the design for a new personal-care home in Stonewall to address the critical need for additional care-home spaces in the community and surrounding areas.

(2) The community has committed to raise \$10 million in funding for this project, demonstrating strong local support and readiness to proceed with construction.

(3) Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority is experiencing a critical shortage of personal-care-home beds.

(4) Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority has the lowest number of personal-care-home beds per capita, with a shortfall of approximately 400 beds.

(5) Despite these approvals, the government has made no mention of the construction of the Stonewall personal-care home, leaving many seniors and their families without access to adequate personal-care services in the region.

(6) The delay in commencing construction exacerbates existing challenges in providing timely and appropriate care for aging residents, forcing some to seek services far from their families and their communities.

(7) Investing in the timely construction of this personal-care home will provide essential services to a growing senior population, support for the local economy and demonstrate the government's commitment to the well-being of Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately restore funding and commence construction on the personal-care home in Stonewall, ensuring that this essential project proceeds without further delay.

This petition has been signed by Walter Motuz, Therese Dandeneau and Cheri Kozokowsky and many, many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) Kellie Verwey, a beloved young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, was tragically killed in a

car crash caused by a repeat violent offender with long criminal history.

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

This has been signed by Jason Morton, Dwight Barre and Chance Horn, and many, many other Manitobans.

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

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

\* (16:00)

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and placement of an MRI machine in the

Portage regional health facility in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

This is signed by Monique Lubkiwski, Cindy Curry, Lori Carpenter and many, many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We've been playing it fast and loose with the manys so far today. I'll just remind members you get two manys at the end of your petition.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

*The Speaker in the Chair*

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition is signed by Tyson Anderson, Robert Rintail, Connor Nichol and many, many more Manitobans.

\* (16:10)

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

**Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

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

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

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

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

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

(5) The provincial government has the ability and the responsibility to advocate for and implement measures that protect its citizens by ensuring that

repeat violent offenders are not released into our communities without proper safeguards.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

Honourable Speaker, this petition has been signed by Deb McLeod, Brenda Solomon, Yanara Peters, and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

**The Speaker:** No further petitions?

Grievances?

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

*(Continued)*

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

### House Business

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** I would like to announce the Standing Committee on Justice will meet, if necessary, on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 9 a.m. to consider the following: Bill 9, the liquor and gaming cannabis control amendment act (2); Bill 13, The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2025; Bill 32, The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (Measures to Address Unlawful Activities); Bill 35, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act; Bill 36, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Bill 43, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act.

And, Honourable Speaker, can you please call the government resolution for the Special Committee on Local Journalism.

**The Speaker:** It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Justice will meet, if necessary, on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 9 a.m. to consider the following: Bill 9, The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act (2); Bill 13, The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2025; Bill 32, The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (Measures to Address Unlawful Activities); Bill 35, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act; Bill 36, The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Bill 43, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act.

## DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT MOTION

### Special Committee on Local Journalism

**The Speaker:** And we will now go to debate on the government motion, the special committee on local journalism, standing in the name of the honourable member for Steinbach, who has 27 minutes remaining.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** Disappointed I only have 27 minutes left. I'll try to contain my marks—remarks in that time, because it is interesting when the government calls for a special committee, and I don't remember exactly where my remarks left off when I had the opportunity to speak because I know it was after the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt), who gave a really interesting recollection of his time in local journalism.

And, you know, we served together as colleagues; many of us do on both sides of the House, and sometimes you don't get the opportunity to fully hear from your colleagues about their history and how they came to this place and how they achieved their position in elected life.

And so it was interesting to hear from the member for Riding Mountain about some of the changes that had happened in local journalism. And, of course, we know that just seeing, unfortunately, many local newspapers either completely disappear or move to an entirely online format.

So we know that there's change because we see it as consumers of newspapers, but I was—it was really fascinating to hear from somebody who's in, you know, the business of producing local journalism, about how much it's changed over the years, both in terms of how people consume the news, but also how advertisers view local newspapers.

But specifically to the issue of a special committee, it's interesting when you look at our system of committees here in the Legislature, or at

least it's interesting to me. I know some will share my interest in how committee systems work in the Legislature and in Parliament; others will not be quite as interested. But I do think it is worth talking a little bit about how our system works so members will know; though, everybody's an experienced member here now. We're a distance away from the last election.

