



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 15, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline 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.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): I ask for leave for the family and friends of Jordyn Reimer to wear their Justice for Jordyn shirts in the gallery this morning—for this morning only, during private members' business.

The Speaker: Is there leave to alter the code of conduct for the gallery to allow Jordyn Reimer family to wear Jordyn Reimer T-shirts in the gallery for this morning only? *[Agreed]*

Leave is granted.

Mr. Johnson: Could you please call Bill 228 until 10:30, followed by Bill 233? *[interjection]* At 10:30, yes. Sorry.

The Speaker: It has been announced that we will do—sorry—second reading of Bill 228, the retail sales amendment act, farmer's identification number, until 10:30, and then from 10:30 to—10:35, we will then go to second reading of Bill 233, The Lyme and Other Tick-borne Diseases Awareness Month Act,

commemoration of days, weeks and months act as amended.

Speaker's Statement

The Speaker: First, I am advising the House that I have received a letter from the Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Johnson), indicating that the opposition caucus has identified Bill 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act, as their first selected bill for this session.

As a reminder to the House, rule 25 permits each recognized party to select up to three private members' bills per session to proceed to a second reading vote. I've therefore been advised that the question will be put on Bill 227 on May 15, 2025 at 10:55 a.m.

As previously announced, I received a letter from the Opposition House Leader, indicating the opposition caucus has identified Bill 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act, as their first selected bill for this session. And in accordance with this letter, and rule 25, the opposition will put on the second reading motion of Bill 227 at—the question will be put on the second reading motion of Bill 227 at 10:55 a.m.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 228—The Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act (Farmer's Identification Number)

The Speaker: And now, as announced, we will proceed to second reading of Bill 228, the retail sales amendment act, farmer's identification number.

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): I move, seconded by member for Portage la Prairie (MLA Bereza), that Bill 227, the retail sales amendment act, farmer's identification number, be read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

The Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Morden-Winkler (Mrs. Hiebert), seconded by the honourable member for Portage la Prairie, that Bill 228, The Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act (Farmer's Identification Number), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Mrs. Hiebert: Thank you, honourable members, colleagues and to my stakeholders for helping me with this—bring this forward.

I want to thank—for the opportunity to speak today on a matter that significantly impacts our agricultural community and the efficiency of doing business in Manitoba, Bill 228, the retail sales amendment act.

At its heart, Bill 228 is about reducing red tape, cutting through unnecessary bureaucracy and acknowledging the realities of modern farming operations. Currently, under The Retail Sales Tax Act, any farmer in Manitoba who wishes to purchase a product or service that qualifies for a tax exemption must provide a wet or digital signature for every transaction that is not clearly listed as exempt.

Think about that. Every single time a farmer or their employee or they send their family members or anybody who needs to pick up that part, picks up—every time they pick up a part or pick up feed or order supplies, anything they need for the farm, especially in remote areas, new declaration must be signed. That's a lot of extra red tape and paperwork that does not need to be done, or shouldn't need to be done. This is not only inconvenient; it is impractical.

And even members of the—who do the delivery or the supplies—deliver the supplies, it's very difficult to have somebody who's just delivering supplies to have to sign something before they can receive it, for the farmer that needs the parts. In requiring a digital signature—signed declaration for every single purchase puts a logistical strain on the system. It burdens the farmer, it burdens the retailer and it does not reflect the realities of how business is conducted on Manitoba's farms today.

* (10:10)

Bill 228 provides a smart, simple and secure solution. Instead of requiring a wet signature every single time, this bill allows for a farmer to obtain a farm identification number: a unique identifier that for every farm has—for every farm operation, much like a GST number. Often—also another way of explaining would be like a co-op number, which a lot of farmers have those in our communities as well.

Once registered, this number can be used for up to two years, replacing the need for repetitive declarations. This number can be provided over the phone, electronically or noted on invoices at the time of purchase. Let me be clear: this is not about removing accountability. Farmers will still be required to sign a declaration once every two years that confirms their intent to use exempt goods and services for farm purposes. What changes is the burden of

repetition: the inefficiencies of having to repeat the same process every single purchase.

This bill is pro-farmer. It's pro-retailer and pro-efficiency and cuts red tape. It empowers our agriculture community with the tools that they need to do their work more effectively, which is what we want to do. We want the farmers to be able to get to work at feeding our communities and the world around us.

It reflects their time and the realities of their operations. Many farmers need that time if it—they know that there's weather coming or anything happening that they need to get those parts as fast as possible, and this just makes it easier for them to not have to worry about the red tape.

And it helps agriculture retailers, also, whether in a small town or large centre, by reducing their record-keeping burden and ensuring compliance in a more manageable way.

Let me give you an example. Imagine a farmer in Swan River sending an employee to pick up a part from a retailer two hours away. Under the current rules, that employee must bring along a signed declaration from the farmer, often a paper form for that specific transaction, or they're required themselves to sign and that is not something that they want—feel comfortable doing.

