



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 5, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

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

Please be seated.

Point of Order

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Honourable Speaker, on a point of order.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Riding Mountain, on a point of order.

Mr. Nesbitt: My choice of words for a recent question to the honourable member—Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) in this House was inappropriate.

This morning, I apologized in person to the honourable minister, and this afternoon, I publicly apologize to the minister and all honourable members of this House for any unintended consequences of the way my questions were worded.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: I would just point out that the member doesn't have a point of order, but we certainly, I'm sure, all appreciate the member's apology.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 216—The Health System Governance and Accountability Amendment Act (Plebiscite Before Permanent Emergency Room Closure)

The Speaker: The honourable member for—been away for a week—the honourable member for Radisson.

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): I move, seconded by the MLA for Tuxedo, that Bill 216, The Health System Governance and Accountability Amendment Act (Plebiscite Before Permanent Emergency Room Closure); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la gouvernance et l'obligation redditionnelle au sein du système de santé (plébiscites sur la fermeture permanente de salles d'urgence), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

MLA Dela Cruz: Honourable Speaker, I rise today to introduce Bill 216, the health system governance and accountability act, plebiscite before permanent emergency room closure, which will require a plebiscite take place prior to the permanent closure of an emergency room.

Manitobans deserve to have a say when it comes to whether or not emergency rooms close permanently. Honourable Speaker, after the previous government closed emergency rooms across the province without listening to the needs of Manitobans, this bill will ensure that they receive their rightful opportunity to have their voices heard.

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

Committee reports—oh, the honourable member for Brandon West.

Bill 232—The Victims of Impaired Drivers Commemoration Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I move, seconded by the MLA for Portage la Prairie, that Bill 232, The Victims of Impaired Drivers Commemoration Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Balcaen: I'm pleased to rise today and introduce Bill 232, The Victims of Impaired Drivers Commemoration Day Act, which will occur May 1 of each year.

This bill commemorates the lives of the victims lost to the dangerous act that is impaired driving. This bill is in remembrance of Jordyn Reimer and all of those who have lost a life to impaired driving and to all the victims and their families.

I look forward to the unanimous support of this legislation.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Justice Second Report

Mr. Logan Oxenham (Chairperson): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the second report of the Standing Committee on Justice.

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Your Standing Committee on Justice—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on the following occasions in the Legislative Building:

- April 24, 2025 (2nd Session – 43rd Legislature)
- April 30, 2025 (2nd Session – 43rd Legislature)

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act (2)/Loi n° 2 modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools, des jeux et du cannabis*
- **Bill (No. 13)** – *The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2025/Loi corrective de 2025*
- **Bill (No. 32)** – *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (Measures to Address Unlawful Activities)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation (mesures concernant les activités illégales)*
- **Bill (No. 35)** – *The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba*

- **Bill (No. 36)** – *The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules et le Code de la route*
- **Bill (No. 43)** – *The Human Rights Code Amendment Act/Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne*

Committee Membership

Committee Membership for the April 24, 2025 meeting:

- Mr. BALCAEN
- Mr. BLASHKO
- Mr. KING
- Mr. OXENHAM
- MLA REDHEAD
- Hon. Mr. WIEBE

Your Committee elected Mr. OXENHAM as the Chairperson.

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

Committee Membership for the April 30, 2025 meeting:

- Mr. BALCAEN
- MLA CORBETT
- MLA CROSS
- MLA DELA CRUZ
- Mr. KING
- Hon. Mr. WIEBE

Your Committee elected MLA DELA CRUZ as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected MLA CORBETT as the Vice-Chairperson.

Resignations received during Committee proceedings for the April 30, 2025 meeting:

- MLA DELA CRUZ as Chairperson
 - Your Committee elected Mr. OXENHAM as the new Chairperson.
- MLA CORBETT as Vice-Chairperson
 - Your Committee elected MLA LOISELLE as the new Vice-Chairperson.

Substitutions received during Committee proceedings for the April 30, 2025 meeting:

- Mr. GOERTZEN for Mr. KING
- Mr. KING for Mr. BALCAEN
- Mr. BALCAEN for Mr. GOERTZEN
- Mr. OXENHAM for MLA DELA CRUZ
- MLA LOISELLE for MLA CORBETT
- Mr. BLASHKO for MLA CROSS

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record

Non-Committee Members speaking on record at the April 24, 2025 meeting:

- Hon. Min. ASAGWARA
- Hon. Min. FONTAINE
- Mr. GOERTZEN
- Mr. GUENTER
- Hon. Min. NAYLOR
- Mr. SCHULER
- Mrs. STONE

Non-Committee Members speaking on record at the April 30, 2025 meeting:

- Hon. Min. ASAGWARA
- Mrs. HIEBERT

Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 9)** – The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act (2)/Loi n° 2 modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools, des jeux et du cannabis:*

April 24, 2025 meeting

*Keith Horn, Retail Cannabis Council of Manitoba
Sharon Clark, Big Buds Cannabis Sales*

*Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 32)** – The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (Measures to Address Unlawful Activities)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation (mesures concernant les activités illégales):*

April 24, 2025 meeting

*David Grant, Private citizen
Sel Burrows, Point Powerline*

*Your Committee heard the following 59 presentations on **Bill (No. 43)** – The Human Rights Code Amendment Act/Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne:*

April 24, 2025 meeting

*Desirée Pappel, L'Association des éducatrices et éducateurs franco-manitoabains
Derek deVries, Park City Gospel Church
Christine Ronceray, Private citizen
Nick Klassen, Private citizen
Michael Sullivant, Pembina Valley Baptist Church
Joshua Shetter, Private citizen
Naomi Letkemann, Private citizen
Monica Wiebe, Private citizen
Candace Sabel, Private citizen*

Tara Sheppard-Luangkhot, Organization for Peace, Equity and Nonviolence

Jennifer Friesen, Private citizen

David Grant, Private citizen

Karen Sharma, Manitoba Human Rights Commission

Don Woodstock, Private citizen

Kathy Harris, Private citizen

Caleb Clay, Private citizen

Helina Zegeye, Sunshine House

Barbara Bendera, Private citizen

Gina McKay, CUPE Manitoba

Kristine Barr, Private citizen

Charlie Eau, Trans Manitoba

Michaela Chotka, Private citizen

Fae Johnstone, Queer Momentum

Parker Morran, Private citizen

Jen Seguin, Private citizen

Rachamim Enoch Coad, Private citizen

Kai Solomon, Private citizen

Michael Shaw, Private citizen

April 30, 2025 meeting

Dayne Moyer, Private citizen

Lee Ramuscak, Private citizen

Dieth de Leon, Bahaghari Pride Manitoba

Lila Asher, Private citizen

Jackson Unger, Private citizen

Rhiannon Frost, Private citizen

Alevtin Pankov, Private citizen

Reece Malone, Private citizen

Ashlyn Noble, Private citizen

Lauren Bailey, Private citizen

Kai Zamora, Private citizen

Linda Karn, Private citizen

Raymond Lyttle, Private citizen

Emersyn Hildebrand, Private citizen

Nathan Martindale, Manitoba Teachers' Society

Moon Fast, Private citizen

Volin Thiessen, Private citizen

Lindsay Brown, Private citizen

Chris deBoer, Private citizen

Gloria Dignazio, Private citizen

Sandra Saint-Cyr, Private citizen

Rhonda Forbes, Private citizen

Alison Norberg, Private citizen

Noreen Stevens, Private citizen

Arlene Macklem, Manitoba Federation of Union Retirees

Mandalyn Unger, Private citizen

Erica McNabb, Private citizen

Aro van Dyck, Private citizen

Wren Robertson, Private citizen

Kate Kehler, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg

Andrew Kohan, Private citizen

Written Submissions

*Your Committee received the following 423 written submissions on **Bill (No. 43)** – The Human Rights Code Amendment Act/Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne:*

*Jeff Burnard, Private citizen
Annika Baer, Private citizen
David Krahn, Private citizen
Gary Driedger, Private citizen
Darryl Harder, Private citizen
Scott Ryman, Private citizen
Dawson Krahn, Private citizen
Cornelio Dyck, Private citizen
Caitlin Wall, Private citizen
Brayden Friesen, Private citizen
Mike McFarlane, Private citizen
Jordan Wall, Private citizen
John Krahn, Private citizen
Emily Baker, Private citizen
Vincent Elias, Private citizen
Steven McGillivray, Private citizen
Geoff Bergen, Private citizen
Braden Wall, Private citizen
Dylan Young, Private citizen
Raymond Garand, Private citizen
Rosalie Feener, Private citizen
Chas van Dyck, Private citizen
Jonathan Van Dyck, Private citizen
Joanne van Dyck, Private citizen
Leon Laidlaw, Private citizen
Raven Hebert-Lee, Private citizen
Lynne Granke, Private citizen
Megan Wray, Private citizen
Erik Thomson, University of Manitoba Faculty Association
Sarah Schira, Private citizen
Breanne Wall, Private citizen
Fraser Young, Private citizen
Doug Derksen, Private citizen
Katie Derksen, Private citizen
Miriam Robern, Private citizen
Brooke Reed, Private citizen
Kelly Hughes, Private citizen
Darlene Blatz, Private citizen
Sandra Schira, Private citizen
Lucy Delgado, Private citizen
Amanda Morris, Private citizen
Owen Toews, Private citizen
Maddi Reed, Private citizen
Robert Martens, Private citizen
Anny Chen, Private citizen
Morgan Schroeder, Private citizen
Emèt Eviatar, Private citizen*

*Hillary Siemens, Private citizen
Katie Leitch, Private citizen
Tara Forshaw, Private citizen
Leah Krahn, Private citizen
Leo Cortens, Private citizen
Kaitlyn Duthie-Kannikkatt, Private citizen
Joel Siemens, Private citizen
Heather Krahn, Private citizen
Jonathan Janzen, Private citizen
George Krahn, Private citizen
Sierra Krahn, Private citizen
Stokely Lindo, Private citizen
Chris Scott, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1505
Jason Hodson, Private citizen
Robert Lentowich, Private citizen
Victoria Hornblower, Private citizen
Sarah Borbridge, Private citizen
Joe Curnow, Private citizen
Melanie Janzen, Private citizen
Ellen Bees, Private citizen
Jeff Patteson, Private citizen
Kathleen Wilson, Private citizen
Jennifer Watt, Private citizen
Karlie Higgins, Private citizen
Fenton Litwiller, Private citizen
Raelene Hall, Private citizen
Mary Peladeau, Private citizen
Kathy Bergen, Private citizen
Shannon Moore, Private citizen
Lani Zastre, Private citizen
Joan Kirouac, Private citizen
Natalie Wiebe, Private citizen
Aimee Rice, Private citizen
Cale Gushulak, Private citizen
David Camfield, Private citizen
Shannon March, Private citizen
Elizabeth Matte, Private citizen
Cathy Pleskach, Private citizen
Timothy Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Wayne Serebrin, Private citizen
Greg McFarland, Private citizen
Gretchen Derige Cortens, Private citizen
Cherie Schellenberg, Private citizen
Sara Patteson, Private citizen
Sarah Leeson-Klym, Private citizen
Noah Schulz, Private citizen
Garry Schellenberg, Private citizen
Marley Pauls, Private citizen
Shane Thevenot, Private citizen
Marianne Shaibu, Private citizen
Joan Armstrong, Private citizen
Cameron Griffiths, Private citizen
Grace Carey, Private citizen*

Emmanuella Shaibu, Private citizen
Elis Wautier, Private citizen
Jacklyn de Visser, Private citizen
Zacharie Montreuil, Private citizen
Anna Levin, Private citizen
Helene Bernardin, Private citizen
Caleb Mcneish, Private citizen
Louis Richard, Private citizen
Jacqueline Rados, Private citizen
Orvie Dingwall, Private citizen
Leyla Shahsavari, Private citizen
Alexis Miller, Private citizen
Mary Richard, Private citizen
Laurie McDougall, Private citizen
Sharon Vandenbosch, Private citizen
Kyle Ross, Private citizen
Andrew Single, Private citizen
Sherise Fleury, Private citizen
Cortney Pachet, Private citizen
Carla Gervais, Private citizen
Nicole Trottier, Private citizen
Robyn Dyck, Private citizen
Jo Turner, Private citizen
Jennifer Nembhard, Private citizen
Shauna Neault-Pawlychyn, Private citizen
Rosalie Madden, Private citizen
Vicenza Enns, Private citizen
Lindsay Kane, Private citizen
Mark Derksen, Private citizen
Elena Anciro, Private citizen
Isabelle Costanzo, Private citizen
Roan Regan, Private citizen
Amanda Mondaca, Private citizen
Carolynn Derksen, Private citizen
Gail Matheson, Private citizen
Gilbert Vielfaure, Private citizen
Victor Mondaca, Nahuen Consultation
Hunter Reynolds, Private citizen
Alexandra Altunbash, Private citizen
Kaitlyn Mitchell, Private citizen
Elyse LeBlanc, Private citizen
Stacy Cardigan Smith, Private citizen
Ashley Walklett, Private citizen
Luca Gheorghica, Poverty Awareness & Community Action
Barbara Cowan, Private citizen
Jill Carr, Private citizen
Miranda Hutlet, Private citizen
Ruth Baines, Private citizen
Lorraine Bisson, Private citizen
Jennifer Hancharyk, Private citizen
Jacques Lavack, Private citizen
Michael Van Damme, Private citizen
Harv Enns, Private citizen