Everybody's seen it in action, and we'll see it again tonight where members of the community will come to the Legislature to present on bills or they'll go online and do that. That's been a change since the pandemic and probably a welcome change, that members of the public have that opportunity. And they'll speak to what appears to be an all-party committee, in the sense that you have members from both sides of the House who will be listening to those presentations and hearing the viewpoint of Manitobans on legislation, which is very, very important and it's a good thing—a good process that we have, one of the unique processes in Canada.

But it's not a true all-party committee in the sense that when you look at what happens in—for example, in Ottawa, in Parliament, when the House is in prorogue, their committee system is different, where they are mandated, or have the opportunity, to delve into research and to bring recommendations back in an all-party way, in a manner that doesn't really exist here in Manitoba.

Now this resolution—this motion by the government speaks somewhat to try to achieve that, but it raises the question of why we don't have that on a more permanent basis. And I would say for the House, for those who would remember it, that there was—when the rules were changed in 2016, we sort of, you know, remember that as being the large system of rule changes that involved a sessional calendar, which causes us to start at a certain time and end at a certain time. It causes bills to move by virtue of the number of days that they appear before the House. We now have things called specified bills. We have designated bills.

But that negotiation, which took place over about a year with members of both the independent Liberals and the then-NDP members—I believe it involved Dave Chomiak and Steve Ashton and Jon Gerrard, at the time, and myself and Cliff Cullen—those negotiations—I mean with the great assistance of the Clerk's office, I would say, Honourable Speaker—those negotiations concluded basically on the House

rules, and they largely remain intact with the rules that we have today.

There are still some variations that have happened, but members might not know, but we didn't have a question period before bills were—or after bills were introduced. That didn't exist. It allows for more engagement.

\* (16:20)

But one of the things we didn't get around to doing was to reform committees and to look at how committees are structured and how they operate here in the Legislature. And it was actually a commitment of all three parties at the time—because we were going into the 2016 election, so we were sort of up against the clock—but it was a commitment of all three parties at the time to look at how committees actually run in Manitoba.

And now, of course, we've gotten to the other side of the election and other things happen and sort of the impetus of—and the momentum of those changes fell away. But I would encourage this House to look at how we do committees. Now I don't mean so much about the kind of committee we're going to see tonight where—and there have been changes to that of course, in terms of time frames that the public and the MLAs can engage in. And, of course, the virtual ability that I mentioned.

So there have been some changes to committees. But what we didn't get around to doing was looking at the parliamentary system in Ottawa and having committees that were more invested and mandated to look at issues, such as what's mentioned in the resolution here or in the government motion, Honourable Speaker, to say okay, like, you know, we can have—we can set aside six months; maybe we can travel around a bit. It's not unusual to have a parliamentary committee in Ottawa travel the country—different environment of course. You might only, go to four, five communities in Manitoba.

But to hear from the public in those locations outside of the Legislature and then to come together and bring forward your research table, your research through you, Honourable Speaker, and have that then debated in the House.

I think that in Ottawa, they find that that's a valuable experience because it allows not only for members to feel more invested in their job—you don't have to be a Cabinet minister to be making some of those recommendations, then, so it engages members. But also, you hear a lot from the public. It engages the

public and then members come forward in a non-partisan way—these are really run in a non-partisan way—and they bring forward those recommendations to the House.

So I would say and this motion speaks to, I think, the value of that. You wouldn't have to have a government motion that comes forward and says, we should have an all-party committee look at something, if you actually had standing rules that allowed that to happen on a regular basis. And it became, sort of, somewhat routine where matters were referred to these committees and then they would go about that sort of business.

I think it would be healthy for democracy in the House, healthy for members—to have members of the government who aren't in Cabinet who I think would enjoy that sort of engagement. I think the opposition would enjoy it; independent members should be a part of that. And then they'd have that opportunity to sort of contribute to the House in a different way than if you're on Executive Council or you hold one of the leadership roles in the House.

So I leave that as a point of historical interest to me, even if it has no historical interest to anybody else. But I do think it should be something that should be explored and looked at by members.