Natalie Mark, Private citizen
Jean-Paul Hutlet, Private citizen
Erin Bergen, Private citizen
Dorothy Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Lise Lavack, Private citizen
Reginald Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Kay Maskiw-Connelly, Private citizen
Jen Gieg, Private citizen
Angela De Koninck, Private citizen
Donald De Koninck, Private citizen
Ivy Fraser, Private citizen
Kathleen McCandless, Private citizen
Alexander Gregovski, Private citizen
John Lamont, Private citizen
Denis Robert, Private citizen
Jane Gattinger, Private citizen
Erika Couto, Private citizen
Brittany Priest, Private citizen
Jennifer Demare, Private citizen
Gillian Moore, Private citizen
Kyle Coffey, Private citizen
George Gervais, Private citizen
Danielle Chammartin, Private citizen
Sara O'Leary, Private citizen
Tim Killoran, Private citizen
Derek Pena, Private citizen
Chantel Gueret, Private citizen
Erik Bonnefoy, Private citizen
Christine Musick, Private citizen
Kimberly Manaigre, Private citizen
Gareth Priest, Private citizen
Daniel Malo, Private citizen
Chantal Schriemer, Private citizen
Helene Tymchen, Private citizen
Meaghan Madden, Private citizen
Sabrina Abreu Schlickmann Gil, Private citizen
Sandra Hernandez, Private citizen
Anna Weier, Private citizen
Lisa Lavack, Private citizen
Rafael Jose Cardoso Gil, Private citizen
Kat Roberts, Private citizen
Lorraine Hackenschmidt, Private citizen
Amelia Valencia, Private citizen
Barbara Young, Private citizen
Eric Musick, Private citizen
Paulo Gonçalves de Arruda, Private citizen
Ashley Dupont, Private citizen
Kelly Smith, Private citizen
Cassandra Schroeder, Private citizen
Debra Schroeder, Private citizen
Madeline Dumont, Private citizen
Mikayla Patenaude, Private citizen
April Penner, Private citizen

Isabelle Froese, Private citizen
Colleen Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Sharon Webb, Private citizen
Nettie Kehler, Private citizen
Betty Hiebert, Private citizen
Mark Harder, Private citizen
Justin Jeanson, Private citizen
Kendra Fehr, Private citizen
Al Dyck, Private citizen
Jamie Fehr, Private citizen
Milton Garcia, Private citizen
Marina Doerksen, Private citizen
Massis Sarkes, Private citizen
Elizabeth Michnik, Private citizen
Anna Madden, Private citizen
Eva Krahn, Private citizen
Donald Michnik, Private citizen
Ruby Warren, Private citizen
Brendan Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Marcey Waldner, Private citizen
Carol Neufeld, Private citizen
Jordan Fehr, Private citizen
Rhonda Banman, Private citizen
Claudia Dyck, Private citizen
Catherine Hart, Private citizen
Jillian Freund, Private citizen
Bryan Sullivant, Private citizen
Elizabeth Heide, Private citizen
Sondra Sawatzky, Private citizen
Gustav Sawatzky, Private citizen
Margaret Wiebe, Private citizen
Viola Kraemer, Private citizen
Cassia Nelson, Private citizen
Tahlia Hiebert, Private citizen
Indira Pedersen, Private citizen
Julianna Dueck, Private citizen
Cheryl Enns, Private citizen
Brenda Kroeker, Private citizen
Robin Janz, Private citizen
Helena Peters, Private citizen
Nettie Freund, Private citizen
Helena Friesen, Private citizen
Naomi Bergeron, Private citizen
Amy Martens, Private citizen
Pam Reimer, Private citizen
Colleen Zacharias, Private citizen
Victoria Freund, Private citizen
Rhonda Rempel, Private citizen
Alana Knelsen, Private citizen
Alyssa Knelsen, Private citizen
Celine Castro, Private citizen
Julia Wall, Private citizen
Tammy Klassen, Private citizen

Danna McDonald, Private citizen
Inna Kraemer, Private citizen
Rachael Krahn, Private citizen
Nicole Winkler, Private citizen
Zachary Freund, Private citizen
Shirley Sawatzky, Private citizen
Nathan Unger, Private citizen
Adam Wiebe, Private citizen
David Betker, Private citizen
Linda Churchill, Private citizen
Tracy Friesen, Private citizen
Eva Guenter, Private citizen
Cynthia Klassen, Private citizen
Margie Loewen, Private citizen
Margaret Ketter, Private citizen
Jessica Dyck, Private citizen
Rebecca Waldner, Private citizen
Arev Melkon, Private citizen
Juan Friesen, Private citizen
Bob Hildebrandt, Private citizen
Elizabeth Hildebrandt, Private citizen
Daniel Laurence, Private citizen
Shayna Hart, Private citizen
Edward Brost, Private citizen
Aasher Kataria, Private citizen
Steven Freund, Private citizen
Chelsea Hoffman, Private citizen
Sarah Wall, Private citizen
Cornie Wall, Private citizen
Brendalee Reimer, Private citizen
Arthur Aidarkhanov, Private citizen
Jodi Janzen, Private citizen
Rachel Hiebert, Private citizen
Andrea Wiebe, Private citizen
Helene Engbrecht, Private citizen
Vikin Sarkes, Private citizen
Irene Bindi, Private citizen
Crystal Wall, Private citizen
Victor Mondaca, Private citizen
Ana Penner, Private citizen
Barbara Teichroeb, Private citizen
Wilhelm Zacharias, Private citizen
Randy Hiebert, Private citizen
Vanessa Rodas, Private citizen
Mabel Neufeld, Private citizen
Judy Betker, Private citizen
Esther Wiebe, Private citizen
Cheryl Pecus, Private citizen
Tanner Fehr, Private citizen
Brenda Peters, Private citizen
Donna Molberg, Private citizen
Jenna Dyck, Private citizen
Barb Neudorf, Private citizen

Justina Dyck, Private citizen
Richard Peters, Private citizen
Will Klassen, Private citizen
Anna Toews, Private citizen
Aaron Zacharias, Private citizen
Janelle Colbourne, Private citizen
Caleb Waldner, Private citizen
Jeremiah Dyck, Private citizen
Tammy Harder, Private citizen
Julie Wall, Private citizen
Peggy Peters, Private citizen
Curtis Hildebrand, Private citizen
Shirley Watt, Private citizen
Diane Falk, Private citizen
Sarah Broad, Private citizen
Melanie Hildebrand, Private citizen
Nicole Wiebe, Private citizen
Henry Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Lesley Dalrymple, Private citizen
Alex Watt, Private citizen
Patsy Penner, Private citizen
Carol Neisteter, Private citizen
Dorothy Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Jack Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Bonnie Friesen, Private citizen
Ron Neisteter, Private citizen
Charlotte McCrar, Private citizen
Jake Klassen, Private citizen
Sharon Schroeder, Private citizen
Abe Redekop, Private citizen
Myrna Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Sharon Nield, Private citizen
Esther Hoepfner, Private citizen
Pauline Mahmood, Private citizen
Carol Fehr, Private citizen
Linda Hildebrandt, Private citizen
Crystal Driedger, Private citizen
Pratima Manuel, Private citizen
Irene Letkeman, Private citizen
Dario Sidler, Private citizen
Brya Enns, Private citizen
Maria Neufeld, Private citizen
Marge Hoepfner, Private citizen
Brenda Wooley, Private citizen
Carolyn Klassen, Private citizen
Brent Wiebe, Private citizen
Mark Warms, Private citizen
Janice Thompson, Private citizen
Debbie Whyte, Private citizen
Lynn Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Jan Wollmann, Private citizen
Lorraine Penner, Private citizen
Mary Tarka, Private citizen

Nicole Thiessen, Private citizen
Jonathan Young, Private citizen
Stanley Neufeld, Private citizen
Lori Wiens, Private citizen
Bev Hamm, Private citizen
Jennifer Giesbrecht, Private citizen
Jake Peters, Private citizen
Kathy Bueckert, Private citizen
Abe Neufeld, Private citizen
Judy Penner, Private citizen
Judith Loszchuk, Private citizen
Bruce Wooley, Private citizen
Shauna Peters, Private citizen
L. Grant Morrison, Private citizen
Laura Hatfield, Private citizen
Tyler Jonah Pierce, Private citizen
Lex van Dyck, Private citizen
Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of Labour
Carey Richards, Private citizen
Chrystal Neault-Lount, Private citizen
Judy Walker, Private citizen
George Friesen, Private citizen
Mary Klassen, Private citizen
Mikayla Hunter, Private citizen
Caleb Martens, Private citizen
Cliff Wiebe, Private citizen
Cindy Schulz, Private citizen
Reynold Schulz, Private citizen
Davey Bonser, Private citizen
Teresa Hildebrand, Private citizen
Amanda Livingstone, Private citizen
Danielle Hart, Private citizen
Irma Syganiec, Private citizen
Kimbal Hyska, Private citizen
Colleen Rogers, Private citizen
Lindsey Childs, Private citizen
Dan Saul, Private citizen
Liz Lylyk, Private citizen
Amber Vandenberg, Private citizen
Rosanne Loewen, Private citizen
Brett Kozak, Private citizen
Michael Lesperance, Private citizen
Alexis Lam, Private citizen
Elaine Burland, Private citizen
Raquel Driedger, Private citizen
Eliana Dueck, Private citizen
Keith Johnson, Private citizen
Feng Xu, Private citizen
Crystal Johnson, Private citizen
David Puranen, Private citizen
Leah McDonnell, Private citizen
Matthew Schiller, Private citizen
Paul Navidad, Private citizen

Darren Pawella, Private citizen
Logan Wall, Private citizen
Samantha Stevens, Private citizen
Joey Moore, Private citizen

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Amendment Act (2)/Loi n° 2 modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools, des jeux et du cannabis*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 13)** – *The Minor Amendments and Corrections Act, 2025/Loi corrective de 2025*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 32)** – *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (Measures to Address Unlawful Activities)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation (mesures concernant les activités illégales)*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 35)** – *The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 36)** – *The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules et le Code de la route*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 43)** – *The Human Rights Code Amendment Act/Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

Mr. Oxenham: Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development Second Report

MLA Robert Loiselle (Chairperson): L'Honorable Président, I wish to present the second report of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development presents the following as its Second Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on April 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 7)** – *The Human Tissue Gift Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les dons de tissus humains*
- **Bill (No. 33)** – *The Public Health Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique*
- **Bill (No. 34)** – *The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement)/Loi modifiant le Code de la route (réglementation des transporteurs routiers)*
- **Bill (No. 38)** – *The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures)/Loi modifiant le Code de la route (mesures de sécurité routière)*
- **Bill (No. 41)** – *The Reporting of Supports for Child Survivors of Sexual Assault (Trained Health Professionals and Evidence Collection Kits) Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la présentation de rapports concernant les mesures de soutien destinées aux enfants survivants d'agression sexuelle (professionnels de la santé formés et trousse médicale)*

Committee Membership

- *Hon. Min. ASAGWARA*
- *Mrs. COOK*
- *MLA CORBETT*
- *MLA LOISELLE*
- *MLA MALOWAY*
- *Mr. NARTH*

Your Committee elected MLA LOISELLE as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected MLA CORBETT as the Vice-Chairperson.

Substitutions received during Committee proceedings:

- Hon. Min. NAYLOR for Hon. Min. ASAGWARA

Public Presentations

Your Committee heard the following one presentation on **Bill (No. 33)** – The Public Health Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique:

David Grant, Private Citizen

Your Committee heard the following three presentations on **Bill (No. 38)** – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures)/Loi modifiant le Code de la route (mesures de sécurité routière):

Ewald Friesen, CAA Manitoba - Government Relations

David Grant, Private Citizen

Rick Rennie, Manitoba Federation of Labour

Your Committee heard the following one presentation on **Bill (No. 41)** – The Reporting of Supports for Child Survivors of Sexual Assault (Trained Health Professionals and Evidence Collection Kits) Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la présentation de rapports concernant les mesures de soutien destinées aux enfants survivants d'agression sexuelle (professionnels de la santé formés et trousse médicolégales):

Fernanda Vallejo, Latinas Manitoba Inc.

Written Submissions

Your Committee received the following one written submission on **Bill (No. 34)** – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement)/Loi modifiant le Code de la route (réglementation des transporteurs routiers):

Kyle Ross, Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union

Your Committee received the following two written submissions on **Bill (No. 38)** – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures)/Loi modifiant le Code de la route (mesures de sécurité routière):

Dave Elmore, Private Citizen

Bruce Henley, Heavy Equipment Aggregate Truckers Association Manitoba

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 7)** – The Human Tissue Gift Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les dons de tissus humains

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 33)** – The Public Health Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 34)** – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Motor Carrier Enforcement)/Loi modifiant le Code de la route (réglementation des transporteurs routiers)

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 38)** – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Traffic Safety Measures)/Loi modifiant le Code de la route (mesures de sécurité routière)

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 41)** – The Reporting of Supports for Child Survivors of Sexual Assault (Trained Health Professionals and Evidence Collection Kits) Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la présentation de rapports concernant les mesures de soutien destinées aux enfants survivants d'agression sexuelle (professionnels de la santé formés et trousse médicolégales)

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

MLA Loisel: L'Honorable Président, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Radisson (MLA Dela Cruz), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

* (13:40)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I'm pleased to table the Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care 2025-2026 Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure.

The Speaker: No further tabling of reports?

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology; Acting Minister of Advanced Education and Training): It's my pleasure to table the 2025-26 Supplement to Estimates of Expenditure for Innovation and New Technology.

Honourable Speaker, it's my pleasure to table the 2025-26 Supplement to Estimates of Expenditure for Advanced Education and Training.

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): I'm pleased to rise today and table the Supplements to the Estimates of Expenditure '25-2026 for the Department of Finance; Public Service Commission; Employee Pensions and Other Costs; and Enabling Appropriations, Tax Credits and Public Debt.

The Speaker: No further tablings?

Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure 2025-26.

Hon. Nellie Kennedy (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism): Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to table the 2025-26 Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure for Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism.

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): I'm pleased to table the 2025-26 Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure for the Department of Families.

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I'm pleased to table the Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure for Budget 2025 for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning.

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I'm pleased to table Supplements to the Estimates of Expenditures for the Housing, Addictions, Homelessness department for the fiscal year of '25-26.

Thank you.

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture): Honourable Speaker, it's my pleasure to be tabling the 2025-2026 supplement of Estimates of Expenditures for Manitoba Agriculture.

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations): Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure for the Municipal and Northern Relations Department for the fiscal year '25-26.

Thank you.

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): I am pleased to table the 2025-2026 Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure for Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to table for Manitoba Justice the '25-26 supplement for the Estimates of Expenditure.

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure 2025-26 for Manitoba Labour and Immigration.

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure reports for Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation for Budget 2025.

Thank you.

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I'm pleased to table the 2025-26 Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mintu Sandhu (Minister of Public Service Delivery): As the Minister of Public Service Delivery, I'm pleased to table the Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure for '25-26.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: No further tablings?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Red Dress Day

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): Today, we remember and honour the lives of MMIWG2S alongside their families and action change for our province.

Manitoba is often described as ground zero for MMIWG2S. There are countless cases and even more broken hearts mourning the lives of sacred women, girls, two-spirit and gender-diverse relatives who are missing or murdered across our province. Their losses are felt across families, communities and generations.

One year ago today, we announced the establishment of an MMIWG2S Healing and Empowerment Endowment Fund with an initial investment of \$15 million. In November, we announced, in partnership with Shoppers Drug Mart, another \$10-million donation towards the endowment fund, making it

\$25 million in less than one year. The endowment fund will exist in perpetuity, ensuring MMIWG2S families will have access to the vital supports to foster healing and empowerment for themselves for years to come.

This morning, I was honoured to announce five community partners, representing First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous populations across Manitoba, who will help deliver the first return of over \$350,000 to MMIWG families this year.

Our government's Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag provincial strategy, which translates into all women doing well, reflects our sacred commitment to support, protect, empower and liberate Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit. Through Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag, in the last 20 months, so far we have supported or established: the ANCR safe ride; over-almost \$1 million to Tina's Safe Haven; Giganawe's *[phonetic]* Matriarch Circle support; the MMIWG2S mural; Fisher River Cree Nation healing space; Brandon 24-7 safe space and transitional housing, called Franny's Place; Norway House healing gathering; Anne Oake Family Recovery Centre; Downtown Community Safety Partnership Indigenous woman's unit; 2Spirit Manitoba; Tracia's Trust engagement; Infinity Women Secretariat; transitional housing support, North End woman's resource centre; MKO baby baskets program; February 14 Women's Memorial March in honour of MMIWG2S; Manitoba Moon Voices; Sagkeeng First Nation's memorial event for Tina Fontaine's 10-year anniversary; MKO, monument installation; Andrews Street Family Centre; sunshine Two-Spirit Powwow; and the Inuit family resource centre.

My team and I are looking forward to sharing some incredibly exciting, innovative and transformative initiatives that we have under way in the next months.

To survivors and families: We see you. We believe you. We are walking this path with you. Let the red dresses hanging across our province today not only stir our hearts but move our hands and policy into meaningful action. And our government is committed to do just that.

Finally, Honourable Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not take a moment on this important Red Dress Day, and on the member for Fort Whyte's (Mr. Khan) first day in this House as Leader of the Official Opposition, to remind Manitobans, especially MMIWG2S families, that the new PC leader—who, let's be honest, barely secured his position—has yet to apologize for his role in the 2023 PC election campaign, a PC

campaign that echoed Trump-style tactics targeting Indigenous women murdered by a serial killer.

And while he's been too busy thanking Donald Trump for the tariffs that are making Manitobans' lives more difficult and thanking Donald Trump for interfering in Canadian politics, he still hasn't found time to reach out to the families. He's not stood in this Chamber to apologize. He's not shown remorse. And let's not forget that he has also yet to apologize for his deplorable Trump-style attacks on trans children.

It's shameful, it's unacceptable, and Manitobans deserve better.

Miigwech.

* (13:50)

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Honourable Speaker, today as Manitobans march downtown for their loved ones at this very moment, we stand with all those victimized by the terrible MMIWG2S crisis. The crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people has left anguish and irreparable wounds on our communities for decades.

In just these last few years alone, Manitoba has sadly witnessed many Indigenous women and girls taken at the hands of domestic violence and systemic failures.

Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran, Rebecca Contois and Ashlee Shingoose, who were killed in 2022, deserved better.

Amanda Clearwater, her small children Bethany, Jayven and Isabella Manoakesick, as well as her 17-year-old cousin Myah-Lee Gratton, were murdered last February by Amanda's boyfriend. They deserved better.

Jessiah Young was murdered by her own grandmother this January. She deserved to celebrate her third birthday this April 20th.

Nadia Flett-Carriere, killed in a murder-suicide by her ex-boyfriend just last week, also deserved better.

These are just 10 of the many, many women and girls who deserved more than any words can say.

These are families whose mother day—Mother's Day this month will not be celebrated the way it should be. Children without their mothers. Mothers without their daughters.

Red Dress Day is a vow to not forget them, and to ensure that no woman or girl is left behind again.

Let us all strive to do better, work together and protect Manitoba women and girls as they so deserve.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

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: Today, on Red Dress Day, we honour and remember the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people.

These red dresses—empty, haunting and symbolic—remind us of the deep grief felt by families and communities, and the urgent need for justice, safety and systemic change.

I want to thank the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) for her statement today. Words of remembrance are important and they must be matched with meaningful actions.

Honourable Speaker, as legislators, we have a responsibility to do more than just acknowledge this national crisis. We must support the families still searching for answers, invest in preventative supports and commit to fully implementing the Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry. This includes better access to housing, trauma-informed health care, mental health supports and culturally appropriate services led by Indigenous communities.

There are many Indigenous women and families who are still waiting for justice, for safety and for recognition. They deserve to know that their loved ones are not forgotten, and that their lives matter every day.

Let us honour these lives with lasting change and ensure that the red dresses we see today are not only a symbol of loss, but also a call to action.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Lapu Lapu Festival Tragedy

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): Honourable Speaker, I request leave in advance to finish my member's statement on the Lapu Lapu Festival tragedy.

The Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave to finish her statement? *[Agreed]*

MLA Dela Cruz: Rizza Pagkanlungan immigrated to Canada from the Philippines with her husband to be closer to her family.

Kira Salim was a well-respected teacher-counsellor at Fraser River Middle School and New Westminster Secondary School.

Jendhel May Sico was a loving aunt employed at a lumber distributor company.

Maria Victoria "Vicky" Bjarnason was a beloved mother visiting her sons from the Philippines.

Richard Le was a realtor who died alongside his wife, Linh Hoang, and their five-year-old daughter, Katie Le. They are survived by their 16-year-old son who stayed home that day to study.

Daniel Samper, Glitza Maria Caicedo and Glitza Daniela Samper immigrated to Canada from Colombia to escape violence, and Jenifer Darbellay was a creative and skillful artist.

Many are still waiting for good news to come for their loved ones in critical care, including the two-year-old son of my family friend, a Manitoban.

Honourable Speaker, on April 26, 2025, families and friends of the Filipino community gathered in Vancouver for the British Columbia's second annual Lapu Lapu Day Festival, a time meant to commemorate and honour a Philippine national hero, Datu Lapu-Lapu, who bravely resisted Spanish colonial rule and put an end to Ferdinand Magellan's tirade on our land.

Across the diaspora, the Lapu Lapu Festival marks a time to celebrate our culture's historic resilience in times of injustice. This celebration was stolen by a tragic juxtaposition when a car sped into the crowd. Over 30 people were injured and 11 devastatingly lost their lives. The youngest life lost was only five; the oldest was 65.

In our culture, we have a belief called kapwa *[friend]*, Honourable Speaker, a value rooted deeply into everything that we do that connects all of us in a profound way. Kapwa means that what happens to you, happens to me. It happens to all of us.

Filipinos are told far too often that we are a resilient people because of how we have overcome the hardship that we have faced. We have seen countless waves of bloodshed, natural disaster, injustice and collective hurt. While resilience is something that I, and I know the member for Notre Dame (MLA Marcelino), minister for Labour and Immigration, hold with pride, I also understand that as a second-generation Filipina immigrant whose bloodline has already seen so much, Honourable Speaker, we should have—we should not have to keep enduring

this hurt. This kind of violence and uprooting has no place in a country like Canada that our ancestors fought tooth and nail for us to call home.

Because of this violence, shockwaves of grief, fear and reminders of past trauma have been sent through our communities in the Filipino diaspora, all the way back to our homeland in the Philippines. To our pamilya [*family*] out west, nandito po kaming lahat para sa inyo [*we are all here for you*]. Kahit lang—kahit dito lang po tayo sa Manitoba, hindi po kayo nag-iisa sa lungkot at luksa. [*Even though we are here in Manitoba, you are not alone in sadness and grief.*] We are right there with you in your sadness and in your grief.

And to the first responders who acted promptly to the call of duty, the kababayans [*countrymen*] on the front lines who treated the victims, and the Filipino BC organizers who provided first aid and leadership amid the attack, thank you. Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat. [*Thank you very much to all of you.*]

Condolences, as well, to our elected counterparts out west: Mayor Ken Sim, Premier Eby, MLA Mable Elmore and all those also providing support to their constituents.

To our kapwa [*friends*] who are hurting right here in Manitoba, who are nervous for what comes next and whose minds are racing trying to find new ways to help: We see you. We are here for you. And community will get us out of this. Honourable Speaker, community is the reason that the Filipino community is strong. Community is the source of our safety.

For those wishing to offer monetary support, a transparent fund has been set up between Filipino British Columbia and United Way British Columbia at uwbc.ca/lapu. Honourable Speaker, 100 per cent of these donations will help provide immediate assistance, counselling and trauma services and other critical support as the community begins to heal.

Honourable Speaker, I ask for leave for a moment of silence immediately following my statement to commemorate the lives lost to this tragedy, those hurt and the pain and the grief of the friends and family affected.

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

A moment of silence was observed.

* (14:00)

The Speaker: Thank you.

Decorum in the Chamber and Public Apology

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Today, I have the honour of rising as the leader of His Majesty's official opposition to play a key role in leadership in our free and democratic electoral system. I am beyond honoured and humbled.

Thank you.

I also have an honour of serving here for the last three years. So often, I have looked up in the public gallery filled with students who are looking at us as mentors and examples of respectful behaviour, and on every occasion we have failed them with our behaviour that would not be tolerated in schools or in society. That tone changes today.

Today, we hold this NDP government to account, and we will do that in a dignified way that reflects the views of Manitobans who have sent us a clear message: All elected officials must do better.

We will ask tough questions because Manitobans deserve real answers. We will hold the NDP to account for their long list of broken promises. We will show Manitobans that there is a better path to unleashing our full economic potential, to making life more affordable, to holding criminals to account with jail not bail policies and, once and for all, fixing health care with real action, not photo ops and empty announcements.

Today, it is fitting that my first opportunity to address this House is on Red Dress Day, honouring the memories of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

I stand here today as the new leader of the PC Party and apologize to the families of Rebecca Contois, Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran and Ashlee Shingoose and to all Manitobans for the harm that was caused by our previous campaign.

As the new PC leader, this is now on me to carry and move forward, in humility, in humbleness and in kindness, in an unwavering love and belief that when we come together under one big tent, we are all better for it.

Honourable Speaker, a new day has begun.

Thank you.

Infinity Women Secretariat

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): Today, on Red Dress Day, I would like to recognize the non-profit Infinity Women Secretariat. Through a grassroots

movement, IWS has created programs that advocate for Red River Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+ individuals through social, economic and political arenas.

IWS offers many programs to help their community members through policies, programs and services that foster an understanding of the needs of women, girls and members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community through economic, social and mental health avenues.

Their youth outreach program is dedicated to supporting and encouraging and inspiring Red River Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQ individuals. They want to celebrate and embrace individual connections to their Métis identity through culture, outreach and empowerment programming.

As part of the MMIWG2S advisory committee and in collaboration with the MMF, their Pey Key Way Ta Hin, Bring Me Home program offers a family support worker to help Red River Métis families, citizens and survivors by supporting and assisting them with finding their lost relatives and by bringing them home. This program is about providing families with closure and giving those that have been lost their voices back. It is about providing families with an understanding of what happened to their missing loved ones and being able to bring them home.

Where colonial systems attempt to suppress and erase the voices of Red River Métis women, girls and two-spirit individuals, the IWS's work in supporting them and fostering connections between them is critical. It would not be possible with the hard work of the dedicated IWS board members, Frances Chartrand, Adrienne Carriere and spokeswoman Anita Campbell who is here with us today in the gallery.

Honourable Speaker, women are sacred, and we must continue to uplift their voices, guarantee their protection and show reverence for their lives.

I ask my colleagues to please rise and join me in celebrating the work of the IWS.

Alfred "Bucky" Anderson

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): It's not every day we get to celebrate someone who I have known for 35 years and whose leadership, creativity and heart have touched so many lives, but today, I am proud to do just that by recognizing Alfred "Bucky" Anderson.

Joining online today is Minister Anderson, vice-president of the Interlake region and Minister of Culture and Heritage with the Red River Métis government.

Elected in 2010 as vice-president of the Manitoba Métis Federation, Minister Anderson's leadership and commitment have earned him the continued trust of his community, being acclaimed in 2014, 2018 and again in 2022.

Minister Anderson often says his mission is to instill pride among Red River Métis citizens and, quote, put a smile on your face, unquote. That mission came to life when he created the Métis Music Van, a unique initiative that has travelled throughout the Interlake, southeast and Winnipeg regions, promoting the vibrant culture and music of the Red River Métis.