On this particular issue of the motion to look for an all-party committee, I mean, it's interesting that the government would choose the state of local media to have an all-party committee which again is, unfortunately, an unusual thing in Manitoba. So because it's unusual in Manitoba, when you actually do form a committee, it should be something quite extraordinary, one would think, Honourable Speaker, because it happens so rarely.

I recall back to Gary Doer forming an all-party committee. I believe it—in my mind it was about auto theft, in particular, but it might have been more general about youth crime. And he formed a committee in—not long after he was elected, so it would've been the early 2000s and it was an all-party committee, and they went to Ottawa and they lobbied for, I think, tougher laws on youth crime in particular.

And that one, at the time, and it might be relevant again today, but that one, at the time, seemed particularly germane because there was a real concern about auto theft in particular but youth crime in general.

And at that time, under Gary Doer's direction, those members of that all-party committee came together and they went to Ottawa and I don't—I think

they reported back to the House in terms of their activities in Ottawa but they really went and it was a Manitoba effort, a collective effort to say to Ottawa at the time—it would've been I think the Chrétien or even Martin government in power—that we needed to reform how youth were dealt with in the criminal justice system.

And it made a lot of sense because it's something that you could have a unified voice and it was a real pertinent issue at the time for Manitobans.

Looking beyond that, and Honourable Speaker, you might not recall. I don't think you were in the House—you wouldn't have been in the House at the time—but going back to the early 2000s, there was an all-party committee on smoking in public places. Now, that seems—you know, we're in a time now where it seems almost amazing that you had to have a committee to discuss smoking in public places. But I'm sure you and others of us who are of a certain generation remember when that was actually somewhat controversial, and it wasn't necessarily an easy decision for a government to make.

So at that time, this Assembly formed an all-party committee. I remember Denis Rocan was on it as one individual, and it's someone that I think Gary Doer often referred to as being sort of the lead on that particular issue. I think—and he mostly said that in rural Manitoba when he thought he was going to get some political flak; in Winnipeg, he sort of took credit for it. But there was—the consummate politician that Mr. Doer was.

But there was an all-party committee then on smoking in public places. And that also made sense because it was one—it was an emerging issue; I think there maybe was debate about the application of the law, the timing of the law, where and when it would take place. Now, of course, it seems absolutely, you know, almost amazing that they had to have an all-party committee on that in Manitoba, but they did. And they, I believe, toured around Manitoba, and they got input from the public on what people felt about smoking in public places.

Now, of course, we have laws that have been in existence for a long time and I think are well received and well regarded, not just by, you know, those who are advocating for the elimination of cancer, which smoking was a prevalent part of for certain kinds of cancers, but just generally in society it's well supported.



So that was an example of a all-party committee in the Manitoba Legislature that I think made a lot of sense, given the nature of the issue and given the time.

I recall also, Honourable Speaker, after the horrific terrorist attacks of 9/11, perpetrated on New York City and on Washington and the one plane that went down in a field in Pennsylvania, I believe, that there was an all-party committee formed on security. Now, I don't recall—that committee might still exist in some form in the Legislature, but at the time there wasn't. And so coming out of the terrorist attacks and, of course, all members who were here but regardless of what you were doing in life at the time, you'll recall the sensitivity and the high alertness to security, regardless of where you were.

And the feeling that this was sort of a—almost a new normal and that these sorts of attacks could be happening at any time and any place. And Manitoba, even though some might wonder why we felt vulnerability at the time, there really was vulnerability felt by members and others in society, and society was demanding that, you know, what is being done? And whatever is being done should be done in a non-partisan, all-party way.

So that security committee was formed; I know the Leader of the Opposition was a part of it; I believe independent members were part of it. And they got regular briefings on security issues that existed here in Manitoba.

Now, again, Honourable Speaker, that might exist, it might continue to exist, either on paper or in reality in true form here in the Assembly, but, regardless, it came together as an all-party committee in response to something so significant that the public was demanding that there be a non-partisan approach.

So then you look at this particular issue, and you wonder, well, does it rise to that level? And one of the distinctions would be, I would say, Honourable Speaker, is that none of those issues, whether it was security or the lobbying on youth crime or smoking in public places, none of them dealt with expenditures of the government per se. They were important issues, to be sure, but they weren't regarding direct expenditures of the government. They were regarding broad-based policy—smoking in public places, security in the province of Manitoba and youth criminal justice—broad-based policies and some of which weren't even directly in the purview of the power of the provincial government, important issues but not in the purview of the provincial government.

And so now we have the Assembly debating a potential all-party committee on a direct, essentially, line expenditure. The government is asking whether or not there should be funds appropriated for supporting local media. And whether you think that's a good idea or a bad idea, it is interesting that the government is now sort of taking a line item in the budget and saying to the opposition and the independents, well, we want your input onto this.

\* (16:30)

Now we don't have an all-party committee on highways or roads, and the expenditure on highways and roads. We certainly have Estimates, and we have those sort of things. But we don't have all-party committees coming together to discuss a particular line item expenditure in that way; although I'm sure many colleagues would be quite happy, I think, to participate in an all-party committee to talk about why they need more funding and where funding should go if they had actual authority in terms of road expenditure.

But that would be unusual, because normally you wouldn't take the expenditure power out of a government department or out of Treasury Board and try to allocate that to an all-party committee. That certainly isn't the history here in Manitoba.

We don't have to look even that far back, so I worry sometimes, Honourable Speaker, that you or others might consider me a—something of a fossil or a relic of the Legislature when I talk about what's—or even my own colleagues—when I talk about what's happening, what was happening in early 2000s with Gary Doer. But I remember the now-Premier, the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), recommending in opposition that there be an all-party committee on the price of food, on grocery prices, he recommended when he was in opposition.

Now that wasn't ultimately accepted because, again, it's an odd sort of thing to sort of say, okay, we're going to come together and try to talk about something where we're not even sure where the influence would be. So on the previous examples, when it came to criminal justice reform, you could—you would know where to go to influence that change. You would go to the federal government, to the federal Minister of Justice, and you would try to influence that change.

On the issue of smoking in public places in Manitoba, with that all-party task force, it was obvious that the government had the legislative authority—it

wasn't a spending authority, but it had the legislative authority to actually make rules around that.

When it came to security, a little bit more nebulous, depending what that security threat might actually be at any given time, but certainly through the Department of Justice or maybe even through the Legislative Assembly, there was—[interjection]

I now have colleagues who have been here even longer than me, giving me advice on—I mean, it's hard to believe that such a colleague would exist, but I do appreciate their advice. And I'll get back to that.

But I wanted to talk about the issue of how these are different sort of issues than what were being talked about today. But the Leader of the Opposition, or the Premier (Mr. Kinew) who, in his role as Leader of the Opposition, when he recommended a committee on having food prices examined, you know, you wondered what was going to sort of come of that. Like, where would the actual pressure be to make a change or to make a difference.

Now, of course in government, when the Premier assumed that important office, he made the promise that he would crack down on grocery stores if they didn't lower their prices as a result of fuel taxes having a temporary halt. He made that promise. He didn't talk about an all-party committee, as he did in opposition. He said I'm going to crack down on Safeway, Sobeys, Superstore, whomever, if the prices don't go down.

Now, how that would have been measured, nobody knows, because they didn't actually do anything, and prices didn't go down. We've continued to see skyrocketing inflation and consumers paying more and more in the grocery store, and there was no talk of an all-party committee at that time, even though he'd promised it when he was in the opposition. And he didn't fulfill the promise that he made when he was the Premier.

So then that leads you to sort of question what is the importance, you know, of this, and what would the outcome of it be? Now, I was reminded by one of my colleagues who, again, who has been here even longer than I've been, that there was my friend from Elmwood, I'm told it was—and I do consider him actually to be a friend and a learned colleague, even though we've not always agreed on much in this House. You can agree—you can disagree without being disagreeable, I think, and we do between the two of us.

But he talks about, and I've heard him mention, the Meech Lake Accord, an all-party committee, and of course—I mean, we remember the significance and

the role that Manitoba played, the very significant role that Manitoba played, when it came to Meech Lake and it not going forward.