His efforts have been recognized with three separate awards in Selkirk, including the Selkirk Biz business excellence award and a community leadership award from Promoting Aboriginal Student Success. The impact of his work is also captured in a life-sized mural titled, quote, The Beat Goes On, unquote, at Robinson and Main Street in Selkirk, where the Métis Music Van stands as a symbol of cultural pride and unity.

Minister Anderson finds joy in watching the Métis community flourish. He continues to connect citizens in a meaningful way, sharing music, history and hope.

Please join me in thanking Minister Alfred "Bucky" Anderson for his unwavering dedication, cultural leadership and the joy he brings to the communities across Manitoba.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Drag the Red

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): Today I want to recognize the incredible work of Drag the Red, who search the Red River for missing and murdered persons.

Drag the Red is a grassroots organization that was started in 2014 after the discovery of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine in the Red River. It was co-founded by myself and Kyle Kematch. We formed Drag the Red to search for others who were—have relatives who have gone missing or have been murdered, including our own siblings, Claudette Osborne-Tyo and Amber Guiboche. Since then, Drag the Red volunteers continue to search the Red River each and every year. This is preventative work, it gives families hope, supports community building and works collaboratively with policing and many community organizations.

MMIWG2S+ touches the lives of so, so many, and the heart work that they do is creating change. This is a heavy task that Drag the Red does and—but is unfortunately needed, and I'm pleased to know that there are folks who are out there looking for our relatives. Their continued dedication means the world to MMIWG2S families. For anyone who has faced the grief of losing a loved one, know that—know you are not alone.

All of us have a part to play in supporting the community during hard times, and Drag the Red does just that important work to support those who are still searching for their loved ones.

Organizers from Drag the Red have joined us today in the gallery, and I ask that the House join me in saying *miigwech* to the volunteers for their dedication and commitment, each and every year.

You have shown great strength in the face of tragedy and do so much to support the community. I am so grateful for your work in supporting MMIWG2S+ families in your efforts to bring our relatives home and to keep our community safe.

We love you. *Miigwech*. Thank you for all of your work.

Jana Benzolock, Lilian Bonita, Mitch Bourbonniere, Raelyn Deboynton, Morgan Fontaine, Shawna Francois, Neale Gillespie, Cherish Harper, Caitlin Lima, Savanna McMannus, Tyna Moorfoot, Santana Roberts, Gina Smoke, Jill Wilson

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Prior to oral questions, there are several guests in the gallery I'd like to introduce.

First I'll draw attention to—of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today pulmonary arterial hypertension patients Tanya Stinson, Cindy Hayman, Chrissy Wilder; and pulmonary arterial hypertension caregiver Rob *[phonetic]* Wilder, Dr. David Christensen, St. Boniface Hospital, who are guests of the honourable member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton).

* (14:10)

And we welcome you all here today.

We have, seated in the public gallery, from École Saint-Norbert, 40 grade 6 to grade 8 students under the direction of Chantelle Murray, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Seine River (MLA Cross).

We welcome you here today.

And we have, seated in the public gallery, from Novell Design Build, custom home builders in Vancouver, BC, three guests: Laurel James, Angelito Camalang *[phonetic]* and Terran Camaclang.

And we welcome you here today.

Speaker's Statement

The Speaker: And now, prior to oral questions, I have a statement for the House.

I'd like to take a moment to clarify our practices of—for referencing guests in the gallery during debate. I've recently received questions from members on this matter, and I felt it is important for all MLAs to understand what is acceptable.

As the Speaker of this House, it is a pleasure to be able to welcome guests into our galleries so that they may witness the business of the Assembly first-hand.

While it is acceptable for members to applaud, wave at or reference guests in the gallery during proceedings, such as during a member's statement, it is not acceptable to draw them into debate. The public gallery code of conduct specifically directs visitors to refrain from making any interruption or disturbance during proceedings, so encouraging them to do so is both confusing and unfair. This is the most problematic when a member's making partisan statements. Many guests, including youth visiting as part of school groups, have conveyed feeling uncomfortable when such attention has been drawn to them. They are here as observers of our democracy, not as props.

I would also remind members that it is a long-standing practice in our parliamentary system that comments must be made through the Chair and not directly to other members or to the galleries, as noted on page 610 of the third edition of House of Commons Procedure and Practice. To involve guests in our debates, then, is not only a breach of etiquette, but is also a breach of practice.

I want you all to understand that if this occurs again, especially in more partisan moments, I may interrupt members and ask them to rephrase their demark—remarks and to stop involving guests in the debate.

I hope this statement clarifies this matter for the House, and I thank you all for your attention to this matter.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Leader of the Official Opposition New Leader Acknowledgements

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, in this role as an MLA, there are a lot—there is a lot that unites us in this room. We see lots of joys and sad that we also experience much tragedy. One of the first events I attended as Leader of the Opposition will forever stay with me.

Last Tuesday, we were not NDP, Liberal or PC; we were Manitobans standing with the Filipino community to stand united after the Lapu Lapu tragedy in Vancouver. On the exact opposite side of the spectrum, last night we also stood united for entirely different purpose and saw the Jets tie up a win in its—incredible overtime action. Go, Jets, go.

I have many serious questions for the Premier, but I want to take this first opportunity to acknowledge all that unites us and allow him the opportunity to respond.

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): On behalf of the Province of Manitoba, I want to take this opportunity to extend my sincere condolences to everyone in British Columbia who is directly affected by the tragedy at the Lapu Lapu festival. I also want to extend those sympathies to members of the Filipino community in British Columbia, here in Manitoba, across Canada and around the world.

What took place at that event betrays our expectations. A gathering was not only turned into a dark, dark event, but we saw a celebration become the site of a loss of life. We stand together as Manitobans to support the survivors, their friends and their families.

Honourable Speaker, you can tell that I was at the game last night, too. I left a good chunk of my voice there, but I will always be able to say: go, Jets, go and we want the cup, we want the cup, we want the cup.

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

Manitoba's Economy GDP Growth Targets

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, we agree that there's a lot that unites us, and our economy is one of them.

Unfortunately for Manitobans, under this Premier, our province is dead last in GDP growth—I'll table that article here today—where declining agricultural

exports are already contributing to this decline, and American and Chinese tariffs will worsen the situation.

The Premier's approach on economic leadership is failing.

Can the Premier tell us what his GDP growth targets are for this year?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Well, everyone in Canada knows that the biggest threat to our economy is Donald Trump. That's why we're all so puzzled at the Progressive Conservatives, who chose a new leader who thanks Donald Trump for his 25 per cent tariffs.

Our strategy to grow our economy is to stand up to Donald Trump and to prevent the Progressive Conservatives from ever forming government in Manitoba again. Only then will we be ensured that we're not going to have somebody who is worried about Donald Trump instead of worrying about you.

We're fixing health care in Manitoba. We're making life more affordable.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate Mark Carney on his election as Canada's Prime Minister and to wish him luck in his Oval Office meeting with Donald Trump tomorrow.

We are going to keep building up this country by working together, not by sucking up to Donald Trump.

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

Mr. Khan: Manitobans, you saw it right there. This Premier reverts back to his nature: bullying tactics. It's who he is.

I asked a serious question, first day, Leader of the Opposition, about GDP in this province of Manitoba, and what does the Premier do? He attacks. He misleads Manitobans.

The NDP—Manitobans should know, the NDP are using your taxpayer dollars to a—launch attack websites on me minutes after I won. They're using your taxpayer dollars to attack—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan: Now when you want to talk about Donald Trump, there's a direct line between this Premier's history and Donald Trump.

I'll ask the Premier again: What is his growth targets for GDP in this province? Manitobans have a

right to know. It's not a joke. He can stop laughing and bullying and answer the question.

Mr. Kinew: Honourable Speaker, these are the words of the member opposite, a direct quote here. How much of an influence does the 25 per cent tariff threat have? He goes on to say: Thank you. I would say thank you to Donald Trump.

These are his words. The biggest threat to our economy, and everyone out there knows this, is the Trump tariff tax. At a time when business owners were asking for us to work together, at a time where Canadians were saying: we need to rally around the flag to stand up for this beautiful country that we love so much, the member for Fort Whyte thanked Donald Trump not once, but twice: I would say thank you, I would say thank you. Verbatim, direct quote.

That's not how we build up our economy. We build up our economy by investing in you, the working people of Manitoba. We build up our economy by making businesses more productive. But most importantly, we do it as Canadians protecting our national sovereignty and our national security each and every single day.

I will never thank—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

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

Venture Capital Investment

Mr. Khan: Manitobans witnessed it there directly. I asked him a question about GDP, refuses to answer it.

The Premier wants to attack, attack, attack.

Why won't he go outside the House and repeat that attack where he's not protected by parliamentary privilege? He won't do it because he knows—he knows—he is misleading Manitobans. *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan: Venture Capital provides private financing to startups and companies that investors believe have growth potential. It's an important measure of business confidence.

* (14:20)

Can the Premier share the level of capital 'venture' investments for Manitoba in 2022 and how it compares nationally with last year?

Mr. Kinew: I'd venture to say that capital is afraid of Donald Trump right now, which is why it's so puzzling that the member opposite would thank

Donald Trump. Again, direct quotes, his words: I would say thank you. I would say thank you for the 25 per cent tariff threat.

The tariff threat is a big risk. It's a source of uncertainty, so we, as your government, are stepping up to deliver. How are we going to do that? We're going to build, build, build our Manitoba economy: new personal-care homes that the PCs never built; new emergency rooms that the PCs closed; new highways in rural Manitoba across all the constituencies, none of which voted for the member opposite to become the new PC leader.

But, importantly, we're going to work together with the premiers and the new Prime Minister to stand up to Donald Trump as one united team Canada. We're working for you; we're working for Canada; we will never thank Donald Trump, like the member opposite.

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

Mr. Khan: Honourable Speaker, the NDP are using your taxpayer dollars and have already been hit with copyright infringement, misappropriation of likeness, and defamation by false implication.

The Premier can simply step outside and repeat the words he's saying, but you know who's afraid of this NDP? Everybody. Venture capital is afraid of this NDP. Venture capital investments—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan: —in Manitoba in 2023 were \$46 million—fifth strongest in Canada. In the first year under the NDP, venture capital is \$2 million—a 96 per cent drop under this NDP and this Premier. I'll table the data so the Premier can actually read it.

Will the Premier wake up to the fact that his policies are not growing our economy? What is he going to do to increase our economy?

Mr. Kinew: The economic horse pulls the social cart. That's why our government has been working hard, not only to build, build, build our provincial economy and to invest in the next generation of workers—that's you and the kids in school across Manitoba today—but we've also been working with the other premiers and the Prime Minister at the federal level to stand up to Donald Trump.

Donald Trump is in the media over this weekend talking seriously about the possibility of a military—of

invasion in Canada. He says it's not likely, but he's still talking about it.

How could somebody claiming to lead a legitimate political party in Canada thank a person like that? Again, the direct quotes: I would say thank you. I would say thank you. These are the words that the member opposite said. How could he support Donald Trump? If you want to stand for Manitoba's economy, you have to stand against Donald Trump.

We stand for our economy. He stands with Donald Trump.

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

Mr. Khan: Oh, Honourable Speaker. The law, the Premier's favourite quote: the economic horse pulls the social cart.

What did the president of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce say? What did the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce say? The economic horse is pulling the social cart, and the social cart is getting heavier and heavier and heavier under this NDP.

The question is simple: Can the Premier stop bullying? Can the Premier answer a question so Manitobans can be assured that their economy is safe? What is this Premier going to do to grow our economy here in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Kinew: I'm going to stand up to Donald Trump and I'm going to stand up for Canada because I love this beautiful country. Even if you didn't have the political IQ to prevent yourself from saying, I would say thank you to Donald Trump, would your patriotism not kick into gear? Would you not have the good sense to say, let me not thank the existential threat to Canada's economy right now? Apparently not.

I guess we know there is a clear division when we're talking about our visions for the future of the economy. On this side of the House, we're feeding the economic horse. We're making it strong. We're investing \$3.7 billion into building up the infrastructure to power the economy for tomorrow.

At the same time we're investing in you, the youth, the next generation, because the best economic plan is an education plan, and we're standing up to Donald Trump and we're saying: Canada is not for sale. Canada will never—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Crown Timber Dues in Manitoba Request to Align with Neighbouring Provinces

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Two weeks ago, I asked the conservation minister why his department wasn't reducing Crown timber dues, even though Ontario had cut theirs to one-third of Manitoba, driving our loggers out of business.

Since the minister wasn't able to answer my question then, the logging industry is concerned that this government is out of touch, and are scared for their future.

Will the minister commit today to align timber dues with our neighbouring province and put hundreds of loggers back to work?

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): There are loggers working all across Manitoba. They're working in partnership with Indigenous communities; they're working in partnership with the industry, something that members opposite had no idea, had no concept of wanting to support in any fashion or way whatsoever.

But as we stand up that industry here in Manitoba, we do it in a good way, in a good way that brings everybody to the table, that brings industry, that brings Indigenous communities to the table, that brings benefit to not only Manitoba, but not—all of Canada, and we're doing that in a right way, something members opposite never done in all of their years.

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

Mr. Narth: Well, Honourable Speaker, well, we knew we had a Premier (Mr. Kinew) that still thinks he's campaigning, the Health Minister listening to our health-care system crumble, an Education Minister that hasn't built a school, but now we've got a conservation minister that is taxing building supplies on new homes out of the market.

How can this government tell Manitobans that they are breaking down international trade barriers and strengthening our economy when they have just created new trade barriers as a result of this minister's inaction?

Mr. Bushie: As we break down those trade barriers, that member opposite stands with their newly elected leader and thanks Trump for the tariffs. Thanks that—creating those barriers, building those walls and creating that hardship for Manitoba and hardship for the logging industry here in Manitoba.

We're going to break down those barriers. We're going to do that in support. We're going to do that when we have revenue sharing, something that was unheard of under the PC government. We're bringing that forward in a very concrete way for the benefit of all Manitobans, Indigenous communities and industry all across this great province.

**First Nations Along Eastern Lake Winnipeg
Licence for Forestry-Based Business**

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Okay. Honourable Speaker, if the minister is unwilling to sit down with neighbouring—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Narth: —provinces to create a standardized fee structure to promote interprovincial trade, there is another solution: Hollow Water First Nation, along with three other First Nations on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, had been awarded a licence under the previous PC government to operate a forestry-based business, formally—formerly managed by Tembec, which would provide hundreds of good jobs.

Will the minister commit to providing support and assistance for this Indigenous-led venture to strengthen our economy?

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): For the member to talk about Hollow Water, probably having never visited Hollow Water in the first place, is shameful. I'm a member of that First Nation, and I've spoken with leadership all across the east side of Lake Winnipeg.

And knowing full well that they had the doors locked from those members opposite. They did not open the doors; they did not open the communication; they stood there and they talked about creating things. They built those things on Etch A Sketch. What happens when you do that? You shake those details out and they disappear. That's exactly how they plan; that is exactly how they govern, and they did nothing for timber industry all across Manitoba.

The Speaker: Order, please.

Just to remind the honourable member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth) to use the minister's correct title in the future. There is no conservation minister.

**Interprovincial Trade and Labour Mobility
Request to Remove Barriers in Manitoba**

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): In a public document, the Montreal Economic Institute noted that Manitoba will be one of the largest beneficiaries of

eliminating interprovincial trade barriers. Other provinces are moving well ahead, and all Manitobans would benefit.

Bill 227 would remove trade and labour mobility barriers between Manitoba and other provinces. Where other provinces are already ahead of Manitoba, Manitoba is falling behind.

Will the NDP support Bill 227 today and support the free flow of goods, services and labour? Yes or no?

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): Honourable Speaker, this team is doing very important work reducing interprovincial trade barriers, and that work continues under the incredible leadership of my colleague, Minister Moses—or, sorry, the minister responsible for business, mining, jobs, trade and—we also, of course, have great leadership from our Premier (Mr. Kinew) on this file.

* (14:30)

There are a number of other really important things we're doing, like a \$3.7-billion capital plan, a payroll tax cut to make Manitoba even more investible and, of course, other really important investments we're making to grow our economy here in Manitoba.

You know, that's very different from what the members opposite did over the many years they were in government, when they failed to do that work of growing our economy and, of course, what's not going to help grow an economy? Tariffs on Canadian goods from Mr. Trump, which we know the member opposite, the leadership—leader is supporting.

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

Mrs. Stone: Honourable Speaker, there was no answer to the question that was provided. It was a simple yes or no question.

Prime Minister Carney has vowed that, from a federal level, we will have free internal trade by Canada Day. Ontario, Nova Scotia and PEI are all moving ahead and Manitoba is being left behind. We're asking a simple question for the NDP to make a legislative commitment to removing interprovincial trade barriers.

Eighteen months of no talk—all talk and no action by this NDP. At what date can Manitobans expect fast-tracked licensing and certification requirements to increase labour mobility to Manitoba?

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, this team is doing the work to protect jobs and protect our economy here in Manitoba.

We are working to reduce interprovincial trade barriers. We brought forward a huge \$3.7-billion capital plan that is going to see us build, build, build 11 schools, three personal-care homes. We're going to get the NEWPCC facility built which they never got done to ensure Manitoba's economic engine in Winnipeg continues growing, and we're going to keep making important investments to support businesses so they can keep growing in Manitoba.

This team is doing the important work. Our last budget is going to help to unlock economic potential in Manitoba. That work continues; Manitobans can continue to rely on this team to grow our economy and protect jobs here in our province.

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

Mrs. Stone: Honourable Speaker, we are talking about a free trade bill here in Manitoba that other provinces have already moved ahead in. When this NDP had an opportunity support it, it was the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kostyshyn) that actually spoke it out at a time of US and China tariffs.

Prime Minister Carney advises that he is committed to removing all federal exemptions under the Canada Free Trade Agreement. The PM has said removing barriers to the free movement of workers, goods and services would increase Canada's economy by \$250 billion; that's \$6,000 back in the pockets of Canadians.

Will this minister follow Ontario, Nova Scotia and PEI and commit to eliminating all provincial exemptions by Canada Day, yes or no?

MLA Sala: Again, Honourable Speaker, you know what will not help to grow our economy here in Manitoba? Tariffs from Donald Trump, right? And here we have the Leader of the Opposition who is on record thanking President Trump for those tariffs. That's obviously not the right forward.

Our team will always stand against Donald Trump and his tariffs and we'll always fight for Canada and Manitoba.

You know, I'll say briefly, I'm happy—over the last week, I was meeting with investors, credit-rating agencies who, I'm very happy to report, are very, very supportive of our budget, of the work we're doing;

they think our work is credible and they see us as building a stronger Manitoba.

Hudson Bay Archives Auditor General Recommendations

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): The Premier's (Mr. Kinew) expressed an interest in Hudson Bay archives. What recommendations has the minister implemented from the Auditor General that would protect and preserve Manitoba's archives?

Hon. Nellie Kennedy (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism): Honourable Speaker, I can honestly say that our government is committed to the historical value of all that we have in Manitoba. Our government stands behind making sure that we have the ability and the wherewithal to be able to preserve the history within our province.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Perchotte: Honourable Speaker, the Auditor General's report found over a dozen instances where the HVAC system and other conditions were insufficient for record storage. How many such incidents have occurred since the report was done in February of 2024?

MLA Kennedy: Honourable Speaker, we take these things very seriously with the—seriously in this side of the House. We recognize the importance of ensuring that all of our archives and our history within our province are managed in a way that keeps things safe, and to ensure that we have the ability to enjoy these records for years to come.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Perchotte: Honourable Speaker, the question is about what has the minister done to protect and preserve these critical archives.

Why is the minister refusing to engage with this vital aspect of our shared history? Manitobans deserve to know.

MLA Kennedy: Honourable Speaker, it's interesting coming from that side of the House where we have, you know, the new official Leader of the Opposition thanking Trump for tariffs.

On this side of the House, we actually care about our history and how we support Manitobans.

We support First Nations and ensuring that artifacts are here and that Manitobans are able to be sure that we are taking care of our ancestors and the people that have come before us.

Thank you.

Death of Myah Gratton Status of Family Services Report

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): On February 11, 2024, Myah-Lee Gratton was murdered despite reaching out to her case worker to express her fears for her safety and plea for help. The minister and Premier (Mr. Kinew) made different promises to Manitobans about what would be released and when.

Why has the minister still refused to release this report?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): Again, I want to put on the official record, on behalf of myself as the minister responsible—and the Premier has said it many times as well—in behalf of our whole NDP caucus: you know, what happened was an absolute tragedy, and it's something that's going to go down in Manitoba history as one of the worst acts of intimate partner violence, particularly involving children.

And that remains true to this day, that we stand with the families. We actually went out to Carman on the year anniversary and had the opportunity to hear from family members and from community talk about every single one of them and the love that they had—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Byram: A grieving mother should not have to turn to the courts for answers. Juliette Hastings deserves justice for her daughter.

Will this Premier today apologize for his government's failure to protect Myah-Lee and commit to working together for the safety of all Manitobans?

MLA Fontaine: If the member opposite had cared to do a little bit more research instead of trying to make a political football out of this or get some political points out of what is a really, really incredibly heart-breaking and serious tragedy, she would know that the mother does have a report. We did release some of the report, as was her lawyer. So her lawyer does have that report.

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

Ms. Byram: The Premier said last year that he'd be willing to launch a public inquiry.

When can Manitobans expect that public inquiry into the systemic failures that led to Myah-Lee's death?

MLA Fontaine: The member opposite also knows—because I had her in my office when we shared our \$20-million Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag strategy, which a huge component of that, as I shared with her, is about helping to support women tackling intimate partner violence, which includes access to shelter, 24-7 drop-in safe spaces and transitional housing.

We're doing that work. Our government invested \$20 million towards ensuring that Indigenous women, girls, two-spirit and gender-diverse folks have the supports and the safety net that they need to ensure their safety and that they're able to—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Universal Screening for Learning Disabilities Timeline for Standing Committee for Bill 225

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): On March 26, I introduced Bill 225, universal screening for learning disabilities. On April 11, two weeks later, the government issued a news release celebrating their commitment to universal screening for learning disabilities. And on April 15, I was thrilled to see Bill 225 pass second reading with unanimous support.

* (14:40)

Honourable Speaker, the next step is committee. Many Manitobans have already signed up to present at committee.

Will the minister share with the House here this afternoon when Bill 225 will go to committee?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I thank the member opposite for that very important question. I will make a small correction for the record and that is that our government did more than just express a commitment to the early universal screener tools that we have introduced; in fact, we've issued a policy directive, and it is something that we're really exciting to be rolling out in the fall in schools across Manitoba.

The introduce it—the introduction of these universal early screening tools are going to ensure that all Manitobans, including our earliest learners, receive the supports that they need at the earliest possible intervention. We're very, very proud of that announcement. I look forward to working with the member opposite—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Resources for Specialists and Schools

MLA Lamoureux: Identifying learning disabilities through universal screening is just the first step. We also need teachers, reading specialists and speech-language pathologists who are trained and resourced to support students.

It was shared in a letter from a Dyslexia Canada outreach co-ordinator that the heartbreaking reality is that even highly engaged families cannot replace the role of an adequately supported school system.

Does this government agree that providing a universal screening program for students will help educators and specialists respond with a more consistent and evidence-based strategy that children require?

MLA Schmidt: Again, thank you to the member opposite for this important question, for allowing the opportunity for this important discussion in this Chamber.

And, again, I think it's important to note something that's different from Bill two-two-225 that separates from what the announcement that our government was very proud to make earlier last month, and that's that our universal screening tools are not just there to help identify students with disabilities. And, again, I very much applaud the member opposite for her work with Dyslexia Canada and the folks that work at Dyslexia Canada for the excellent advocacy that they do.

But our universal screening tools here in Manitoba are to—are designed for all children and to identify all the barriers that they might be facing when they're struggling with literacy, not just learning disabilities. So we also agree that it's very important—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Accountability for Literacy Outcomes Systemic Barriers for Marginalized Communities

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Honourable Speaker, there's no accountability in the government's announcement. Literacy outcomes in Manitoba are not simply about an individual effort; they are shaped by poverty, language barriers, race and disability. Many parents want to help but cannot take on the role of a trained reading instructor.

Literacy is not just an at-home responsibility; it is a public right.

How is the government ensuring that its approach to literacy, whether through policy, legislation or curriculum, acknowledges and addresses the systemic barriers students and families are facing, especially those from marginalized communities?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): Again, thank the member opposite for the question, and I think that it's true that the member and I probably agree on more than we disagree on this important topic. And I would argue that probably most members of this Chamber really want the best for children and we want the best for—to improve the literacy outcomes here in Manitoba.

That's why our government was so proud, for a second year in a row, to finally restore proper, healthy funding to schools: \$170 million, Honourable Speaker, over two years, in this province. We've also annualized the \$30-million universal nutrition program, which hopefully will be protected into law later this afternoon, to ensure that all children across Manitoba, specifically the children in the most need, receive the—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Threats to Canada's Economy Manitoba's Response

Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park): Honourable Speaker, the MLA for Fort Whyte has been silent for months on issues that matter to Manitobans, but he has been clear on one thing: how thankful he is to Donald Trump for his tariffs on Manitoba businesses.

In fact, he said: So, how much of an influence did the 25 per cent tariff threat have on that? I would say a lot. And I would say thank you; I would say thank you, he's gone now.

So does the minister for economic development, investment and trade have a different approach to Trump's tariffs and threats to our sovereignty?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, let's be clear: we will never become the 51st state, and that is very clear, despite the musings of members opposite, like the MLA for Borderland.

We will not give EV rebates to Elon Musk, like the MLA for Midland wants. And we will never thank Donald Trump for his tariffs, like the MLA for Fort Whyte suggests.

Now, if the MLA for Fort Whyte had stood up for Manitoba businesses instead of thanking Donald Trump, maybe he would have actually won the PC leadership race with more votes.

Now—but I tell members opposite: instead of trying to outcompete themselves to see who can grovel over Donald Trump the most, our government, instead, is going to support Manitoba businesses, support growing more good jobs here in our province and doing it as part of our team Canada approach—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Homeless Encampments in Winnipeg Concern for Government's Housing Strategy

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): Honourable Speaker, the minister and the Premier (Mr. Kinew) have certainly spent a lot of time talking about their strategy for ending encampments and getting people into housing.

To date, how many people have been housed through this process?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): For seven and a half years under that government, they sold off housing, they didn't support people. It takes minutes, seconds, to sell off housing.

We've continually supported people. We've continually taken off the boards that that previous failed government put up. We're not going to continue to take lessons—or any lessons, for that fact—from any members opposite. We will continue to support people, to put people into housing that they boarded up. These folks are continuing to thrive in their housing. They're—these folks that are supporting them are, you know, so thankful that they finally have a government that is supporting them.

So I want to lift them up and say, thank you for the work that they're doing.

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

Mrs. Cook: Honourable Speaker, that was a really simple question. The minister should have had the answer at her fingertips.

The minister has expressed that progress is being made, but Marion Willis of St. Boniface Street Links told the media that there are more encampments right now than ever before.

Can the minister tell us how many people are living in encampments right now in Winnipeg?

Ms. Smith: Well, for the—first, Heather Stefanson and the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan) worked to sell homes out from underneath them. They sold hundreds of homes on Smith Street—over 300 units. Those put people into tents. That's what created encampments in this province.