But there was an all-party committee to talk about that, because the Meech Lake Accord, because it was a constitutional amendment, had to be approved in every Assembly in Canada. And there was a timeline for it, there was significant amount of pressure, so the premier at the time, Gary Filmon, ensured—and maybe this is where Gary Doer sort of came up with these notions of all-party committees—but ensured that all parties were sort of together to discuss it and to talk about it.

But you can see why that would be particularly important. I mean, anybody who remembers the great discussions on constitutional reform—and Meech Lake being only one of them; Charlottetown Accord, and others—will remember how significant that truly was and how you'd want to have an all-party agreement, and you'd also probably need that to get it passed in the House.

A very different sort of discussion than this government motion brings forward. Not that community newspapers aren't important. I would say, as a long-time author in a community newspaper, many of us are given the opportunity to write articles in our local newspapers. I believe that happens in the Winnipeg community newspapers as well, where you can author, sort of, your view from the Legislature or report from the Legislature, whatever people call them.

I've been writing them for 23 years on a weekly basis and I would say I helped other MLAs before that write them as well. So probably close to 30 years I've been involved in writing some of those updates, and I see the value of them in those community newspapers, and I see the value of community newspapers because they speak directly to those who are within a relatively confined area who are concerned and interested in not—you know, they might be interested in what's happening in other parts of the world, but they're often really interested in what's happening two blocks over. And community newspapers do that. They talk about what's happening two blocks over and what community events are happening.

And they often are the most positive news you get, and I sometimes remark about Golden West news who runs a number of different radio stations across western Canada, and the ripple effect that has because they primarily only produce positive news. They talk about the positive things that are happening in communities. Not that they ignore world events, but they

really are focused on, you know, who's won an award in a community; who's doing charitable work; who is doing certain things in a community, and that's a ripple effect.

I mean, can you imagine the effect on society if everybody just read good news? Now, that's a little Pollyannic [*phonetic*], and I know we're not going to get there, but there is an importance of, I think, a mental health importance of telling people the good things that are happening, because we're so inundated by the bad things that are happening that we forget that there are many, many good people doing many, many good things in society. And local news really drives that content.

And so, yes, I think all of us are concerned when we see local newspapers that are not doing well, not functioning, closing down altogether because there's a loss of that sort of community sense, but also a loss of that positive news.

But it goes back to the mechanism, the mechanism of an all-party committee. And when you look at the history, how all-party committees have been used rarely in this Assembly and the kinds of things they've been used for: constitutional change, a major change in how public health is administered through smoking in public places, youth criminal justice, security after 9/11. They're very, very big and broad sort of issues.

They're not line item budget expenditures. They're not questioning, should government spend money in a certain way. I suspect my colleagues and my friend from Midland might be chief among them and might be in the front of the line that would say if government wants advice in terms of how to spend money, I think that she would have lots of advice to the government on how to spend money.

So I'm not sure why they've decided to pick this one particular item to try to decide to form an all-party committee on how money should be spent or invested. There are a lot of different ways to—now, I would say because I can't believe how fast time has gone by—I might ask for a leave for more time—but the issue that I really wanted to get to 24 minutes ago when I started this is why is it that the government wouldn't have formed an all-party committee, for example, on tariffs?

Now I know that the government did bring forward a—sort of an economic group, or whatever, to talk about tariffs, and I'm not criticizing that. I actually think that that's good. But if there ever was an opportunity to show non-partisan, all-party co-operation, it might have been around what some would describe as

one of the most consequential threats that our economy and our country have faced, at least in our generation.

Why wouldn't the government have said, okay, we have members on all sides of the House who have deep experience. I actually look at my friend from Elmwood, but on all parties, and I look at my friend from Springfield-Ritchot. I have other friends who have lots of experience as well, who are waving at me, but who have, you know, deep history and experience in cross-border relations, who have connections in other parts of North America, who've served on committees, like the Canada-US relations committee, to name just one example, who've gone on trade missions to Washington dating back two or three decades ago.

\* (16:40)

Why wouldn't they say, we should try to tap into that experience so—which is a value-based proposition—but also symbolically show that we are going to do this in a non-partisan way? That we're going to reach across the aisles? Instead what the Premier (Mr. Kinew) has done is he's tried to take that issue, a very serious issue, and use it as a political wedge, use it as a political weapon.