So members opposite can stand by those folks across the street when, in fact, they're the ones that put folks into encampments, were okay going outside this building and seeing people in bus shacks. They sold off—now the Leader of the Opposition, you know, is following in those footsteps. They thanked Donald Trump for the tariffs that's going to make building housing here in Manitoba even more expensive.

We're going to continue—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mrs. Cook: Honourable Speaker, another simple question and yet again, no answers from this minister. It seems today is partisan political attack day. There's no actual answers coming from members opposite.

Media is now reporting that encampments are being reoccupied, despite the minister's previous claim that encampments would be cleared and would stay that way.

Why has this minister failed to uphold her own plan that was supposed to help keep sites cleared as residents expected?

Ms. Smith: And I know that member and members across the way are really jealous about our strategy, Your Way Home, and getting people housed with the supports that they need.

Unlike members opposite, we're actually getting folks housed with the supports. Right now they're delaying a bill, Bill 12, that will actually support social housing. Those folks, you know, they want to sell off housing. We're not going to do that.

* (14:50)

So what I say to members across the way: Get out of the way, allow Bill 12 to pass. Protect taxpayers' money and allow us to protect social housing.

What is so hard about that? Quit delaying Bill 12. Allow us to protect that housing and get folks out of

encampments, and help us do that work instead of delaying it—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

And just before we move to the next question, I have to remind the honourable member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Oxenham) to please use the correct title for—ministerial title or constituency when he's asking questions.

**Brandon Health Centre—Assault of ER Nurse
Release of Alleged Perpetrator—Bail System Concerns**

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Health-care workers at Manitoba's hospitals are under siege. And recently, a nurse at Brandon regional hospital's emergency room was spat on, put in a chokehold and nearly stabbed in the neck with a needle. These kinds of assaults are all too common now under this NDP government.

Here's something else that's all too common under this NDP government: the alleged perpetrator was released.

When will this Justice Minister put an end to his catch-and-release bail system and start protecting Manitoba nurses?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Honourable Speaker, I want to be very clear: violence, harassment, harming our health-care workers is entirely unacceptable.

Health-care workers deserve to be safe at their jobs. They should show up, provide care—quality care to Manitobans—and go home safe at the end of the day.

Our government has taken real steps to ensure that nurses and all health-care workers are safer, including at Brandon Regional Health Centre, where we've established institutional safety officers despite the fact that, under the previous failed PC administration, they didn't do that for years, even though they could.

On that side of the House, they want to weaken health care. The member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan) thanks Donald Trump for tariffs and wants an American-style private, for-profit health-care system.

We won't take that approach. We're investing in making health care stronger and keeping health-care workers safe.

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

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

Mr. Balcaen: Another direct question that was not answered. The question was about protecting Manitoba nurses and the release on bail.

Honourable Speaker, this failure to address the safety of health-care workers comes hand in hand with the Justice Minister's failure to address violent offenders. BPS chief Tyler Bates confirmed to media that the man they arrested had a record of violence against those trying to help, and I quote: This isn't the first time he has assaulted a service-care provider. End quote.

How many other repeat offenders is this minister releasing under his failed bail plan?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I want to thank our Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) for the tireless work that he is doing to make Manitoba, including our health-care system, safer for all Manitobans.

And I want to be very clear: After seven and a half years of the failed PCs doing nothing to keep health-care workers safer, we know that the steps we've taken aren't enough, which is why the Justice Minister and myself work very closely together to take very serious steps, like ensuring that over 100 institutional safety officers will be across our sites across this great province of ours.

That is all the while members opposite, including the leader for the opposition, thank Donald Trump for the tariffs that make lives harder for health-care workers and threaten to privatize, if they have the chance, our health-care system. That's—[interjection]

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Mr. Balcaen: This Justice Minister has had nearly two years to address serious workplace violence issues at all Manitoba hospitals.—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

I stand corrected. Time for oral questions had expired.

PETITIONS

Phoenix School

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

Phoenix School, a kindergarten to grade 5 school located in Headingley, has experienced consistent

enrolment growth over the last several years. Enrolment is expected to reach 275 students in the next two years.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this petition is signed by Emma Filion, Joe Filion, Jamie Peterson and many, many other Manitobans.

Little Mountain Park

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The Manitoba Highways department has expressed a desire to have the CentrePort Canada Way to Chief Peguis Trail extension developed to follow

Klimpke Road with a termination point on the CentrePort Canada Way.

(2) The proposed path would eliminate a portion of Little Mountain Park, which abuts Klimpke Road, private residences and the neighbouring Little Mountain SportsPlex.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

To urge the provincial government to recognize the impact of the proposed route on Little Mountain Park, The Players Course, the neighbouring Little

Mountain Sportsplex and the citizens and tourists who use and visit them; and

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

* (15:00)

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): I wish to present the following petition.

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

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

(2) Despite repeated violations of his bail conditions, the officer was free—apologize, Honourable Speaker. The offender was free to roam the streets—okay, let's try it again. The offender was free to roam the streets and to ultimately claim Kellie's life. The 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 the 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 make 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 the repeat violent offenders are held accountable and the public safety is prioritized over leniency; and

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

Honourable Speaker, this petition was signed by Margaret Nelissen. Nielsen *[phonetic]*. Nielsen *[phonetic]*. Nelson *[phonetic]*.

Some Honourable Members: Nielsen *[phonetic]*.

Mr. Khan: Nielsen *[phonetic]*, Mark Nielsen *[phonetic]* and Brayden Twist.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Death of Jordyn Reimer—Judicial Review Request

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

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

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

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

(3) A concerned citizen took the keys from the impaired driver earlier in the evening to ensure he could not drive impaired. The accomplice retrieved the keys from the 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 standard and recommended charges be laid against the accomplice. The Crown prosecutor declined to prosecute the accomplice.

(5) The family of Jordyn Reimer has called for the prosecution of the accomplice and that the decision not to 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 in the Peter Nygård file, which ultimately led to a reversal of 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.

Honourable Speaker, this petition was signed by Dave Taylor, Derek Bengco, Richard Perscona [*phonetic*] and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

* (15:10)

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

(6) Premiers across Canada, including 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 provinces—sorry, 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 carbon tax.

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

We petition the legislative of—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 Nhan Amore [*phonetic*], Lu Saito, Debbie Spencer and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Provincial Road 352

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The Provincial Road 352 is an 87.5-kilometre 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.

(2) The route is gravel for most of its length, with two paved sections: one from PTH 5 to 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 has seen ruts and damage to the gravel sections, those of which are featured online at CAA's worst roads.

(4) The promotion of PR 352 weight restriction to an RTAC 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 off 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 agriculture 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:

(1) 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 1.5-mile stretch from Birnie to PTH 5 and to provide an integrity assessment.

This petition has been signed by Melissa Rossnagel, Rob Waddell, Melanie Beck and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition, Honourable Speaker, is signed by Sue Antymis, Lex Antymis, Terry Neplyk and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislature.

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 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. The tragedy was entirely preventable.

* (15:20)

(3) The Criminal Code falls under the 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 allows dangerous offenders 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.

And, Honourable Speaker, this petition is signed by Kaytlin Wilson, Tye Finlanson [*phonetic*], Aaron Stieger [*phonetic*] and many other Manitobans.

Thank you.

Funding Crime Cost Mitigation for Small Business

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): I wish to present the following petition.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We urge the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support Manitoba small businesses through specific funding to reimburse the expenses and insurance deductibles that they incur as a result of crime.

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

Morden Waste Water Project

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

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

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

Morden's—(3) Morden's waste water system has operated beyond capacity for years, prompting the Province in 2019 to halt property subdivisions due to insufficient waste—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 million to 108 million.

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

(6) Despite 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 an 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 delay and ensure no hindrance to growth and economic development for Morden and southern Manitoba.

This petition has been signed by Fred E. Krause, Ed Zacharias and Elisabeth Wolfe and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

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

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

(1) 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.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

(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 regional health authority.

(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.

* (15:30)

(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 is—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 petition is signed by Robert Hofer, Kurt Burnes, Ryan Person and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Construct New Personal-Care Home—Stonewall

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The government of Manitoba funded the design for a new personal-care home in Stonewall to address the critical need for additional home-care 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 community.

(7) Investing in the timely construction of this personal-care home will provide essential services to a growing senior population, support 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 Lauren Briggs, Frank Seidel, Gloria Kilgallen and many, many Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

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 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 homeschool 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 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 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.

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

This petition has been signed by Kitana McDougal, Frank Wasarberg [*phonetic*], Gabrielle Friesen and many, many other Manitobans.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Authority

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

* (15:40)

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

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

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

(4) An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will reduce transportation costs for patients as well as reduce the burden on

stretcher service and ambulance use. It will bring care closer to home and reduce wait times for MRI scans across the province.

(5) Located around Portage la Prairie are the Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay and Long Plain First Nations reserves. Indigenous peoples in Canada disproportionately face barriers in 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.

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

Thank you.

Construct New Vocational High School—Neepawa

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The Beautiful Plains School Division is among the fastest growing school divisions in Manitoba and began planning for a new high school in Neepawa in 2019 to address the division's rapid population growth.

(2) Current schools in Neepawa are over capacity as they were built for 300 students, resulting in the use of nine portables and the need for 10 additional portables within the next two years.

(3) Neepawa serves as a key agricultural and commercial hub in western Manitoba and is facing

significant shortages in skilled trades and an overextended apprenticeship program.

(4) The Neepawa region is in urgent need of a new vocational high school to support both students and the local economy.

(5) On March 24, 2023, the previous Progressive Conservative provincial government announced the construction of a new vocational high school in Neepawa with a targeted opening date of September 2027.

(6) Since that announcement, the current provincial government has not provided updates or timelines for proceeding with the project, leaving the community without a clear path forward.

(7) This delay in action has made overcrowded classrooms worse, forced the use of makeshift teaching spaces and created hallway education, all of which lowers the quality of education for students and threatens future growth in the Neepawa region.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to immediately proceed with the construction of the new vocational high school in Neepawa and provide clear timelines for its completion.

(2) To urge the provincial government to ensure the new school supports the local economy by meeting the demand for skilled trades training, apprenticeship programs and adult learning opportunities.

(3) To urge the provincial government to address overcrowding in all Neepawa schools by ensuring adequate and permanent classroom space and facilities are built to accommodate current and future students.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this petition has been signed by Rick Rivers, Luke Lovenjak, Marcel Lemire and many other Manitobans.

Funding for Outlet Channels Project

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

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

(3) The level of Lake Manitoba is regulated to be between 810.5 to 812.5 feet above sea level. In 13 of the last 18 years, lake levels have increased this range.

(4) In 2011, Lake Manitoba levels reached 817 feet above sea level. On May 31, 2011, record-high water levels combined with northwest winds gusting to nearly 100 kilometres per hour caused levels to approach over 820 feet above sea level, which resulted in unprecedented flooding and widespread damage to areas around Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. Previously, the lakefront properties found themselves three kilometres offshore.

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

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

* (15:50)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse its decision to cut the funding for Lake Manitoba, Lake St. Martin's outlet channels project and to immediately take steps to expedite this completion.

This has been signed by Scott Sambrook, Judy Swanson and Cindy Branum and many other Manitobans.

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further—the honourable member for Midland.

Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North): 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 service plan, construction of the new Portage regional health facility is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from the added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but 'significantly' the addition of an MRI machine.

(2) An MRI machine is a non-invasive medical and 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.

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

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

(5) Located around Portage la Prairie are the Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay and Long Plain First Nations reserves. Indigenous peoples in Canada disproportionately face barriers in 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 imaging.

(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 wait times for patients and provider care sooner.

Honourable Speaker, 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 Norma Einarson, Steve Einarson and many, many, many more fine Manitobans.

Provincial Road 352

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): I wish to present the following petition.

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

(1) Provincial Road 352, PR 352, is an 87.5-kilometre–54.4-mile–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.

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

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

* (16:00)

(4) The promotion of PR 352 weight restriction to an RTAC 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 of PR 352 from the community of Birnie to 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 I 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:

(1) 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; and

(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 Nathan White, Rebecca White, Andrea Lenton and many, many other Manitobans.

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further petitions, grievances?

Orders of the day.

The honourable Minister of Education, on House—*[interjection]*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable Minister of Education, on House business.

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Acting Government House Leader): I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 21, The Protecting Youth in Sports Act; Bill 24, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Bill 29, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act; Bill 44, The Matriarch Circle Act and Amendments to The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act (Ribbon Skirt Day).

The Deputy Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, at 6 p.m. to consider the following: Bill 21, The Protecting Youth in Sports Act; Bill 24, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Bill 29, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act; and Bill 44, the matriarch circle and amendments to commemoration of days, weeks and months act, ribbon skirt day.

* * *

MLA Schmidt: Can you please call third reading of the following bills: Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes); followed by Bill 31, The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act (Various Acts Amended).

The Deputy Speaker: It has been announced that we will be doing concurrence and third reading on Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes); followed by Bill 31, The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act (Various Acts Amended).

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

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

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I move, seconded by the Minister for Agriculture, that Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques (équité alimentaire pour un apprentissage durable), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

MLA Schmidt: It is a privilege to rise today on what is really a beautiful day in so many ways. The sun is shining down upon us today as we honour and recognize Red Dress Day. It's a very important day here in Manitoba to honour and recognize the families and the survivors and the folks that we are still missing from the MMIWG2S+ community. But the sun is shining down on all of us today as we do that important work.

We're also very excited about the Winnipeg Jets having moved on to the next round of the playoffs, and to add to this beautiful day, we are also entering into the third reading of Bill 17, also known as Nello's Law, a historic piece of legislation.

Bill 17 will codify our government's universal nutrition program into law. This program, the universal nutrition program, was the vision of our dear friend and colleague, the late Nello Altomare. Many of us in this Chamber have had the great privilege and opportunity to get up in this House and put words on the record about Nello's leadership and his vision on this issue. But, again, we know that Nello's work—all of his work, including his leadership on introducing the

universal nutrition program here in Manitoba, was guided by the principle that every child matters and that no child should have to learn on an empty stomach.