So he's actually done the opposite. In taking—instead of taking something, I would say to you, Honourable Speaker—and I'm really distressed about the lack of time that I have now—but I would say to you that if you lined up all of those different times or places where we've used all-party committees: Meech Lake Accord constitutional crisis; a public health issue on public smoking and smoking in public places; youth criminal justice and an epidemic of crime; security after 9/11.

If you looked at it as a puzzle and you are lining them up, and you wanted to say: what's the most logical thing to come after that? And you said to the public, like, these are the different things that we've had all-party committees on: security, crime, constitutional crisis, public health. The next one should either be funding public—or funding newspapers, or the tariff threat posed by Donald Trump and the US administration.

I suspect that 98 per cent of the public would say: we support community newspapers; we love our community newspapers; it's a very, very sort of important part of our community. But given the history of all-party committees in the province of Manitoba, the logical thing, based on those other examples that premiers from Gary Filmon to Gary Doer had put into place, the logical thing would say: let's do something on tariffs. But that's not what the Premier did.

So there's a logical disconnect about why it is that they've chose to try to put this as an all-party committee and other issues that have monumental, that—and let me tell you those tariffs are going to affect community newspapers, too, because if we have an economic issue, it affects, you know, advertising in community newspapers as well.

So I would say to him, this isn't a hard no, but I would say to the Premier (Mr. Kinew), why doesn't he look at an issue like tariffs and the economic crisis faced by the US and come to the opposition, come to the independent members and say, let's talk about that, as a potential way for an all-party committee. And then we can look at reforming committees generally in this House and allow for members to be engaged in special issues and research, as was promised in 2016 and never fulfilled.

Thank you for this short opportunity that I've had, Honourable Speaker.

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot):** Well, today is an interesting day to be debating this particular motion. I thought, for sure, someone from the government benches might get up and want to speak to their own motion. They don't seem to be that concerned or that excited about speaking on the future of journalism in Manitoba.

And the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) certainly took us down history lane and mentioned a whole bunch of committees that existed in history, and lucky for him, he had his research assistant present in the Chamber, the member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway), who pointed out a few of the committees that he had forgotten.

And again, I would like to touch on a few of them before even I was here, but the member for Elmwood was here, and that was the Meech Lake Accord committee. And for those of us who were engaged in politics, that was a very trying, a very divisive time for our country; it was very divisive time for our province.

In fact, if you want to know how that worked, so you had then-premier Gary Filmon with then-leader of the opposition Gary Doer in favour, and you had Sharon Carstairs, who I think at that point in time was the—

**An Honourable Member:** Against.

**Mr. Schuler:** —was against, but she was the leader of the third party; I don't think she was leader of the opposition anymore—or she might have been leader of

the opposition and Gary Doer was leader of the third party.

Anyway, she was opposed against her federal leader, Jean Chrétien, who was for the Meech Lake Accord. Now it didn't seem to have hurt her much. They ended up pointing her a senator, anyway, after she nosedived in one of the subsequent elections. But she was opposed, although her federal leader was a big proponent of the Meech Lake Accord, and it showed how there was a lot of—*[interjection]*

Members from the opposition—from the NDP are heckling from their seats. If they want, we could give leave. I would defer and let them put 10 minutes on the record if they would like.

We would love to hear them speak to their own resolution, it's just that they don't seem to have anything to say. Or probably more importantly, the member for St. Johns (MLA Fontaine) has muzzled all of them; none of them are allowed to speak. And they are all sitting there with their seatbelts on and the seatbelt light on above their head and they're—the only thing they are seemingly allowed to do is to heckle. But they are not allowed to get up and speak.

And, in fact, we're not actually speaking to the government resolution; we are speaking to the opposition amendment to the government resolution. So to be very clear, they could actually get up and speak to the amendment to the government motion if they wanted to. But I know the member for St. Johns will not allow them to get up, and I see the member for River Heights (MLA Moroz), he does not want to be at cross-purposes with the member for St. Johns. There's seems to be divisions even here today and we don't even have the committee.