I've been reflecting a lot about the outcomes that we're seeing from the universal nutrition program, and I know that myself, as Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, and also as the MLA for Rossmere, just had a great week, as all of the members of this House did, visiting our constituencies and hearing from constituents and educators and students and families about the impacts of the universal nutrition program.

And, you know, honourable Deputy Speaker, the universal nutrition program, again, introduced under the leadership of our—of the great Nello Altomare, is a lot—is about a lot more than just feeding kids; it really creates a community. I had the great privilege of visiting with a student last week from Seven Oaks School Division who talked about the impact that the universal nutrition program was having not just on her and her family, but on her entire school community. And, again, it goes much further than just the impact that that child—the important impact that that child experiences on the day when they are fed when they are hungry.

* (16:10)

There are so many other amazing impacts when it comes to the universal nutrition program. There's the impact of volunteering. That's what this student talked about. This was a grade 6 student, if my memory serves me correctly, and she talked not only about the great benefit that she received, and, again, being fed when she was showing up at school hungry, but the great privilege and really the amazing life skills and employment skills that this student was receiving by being a student volunteer in her school's universal nutrition program.

And this is a theme that we're hearing from schools and from students across the province, is what they are getting from this program, not just from the food that they are being nourished by, but, again, by the volunteering skills, the food preparation skills, the cooking skills. This child talked about how she learned how to make lasagna and learned how to make chicken noodle soup from scratch. These are skills that will serve this young person for the rest of her life, and she is already building an impressive résumé at a very, very young age.

She also talked about the impact on her family. Her school, under the leadership of the Seven Oaks

School Division, was able to use some of their school nutrition programming to put together spring break hampers, recognizing that hunger doesn't go away when the school bell rings. This school was able to use some of their additional school nutrition program funding to put together spring break hampers that they were able to send students home with over the spring break so that students and their families could be nourished over that week away from school.

So, again, the impacts of Nello's Law, the universal nutrition program, are just countless, honourable Deputy Speaker. The positive impact is—absolutely been incredible to hear. We're hearing not only about those skills that I just talked about that students are receiving in helping to serve their school community, but we're also hearing about, very importantly, increased attendance and better engagement.

And, again, we're hearing this from folks across the province. My colleagues sitting in this Chamber would certainly agree that these are the impacts that they're seeing in their communities. We're hearing from divisions across the province: Park West School Division; Mystery Lake; Frontier School Division; Portage la Prairie School Division; Hanover School Division and including many of the metro city of Winnipeg school divisions.

And the theme that we're hearing is consistent, and that is that students are showing up where they hadn't shown up before; they're showing up on time, and they are better engaged and ready to learn.

I think also about the impacts on children's mental health, and, again, I'm reflecting about—on this student that I met last week from Seven Oaks School Division. This week, honourable Deputy Speaker, is also—today is the first day of Mental Health Week, so I think not only about the value that students get, some of that—we've talked about the increases in attendance, the fact that they're learning life skills; they're serving their community.

But I also think about what the students have shared about the universality of our school nutrition program and what that means to reducing the stigma and the shame that might come from a non-universal school nutrition program. That was the way that school nutrition programs were delivered here in the province prior to Nello's leadership, the \$30-million school nutrition program introduced under the leadership of Nello Altomare and our Premier (Mr. Kinew).

Previous to that it was the community—community organizations that were stepping up in times of

need and doing the best they could with their volunteers and their donors. But often in those cases these programs were not offered universally. Students had to sign up; they had to put up their hand and ask for that nutrition to be provided in the school. And we know the stigma that that can create for students, and, in fact, the stigma and the shame can sometimes prevent students from putting up their hand and getting that nutrition.

So under the leadership of Nello Altomare and our NDP government, no student will have to put up their hand. This universal nutrition program is exactly that: it's universal; it's open for all students, and we know that that will not only have a benefit to their physical health but also their mental health.

So the results that I'm sharing with the Chamber today, honourable Deputy Speaker, really highlight what Nello knew already, and that's that food is not only essential for a student's health and well-being but also for their success in the classroom. That's why our NDP government talks about the universal nutrition program as a—creating generational change here in the province of Manitoba.

Our Manitoba universal nutrition program was the first of its kind in Canada and inspired the federal government to follow suit and fund a national school food program. So not only has Nello's leadership made a difference for kids in Manitoba, but, in fact, for kids all across our great country.

Nello led the way introducing the program, and our NDP team is very proud to continue on that legacy in his honour.

By making the universal nutrition program the law here in Manitoba, at the heart of our nutrition program are four principles: access, accommodation, equality and quality, and guided by those four principles, schools will be required to respond to the needs of their local community and use food that is locally sourced wherever possible.

Unfortunately, honourable Deputy Speaker, despite all of these clear benefits, benefits that we're already seeing, despite these positive results that we're hearing and already seeing across our province, impacting the lives of students here in Manitoba, unfortunately, there are members of this House that oppose the universal nutrition program and oppose feeding kids.

Our NDP government will never allow Nello's Law and Nello's good work to be undone, and we will never allow this House to take away food from hungry kids. That's why Nello's Law stipulates that Cabinet

members will be subject to a 20 per cent cut in ministerial salary if a bill is passed to reduce or repeal the legal obligation to provide every child's right a free nutrition program.

I also want to thank MFL president Kevin Rebeck, who presented at committee and spoke in favour of Bill 17 and reminded the members of the committee why it is so important to protect Nello's Law and the universal nutrition program from any future government who might not believe in feeding hungry children.

Finally, honourable Deputy Speaker, I want to extend and put on the record the sincere gratitude of our government to the many incredible community partners that helped feed hungry kids across our province. We would like to thank the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba; we would like to thank Harvest Manitoba; Breakfast Club of Canada, our federal partners for stepping up with funding. We would like to thank all of Manitoba school divisions, community organizations, all of the many educators, the volunteers, the school chefs, again, the student volunteers, so many of which I've had the chance to meet and thank for their incredible work.

We thank all of you for partnering with our government in the most noble of work, which is feeding our youngest Manitobans and creating the success that we all seek to see here in Manitoba.

I'd like to speak briefly to the students here in Manitoba: we want you to dream big, and big dreams require strong minds, and strong minds require good nutrition.

So our government's commitment to you, students of Manitoba, is if you can show up with your big dreams, our NDP government will always be there to help feed your mind, feed your tummy, make sure your tummy's full and make sure that every child here in Manitoba can reach their full potential.

Thank you, honourable Speaker. Merci, miigwech and every child matters.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): It gives me—I'm honoured, actually, to stand and put a few words on the record today on Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Nutrition Equality for Lasting Learning Outcomes), and I appreciate some of the words that the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning (MLA Schmidt) puts on the record today, and it's nice to know that she put a few more words on the record as well today.

I mean, we, on this side of the House, of course, contrary to the rhetoric that the minister would put on the record, absolutely feel that children should not be going to school hungry. And there's many factors to why children might go to school hungry, and, you know, we recognize the importance of the good nutrition and, definitely, it leads to the success in the classroom, and, matter of fact, it leads to success and not only in the classroom, but throughout life, honourable Deputy Speaker.

* (16:20)

I mean, the minister—I'm glad that she listened to people at the various, you know, committees and even to myself, putting a few words on the record, that she actually, today, for third reading spoke longer today on third reading than the Premier (Mr. Kinew) did on his own budget.

The Speaker in the Chair

So, that's good to hear that, you know, the minister also decided to put on the record some of the organizations that she had consulted with as well. I know during question period on a few of the education bills, we had asked those questions on the Q & A part of bill debate during second reading, and she couldn't answer those questions.

But we did find out the evening of committee why some of those questions weren't answered, and basically it was the fact that just that morning, the morning of committee, she took it upon herself to finally consult with people. And that was good. You know, better late than never. And we'll see how some of the information that came forward from committee gets implemented in some of the other bills.

I know on Bill 17, for example, there wasn't a whole lot of amendments brought forward. There were a couple presentations, you know, that came and spoke at committee. We know that in regards to Bill 17 and the other bills that were being discussed at committee that night—I mean, that's part of the democratic process. Here in Manitoba, one of very few provinces in Canada that has—that gives the public the ability to come and present at committee. So you go through the first reading, second reading and, of course, you know, during second reading, you have the opportunity to do a Q & A segment and then debate the bill, and then take it—then it passes to committee.

Again, you know, since we're talking about bills passing to committee, I mean, I take a look back to April 8, 2025. I know that the—

An Honourable Member: Seine River.

Mr. Ewasko:—the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) has a few words that she'd like to put on the record, so when I'm done she'll have the opportunity. So that's good.

So if I look back to second reading debate on Bill 17, we're talking April 8, 2025. And if the public—I know there's many people watching from home, you know, and the gallery as well here, but I'm not able to bring the people into the gallery into the debate, so I won't.

So again, April 8, 2025, when we were discussing Bill 17, it actually passed. And so if you take a look in Hansard, Honourable Speaker, because I know that, you know, once session is done, no doubt you reflect on the day's proceedings and you go back and you read various different things that had happened throughout the day, because of course, myself as the former interim Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party took some of your advice to heart on a daily basis.

And since we are here speaking about Bill 17, third reading, on nutrition, I would like to take also this opportunity to congratulate the MLA for Fort Whyte, our new Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the MLA for Fort Whyte, to be our leader.

And I think, Honourable Speaker, much like when we start talk about debates on Bill 17 and various other things that we do in this great Chamber of ours, I think it does—you know, he set the tone today, talking about decorum when we saw the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and his front bench, and some of the ones that are in the third bench from the NDP side who are trying to jockey for position during that Cabinet shuffle that's coming up. They're trying to be like some of the members of the front bench. *[interjection]*

And the member for Seine River, again, Honourable Speaker, I don't know why they feel that they want to interrupt me. There will be lots of time to put some words on the record in regards to Bill 17, and I understand that the member for Seine River also was a teacher, you know, much like myself, and—but obviously a little different.

And I know that probably the member for Seine River is probably, you know, I don't know, feeling maybe a little anxious, especially when we're talking about Bill 17 where possibly not only the member for Seine River, but other members on the other—on the NDP's side—felt strongly that maybe that they would be having a bit of a Cabinet shuffle and had the

opportunity to bring forward, you know, Bill 17 and some of the other bills that were coming forward.

So anyways, Honourable Speaker, where I was going with the reading from Hansard and that, and I know that, you know, the Education Minister herself was talking about information, putting stuff on the record again today, but she failed to say that, actually, second reading of Bill 17 actually passed.

The—and matter of fact, I'm reading from April 8, 2025, Hansard, 1132, you declared the motion carried. Ayes 49, nays 0. I mean, so we're talking about—this was a bill that no one stood in the way of.

We all feel, and I do believe all sides of the House, even though the Minister of Education and other people on the NDP government benches want to create this narrative out there that is false, is absolutely false, and puts information out into the universe and out into Hansard about people not being in favour of feeding children, and I think that's just wrong.

But that just seems to be the narrative, as we heard in question period today again, on the divisive tactics, the bullying tactics, and, again, examples of the toxic environment that we have here in the Manitoba Legislature. It's unfortunate that the members for—on the NDP government side, and the Kinew government, just can't help themselves. They just can't seem to be able to stand up and answer some questions, and simple questions, much like some of the questions that I had asked on Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act.

You know, things like a simple question. This is question, Q & A sort of 101, where, you know, an opposition, or a member within the Chamber, asks a question in regards to, you know, as simple as who did you consult with bringing forward this bill? And at the time, and I—it's nice to know that the minister had changed her tune and was able to actually sit down with some organizations or people. She even referenced, you know, just to sort of give some evidence that I actually do listen to the minister and what she's saying, what she's putting on the record, about the grade 6 student from Seven Oaks School Division talking about how nutritional snacks or foods are helped, you know, move forward in the education sphere. But not only within the—within education within the school day, but also, you know, helping to go out and then do some of that volunteering, Honourable Speaker.

So again, I mean, the minister has—had started sort of down the path of talking about stats, and we know

that, usually, math is a little more difficult for the Kinew government. And so when they start talking about stats, they start talking about economics, they start talking about anything math-related, numeracy-related, they falter at times.

* (16:30)

But I, too, would like to extend a congratulations and thank them for the hard work that they've done over the years, the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba, for working with not only schools, school divisions, but also community organizations.

You know, the Education Minister talks about how—and then continuously pats themselves on the back, her and her Premier (Mr. Kinew)—about creating the—and to quote from her, the universal nutrition program here in Manitoba. And it really, Honourable Speaker, it's sort of interesting that the minister would stand up in the Chamber and put misinformation on the record in regards to that the—that she's trying to say that the federal government followed the Kinew government's lead, which we know, really, those of us that actually had a finger on the pulse on education, not only in Manitoba but across this great country of ours, is that we started having those conversations with the federal government to try to incorporate and put in a universal, or a national school food program.

And that—those conversations started back in, I'd say in the summer, July of 2022, when the—at the time, former Member of Parliament who was a minister, Karina Gould at the time, was the minister talking about how this would potentially roll out across Canada and then be divided up.

And it's interesting that when the minister was asked the question about federal dollars, she said that there was absolutely zero dollars in the universal child nutrition program, which is actually false, because Manitoba and other provinces have signed on to take part of the billions of dollars that the federal government had put in.

And I actually, at the time, when Karina Gould, the Member of Parliament, the minister—was the minister, I actually enjoyed working with her. Worked on many different initiatives to try to bring, again, early childhood education in—you know, and that's actually the—my predecessor within that file, Rochelle Squires, who had the Early Childhood Learning component, had originally signed the Canada-Manitoba agreement.

And then we basically—I inherited, when Premier Stefanson had then amalgamated the two departments,

Education and Early Childhood Learning. And so that's when I had the privilege and the honour of becoming the Education and Early Childhood Learning minister of the time, and then that's when the conversations started going and started coming on with the national food program.

And so on—when we talk about Bill 17, The Public Schools Amendment Act, the minister's also bringing forward this bill, and, again, we're going to see the bill pass through third reading today, and that's if, you know, members like, you know, the member for Seine River (MLA Cross), who wants to put some words on the record. And I don't know, sometimes I even think the member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway) wants to put some words on the record again. And I think he holds some form of record nationally for putting words on the record.

And so he—I don't know if he's going to stand up today to put a few words on the record or not on Bill 17 or others, but I always like listening to the member for Elmwood get up and speak at times, because, you know, he's experienced. He's got that knowledge, both here at the provincial level, but also at the federal level.

So I think it's, again, nice to have that co-collaboration across the aisle. And that's why, again, we saw the different, you know, the line of answering, or the non-answers that we saw, coming from the Kinew government today on the fact that they just couldn't help themselves, Honourable Speaker.

They just—the NDP ministers, either they were not prepared in regards to their own portfolios or, like we had witnessed today—and I'm not sure if the public cameras caught it—but again, talking about media being in the media gallery, seeing what happens when the cameras are off and the microphones are off. I know that some of the ministers were strongly encouraged when we could visibly see that they were struggling answering some of the most basic questions during QP today, that they were handed their talking points on trying to attack our—

The Speaker: Order, please.

I would ask the member to please keep his comments relevant to the bill.

Mr. Ewasko: So, you know, much like here in the Chamber, again, whether it's QP or whatever else, we talk about nutrition. We're talking about how important nutrition is. Bill 17 that we're debating this afternoon in third reading, we're going to see it pass through third reading and become law sometime,

I guess, early June. We'll see if there's other bills that are going to be brought forward. I know the Education Minister had quite a bit to say, but I just want to reiterate: a lot of the information that the Education Minister continuously puts on the record has some holes in it, Honourable Speaker.

So, again, on this side of the House, on our side of the House, Progressive Conservative opposition party, are absolutely in favour of feeding kids, making sure that students are going to school on a full stomach. And for those students, and myself as a guidance counsellor, and I—a former guidance counsellor, I know that some of the educators on the NDP side had something to do with working in student services a little bit as well. So they know first-hand on how, you know, students function or maybe don't even function as well at school.

And, again, a lot of it was that stigma. Like, you know, the Education Minister mentioned a couple times the stigma of trying to get up and potentially even ask for food if they're coming to school hungry. And I think there has to be that wrap-around service, and that's why when the original—the council for food nutrition here in Manitoba, I mean, we—the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba—we actually had more than doubled the money to them, and they sat with status quo under the former NDP government, under Gary Doer and Greg Selinger.

And, again, you know, we know that Greg Selinger was the role model or the mentor to the now-Premier, the MLA for Fort Rouge, the Premier (Mr. Kinew). And so I don't quite understand why that those dollars were frozen under the NDP government, but we had then went and more than doubled the funding to the council for the children—the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba.

As we move forward, this bill—I mean, we take a look at the funding that was given in education last year. We see the funding that was given to education this year. Honourable Speaker, we're seeing an absolute reduction, a cut to education in this province, and it's—I think that is going to be more detrimental in the long run, in students' abilities to learn numeracy, literacy, science, the arts, moving forward, various different things.

* (16:40)

We know that what's happening is because of the reduction in the school funding and, again, the Education Minister patting herself on the back for some school funding, and yes, there's definitely funding that

is going to a nutrition program here in the province—but I think what's going to happen over the next year or two once we start to see the reports come out from the various schools and the school divisions, is that she's going to see that the program that they actually had launched here in Manitoba is not universal at all.

We know that the—during the big announcement when the Premier, the MLA for Fort Rouge—we know how he really enjoys those photo ops and those ribbon-cutting opportunities—and he sat at a student's desk with this plate of a sandwich, and there was some fruit and veggies and I think there was a milk carton off to the side; there was at least a juice box, I'm sure. And, you know, he had—he was smirking, as he usually does, and the photographers were clicking pictures.

Well, Honourable Speaker, I think that was a little bit disingenuous because I really don't think that all students across this great province of ours are sitting down today, in this universal nutrition program—are sitting down to that plate with a sandwich, fruit, veggies and a juice box or a milk carton—I know not in the various many, many, many schools that I've spoken to and seen. Absolutely, is there snacks? Absolutely. Is there some schools that are providing higher quality or higher, you know, sort of lunches or breakfast? Absolutely, there are. But it's not universal.

We take a look at the dollars that this actually breaks down to, Honourable Speaker. The 2023—that's the latest publicly available data has Manitoba at just under—well, about 220,000 students. You know, we've got approximately the 700 schools, give or take. We talk about the \$30 million that the Education Minister continuously pats herself on the back for. And, again, we want to see kids go to school—children go to school and learn. And for those students that show up and they're hungry, it's good to have that opportunity to be able to go and either get a snack or maybe even something better than that.

But we take a look at what the basic math tells us. And the basic math tells us that it works out to about \$136 per student per year. So, in the '24-25 school year, that's 193 school days. So the Kinew government, Honourable Speaker—I know you—I know you're probably pretty good at math, and I'm not putting you into this debate, but that works out to about 70 cents per student per day, and you know as well as I know that—I don't know where this Kinew government is shopping.

We know that they're not shopping that way for themselves because we've seen the Premier (Mr. Kinew) talk on more than one occasion about his salads that

he purchases for himself that range from \$13 to \$17 for his own office, and I'm not sure if he's using Skip the Dishes or he's actually going out himself and picking these salads up. But we're talking \$13 to \$16 for a salad. When we're talking Bill 17, we're talking The Public Schools Amendment Act, about the amount of dollars or cents. They're not even dollars; they're cents that are going per student, and that's 70 cents.

Now, Honourable Speaker, we're going to go one step farther to talk about the dollars and cents that are being used on the children nutrition council—or, sorry, the universal nutrition program here in Manitoba. What we're seeing is, is that that's not even taking into account the people that actually have to do the work to prepare, to then transport, to potentially put in the infrastructure for, like, the kitchens or the freezers or the fridges and all those types of things.

So you know what, I've had the pleasure of putting a few words on the record. I think we've come to the agreement that all sides of the House: we want to make sure that children are going to school and fed; and those that are not being fed, that there's opportunities for them to get some food.

Because we on this side of the House, the PC Party and the opposition for now—another year and a half, two years to go on that, and I think today was a great start showing Manitobans that we're ready to go, we're government-in-waiting, not like the divisive tactics of the Knew government.

We, on our side of the House, absolutely feel that kids can concentrate better with their bellies full, Honourable Speaker, and that's why we're moving Bill 30 past third reading unless, of course, again, members of the NDP want to stand up and try to hold this bill up again. I don't know why they'd want to do that.

But we're going to see this bill go forward through third reading and receive royal assent and just watch for the minister to come forward with her reports on how this is benefitting students in this great province of ours universally.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Seeing no further questions or no further people wishing to debate, is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

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

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

Bill 31—The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act (Various Acts Amended)

Hon. Mintu Sandhu (Minister of Public Service Delivery): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister for Environment and Climate Change, that Bill 31, The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act (Various Acts Amended), reported from the Standing Committee on Justice, be concurred in and be now read for the third time and passed.

Motion presented.

MLA Sandhu: I'm so proud to be standing in the House on third reading of Bill 31, The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act.

Our government promised in the Throne Speech to end property control that limits competition in the grocery sector. Honourable Speaker, this bill does that by amending The Law of Property Act, The Real Property Act and The Municipal Board Act.

This will stop the use of property controls in ownership and the leasing agreement in the grocery sector to increase competition and stabilize the grocery prices.

New property control cannot be created and existing control—property controls are cancelled unless the holder registers it within six months after the bill passes.

Honourable Speaker, a property control cannot—can be reported to the Municipal Board who will decide whether the property control is in the public interest or should be cancelled.

More competition is—in the grocery industry is expected to increase access to healthy food and make life more affordable for all Manitobans. This is just one of many actions our government has taken to lower costs for families.

I look forward to this bill receiving the unanimous support of this House.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

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

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

* (16:50)

MLA Fontaine: Is there leave to include a list of names of guests in the Hansard 'transcript' for today's sitting, with the names to appear after the members' statement made by the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness (Ms. Smith)?

The Speaker: Is there leave to include a list of names of guests in the Hansard transcript for today's sitting, with the names to appear after the members' statement made by the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness?

Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

Leave has been granted.

The Speaker: The—now we're—speakers to Bill 31.

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): It's a pleasure to have the opportunity to rise today and to speak on this legislation, to be in the people's House and be doing the people's business with the PC team, which is a team that is united under a new leader.

And we're ready to serve and to provide that alternative for hope and optimism and change, and that alternative to the dismal NDP record that we've seen in the last two years. And I'm going to talk about their dismal record—*[interjection]*—I'm going to talk about their dismal record and will have some fun doing that.

But we're here today to debate Bill 31, The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act, and as I said in my previous remarks in—during second reading that the bill is, notionally, a reasonable bill and one that our PC team will be supporting. However, our broader concern is that I don't think it is going to have any impact at all, and we can talk about that.

The bill is aimed at big grocery stores and properties 2,000 square feet or larger, and it does not apply to small convenience stores like the 7-Elevens and other small grocery stores. There's a loophole, essentially, is what it is, that allows for the registration of restrictive covenants by businesses that hold them, that currently have them, and businesses have six months from the date that Bill 31 becomes law to register those restrictive covenants.

So, essentially, every business that relies on those agreements is going to make sure that they're registered,

so they're going to use that back door in this legislation and therefore, I think, nullify the whole point, the effect of this legislation.

I think it's interesting, as well, when you look at some of the reaction to this legislation, and I quote from a CBC article that was published on November 20, 2024, where University of Guelph professor of food economics Mike von Massow said: scrapping restrictive covenants for grocers isn't going to drop grocery prices to levels seen prior to skyrocketing inflation. His quote is: there's no real evidence that these property controls are making a significant difference in a lot of places.

Locally, we have a great quote from local businessman, Munther Zeid, who said if the Premier (Mr. Kinew) wants to truly look into making groceries cheaper, the Province needs to look at wholesale costs. Zeid said he even invited the Premier to call him so that ideas of how to bring prices down can be shared. There's no competition in the wholesale side to force prices down, he added. On the retail side, we cut our margins to try to be more competitive, but there's only so low that you can go. And again, that's from local businessman, Munther Zeid.

And it's interesting that he talks about wholesale costs because that is an area that this government could be working on. And wholesale costs—that goes into interprovincial trade, talking about finding new markets and—finding new markets for Manitoba grocers to be able to buy from more cheaply and thereby lower the cost of groceries.

This Premier (Mr. Kinew) certainly has been travelling; he's been leaving the province to go on trips, on all-expense paid, taxpayer-funded trips—all-inclusive, taxpayer-funded trips to Washington, DC. And he's made not one trip—he's made not one trip to Washington, DC, but two.

And I think the members opposite may be surprised to hear me say this, you know, because they're stuck in their own little echo chamber over there, but the Premier went not once, not twice to Washington, DC, but he came back with zero jobs and zero deals for Manitobans.

And so there's nothing that grocers, that those mom-and-pop operations in our operations—in our communities all across this province—can look to, to say this is what the Premier brought back. And that's unfortunate. It's unfortunate to make those trips, and I think it speaks to what this government is all about, which is showmanship and no substance.

But it's interesting, though, that—and I think this is really important, too, because as I mentioned to the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) that we were going to be talking about her and her government's record here, and how that unemployment has risen from 4 per cent to six—over 6 per cent this year—in their time in office. And that we also found out, and this is in the Winnipeg Free Press, that Manitoba trails provincial peers in 2024 GDP growth. That's devastating.

So, GDP growth: way down; unemployment rate: way up; inflation: way up; food costs: way up. That's the record of this government. Not only that, but 50,000 Manitobans rely on food banks every single month. That's a concern—50,000 Manitobans. There's only 1.3 million of us in this province. Fifty thousand. That's the record of this government. That's the record of this government.

So when you look at this article, Manitoba—and again, the headline: Manitoba trails provincial peers in 2024 GDP growth. How did we get here? Manitoba's GDP growth lagged behind all other Canadian provinces in 2024. The keystone province logged a 1.1 per cent increase in its gross domestic product, falling short of the 1.6 per cent national average.

And as our leader, the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition, said in his line of questioning today, and unfortunately we didn't get an answer, but he quoted Loren Remillard, president of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, who said we need a concerted focus around economic development, Remillard said. The economic horse is not getting the attention it needs, while the social cart is getting heavier and heavier.

And unfortunately—unfortunately, that horse is Manitobans. That horse is Manitoba moms and dads, many of whom got up early this morning and went to

work, and they're working hard to pay down their mortgages, to put their children through school, and they're working hard to get ahead and try to pay their taxes and pay the bills, and unfortunately this NDP government is making life more difficult and is doing absolutely nothing to bring down grocery prices.

So while we support Bill 31, unfortunately, it will be of none effect, and I thank you, Speaker.

The Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

The Speaker: The question is concurrence and third reading of Bill 31, The Property Controls for Grocery Stores and Supermarkets Act (Various Acts Amended).

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

The Speaker: The motion is accordingly passed.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Honourable Speaker, could we have a quorum count?

The Speaker: Just for the member's education, there's no point asking for a quorum count, because we need to ring the bells for a minute, in which case we would run out of time.

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): Oh, boy. Is there leave to call it 5 p.m., Honourable Speaker?

The Speaker: Is there leave to call it 5 p.m.? [Agreed]

Leave has been granted.

Order.

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 5, 2025

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