I, however, would like to get back to that we've had committees in the past. The Meech Lake Accord, because it was such a big issue, because it dealt with constitutional amendments, huge, huge consequences. And I remember being a youth activist and being involved with the entire Meech Lake Accord and following the committee. And there was discussion that there would be a price to pay for the Meech Lake Accord not passing. And it was a historical, monumental conversation.

It was a very important committee for this Legislature because it was dealing with something that was so big and so intricate and so involved, because changing the constitution, there's all kinds of formulas on how many provinces you need with how much population. So it was a very, very important issue.

There was a second committee that took place before my time here. And the member for Elmwood has been sitting here saying there was another one, and I didn't want to tell him because he was going to pre-empt me. I actually think he was going to jump up and give a speech on this, because the other committee was the committee on school board boundaries. It was called the Bill Norrie report.

And now the member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway) remembers, it was the Bill Norrie report. And it was quite a big report. It dealt with school board boundaries. It was the beginning of that. Actually, if you go back and you look at that report that was produced by that committee, it actually was a good report that was produced. Now, it was less of a parliamentary committee; it was more of a committee of the Legislature that went out. I don't know if elected officials were on the Norrie commission.

I don't know if the member for Elmwood can remember that; it's before my time here. But it was very important. And it actually produced a very interesting document. And I was on a school board. I was chair of the River East School Division at that time, which is now River East-Transcona, and actually it came at the latter part of the Filmon government and then the Filmon government wasn't returned and the Doer government, the minister of Education was the—was Drew Caldwell from Brandon East.

And he actually referred to that committee report. And they did bits and pieces of it, and instead of accepting the entire report, they did parts of it and it ended up not being a positive experience for the Doer government, and they probably would have been better off taking the whole report that had—that the Norrie commission had produced, rather than parts of it. And I think after that, the Doer government soured on any more education reforms until the next government. And it seems to be that dealing with school board boundaries tends not to be a positive thing in Manitoba.

The next one, and there was another one in there, and it was called the Peter George Dyck—there was another MLA, and it was also a parliamentary committee with parliamentarians and I don't remember what the topic was. And they were travelling around, and again, that was before my time here as well.

\* (16:50)

And then we got to the smoking committee, and that was—on that, I know from our side was at the

former—it was smoking in public places, and on our side was—it was controversial, and it was the former Speaker of ours, Denis Rocan. He was our representative on that committee, and I don't remember who all the other members were. It has been a few years.

And so, you know, there's always a second career for Speakers. I mean, they can always get on a legislative committee, and it was a good committee. And it dealt with a very controversial, very topical. And I often go to I Love to Read Months and we talk about what we do as legislators, and I point out there was a time when people could actually go into a grocery store, be smoking, leaning over the meat counter with their cigarette or—on airplanes, you would sit on an airplane and if you were the last seat of the non-smoking section, and the smoking section was behind you, they were smoking and blowing the smoke, and it was gratuitous because, like, the whole airplane was basically a smoking section, although they had not-smoking, non-smoking sections.

And bars—and there was a woman who came forward to that committee, and I remember her. One of the ministers across the way, she clearly wants to speak, and I'd love for her—she probably would have good information to put on the record. But the woman came forward, and she had been a waitress in a bar. And she ended up with lung cancer, and she said, it's not just the individuals who are smoking who put themselves; it's second-hand smoke is so bad for the employees and the workers and the individuals. And that is what came up at one of these legislative committees. It was a good committee, it was a tough, tough topic to take on.

I would suggest in the few moments that I have available that the committee that's being proposed here, in the 25 years that I have been a representative in this Chamber and the four as a school trustee, I don't ever remember an email, or somebody coming up to me and saying, you know, you got to do a committee on the future of journalism in Manitoba. Never.

And maybe there are some here. I doubt that this is really the top of mind of Manitobans. I would suggest that, probably, if you went out and you said, hey, listen, you know, we would like to have a committee, we're just deciding between should it be on Donald Trump and his tariffs, or journalism. Which one do you think we should do a committee on?

I have—my sense—my Spidey sense would say that it would probably be on tariffs. In fact, we even called

on this NDP government to put an all-party committee together, and deal with the tariffs and the threats to Manitoba and Manitoba's economy. And not just from the Americans and Donald Trump, but also the Chinese who are going after our agriculture. Very serious, and the long-term consequences and the long-term fallout will be seismic.

So to have picked a topic like this, where we're going to talk about journalism—we all have newspapers. We all support our newspapers. The newspapers are producing. Now, they are in a decline, and I put down a few things that have seemed to have come up since newspapers started their decline. There's this thing called Facebook, X or Twitter, Instagram. The Premier (Mr. Kinew), I think, has become one of the major shareholders of TikTok because he seems to—that seems to be his feature.

And I would suggest that we are just seeing a natural progression, and probably what we could've done with this topic is put it on—and the government actually doesn't use this. It's called Engage Manitoba, and it was probably one of the best things that could've come out on communicating with the public, and it came out of COVID.

We went and we created the Engage Manitoba and it was a very good process to get feedback from the public. And I would suggest that this topic could've gone on to Engage Manitoba, and we could've gotten feedback from Manitobans on where they are on journalism.

But to suggest somehow we're going to put a parliamentary committee together to go around talking about a topic that actually isn't top of mind. In fact, what's interesting, the latest polls coming out federally is that Canadians are focusing less on the tariffs and Trump and they're going back to the issues of affordability and the costs of living and inflation, those kinds of things.

I mean, there are really big issues that are facing Canadians and Manitobans, and I don't think this would be top of mind. In fact, if we were to go out on Engage Manitoba and say, you know, list the top 10 things that you would like a legislative committee on, I have this sense that this particular topic would not be one of them.

The other thing is, is we also have a federal government that did sort of deal with the journalism and what's happening there. And I would say it has not gone well for Canadians. It's not gone well for the

journalistic independence. And, basically, it's the Liberal Party of Canada now pays to the tune of over \$850 million, pays media for good news stories. And that would be a concern of mine that when we have government getting involved in journalism, it tends not to be a good outcome.

And I could take us down a historical path and have a conversation of where governments throughout history, whether it was Pravda in the Soviet Union, whether it was—I—the name escapes you now—Mao Tse-tung's newspaper in China, and all the dictators since then who have had control over media.

I don't think we should—as the legislators, as government—be involved in journalism and those issues. We—the federal subsidy, I think, is an affront. I think we should be looking at issues that are of concern to Canadians and Manitobans. I would be concerned about where the government wants to go with this particular topic. They—the motion is very vague. It is very nebulous. It doesn't actually talk about serious outcomes, what expectations would be.

I would suggest to the—to this NDP government that they pull this resolution and put forward things that are epic in their impact that they will have on society, on Manitoba. The tariffs both out of the United States and out of China have such dire consequences for Manitoba and for our economy. That would be my suggestion where we should be looking.

We should be looking—for instance, the Chinese tariffs—and I would suggest to China, they have so forgotten their history of starvation that now they're back to disrespecting their own food. And you know what? Just like we have, you know, the bad days and then we have good days, so too bad days can follow the good days. And I would suggest to China that they not disrespect the food. The quality of product that's produced out of here, out of Manitoba, is second to none, and it is magnificent quality, and they should not be disrespecting Manitoba agriculture or our food.

And we should probably be having a parliamentary or legislative committee dealing with the tariffs, with the attacks from the United States and China on our economy because where agriculture goes, there goes Manitoba. So much of our economy has depended on agriculture, on production, on trade and secondary and third level jobs. We need a strong agriculture, and we should be talking about that, not just our manufacturing.

And we had the colleague from Selkirk talk about all the steel factories that are at threat from what's going on with tariffs. I would suggest that the member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte) should be one of the members on that committee dealing with tariffs because he could come forward and talk about the kinds of damage that's going to be done to Gerdau.

And I had a tour of Gerdau in Selkirk, an amazing factory. And the damage that could happen to them because of these tariffs. That's what we would need in

a committee. Not this particular one. This is actually—they're not reading the room. I would say the government's tone deaf on this particular issue.

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter is next before the House, the honourable member will have 13 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 o'clock, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday, May 5.

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Thursday, April 24, 2025

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