If it's forgotten or if the weather delays the trip and the form isn't valid anymore, for whatever reason that could be, the process stalls. The retailer is left with uncertainty; the farmer misses valuable time during planting and harvest; everyone loses. But under Bill 228 that farmer's ID number can be given once and remain valid for two years, taking away the burden of others having to sign or the farmer himself having to sign the paper himself every single time they need a part.

The retailer notes a number, verifies it against their records, and the transaction proceeds, smoothly, securely and with full transparency because they have that signed declaration on file at the retailers for those full two years. This bill doesn't just make common sense; it reflects good governance. It aligns Manitoba with modern business practices and shows that our farmers are people who have proven, time and again, to be responsible stewards of the resources and our land.

We need to make sure we show farmers that we care and that we want to make their farming life and their business of farming manageable and easier—as easy as we can. With all the stresses that have

happened over the last while, anything we can do for farmers to alleviate any stress or pressure is something important that we—to do, however big or small it is.

Bill 228 also ensures that retailers can maintain accurate and verifiable records without chasing down paper forms or signatures. With one declaration on file, every transaction can be clearly linked to that farmer's ID number. The streamlining also benefits our taxation division, which will be able to audit and review declarations with greater clarity and consistency. So we're still keeping that accountability on file, and they will be able to do the audits and checks that they need to do, so nothing changes.

This legislation was not crafted in a vacuum. It came from voices of agriculture retailers themselves, from the farming community and from rural stakeholders who said loud and clear that the system isn't working.

This came from a stakeholder specifically in southern Manitoba, saying that it just—it's a lot of extra paperwork and that we need to move to the current day and age. We're very far behind with having to have that wet signature. We need something—we need to do something better. We need to have a better system in place to help get rid of the red tape and make life easier for our farmers.

Bill 228 is that way—it makes that way better. This bill makes it easier to do business, saves time, it reduces paperwork, it acknowledges the complexity of modern agriculture. Agriculture is one of the backbones of our province and of our country, and we need to make sure we value every single thing that happens and what our farmers do for us in our province and for our economy. And it maintains the integrity and intent of the retail sales tax exemption for farming operations.

Let's pass Bill 228 and send a clear message: Manitoba supports its farmers, respects its small and local agricultural businesses and is committed to cutting red tape in smart, meaningful ways for our farmers.

And I want to thank you, farmers, for what you do for us and for our province, and for working so hard at feeding the world.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Questions

The Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following

sequence: first question to be asked by a member from another party; this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): It's a good morning. We are having this opportunity to talk about farmers who feed the world, so thanks to the member for creating this opportunity and looking forward to good discussions on this bill.

I want to ask the member about the consultation process. Who did they consult before drafting this bill, and how was that process carried out?

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): I want to thank the member opposite for that question, and I know that he's also—has a lot of knowledge about agriculture. Was able to sit across the table or—at an event with him at Peak of the Market and it was a really great opportunity for us to meet with our farmers and our agricultural producers.

I've met with quite a few, actually, stakeholders, from large tractor implement sales dealerships that have locations across southern Manitoba. I've had an opportunity to talk to other farming operations, people that are involved with producing—Manitoba pork producers, for example—different organizations that grow canola, so there's a lot of farming questions—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Thank you to the member from Morden-Winkler for bringing this bill forward. It is very important and I know she's worked on this for over a year.

My question is: Why not just use the federal GST number instead of creating a new farm identification number?

Thank you.

Mrs. Hiebert: Thank you to the member for Portage la Prairie for that question; it's a very good question.

So it's a—obviously, the GST process is a well-streamed, aligned process. The only thing is it's a federal program and it's directly just for GST, so we do need to have our own system in place for Manitoba for this specific farming bill—or for the tax rebate for the farmers.

Thank you.

Mr. Brar: The member is proposing a farmer identification number under this bill, and I guess there must be some costs to develop and administer this farm ID number.

So does the member have an estimate of these costs and what would be required to implement this?

* (10:20)

Mrs. Hiebert: Thank you for that question.

The reason we have this number is because it often—a lot of the farmers have specific land numbers to kind of help them to—like, they've got like a section number. It's actually a process or a, like a three- or four-digit number with dashes and it's—it actually gives you that location of the farm and the land and that's something that they do keep track of right now.

It just would be easier for our farmers to be able to have a number. Just like if you have a co-op number, you go into the grocery store, you just kind of have to rattle off your number, and they just put you into the system. It's much easier and much better for the farmer that way, and it takes—gets rid of the red tape.

MLA Bereza: Again, I know the member from Morden-Winkler spent a lot of time on this bill, but my question is: Why is this needed right now?

Mrs. Hiebert: Very good question. So currently, it's a very archaic, old system that we have so it's been like this for years and years and years, where they have to actually physically sign a paper, declaration every single time that they go in to get—if they need exemption for something, and we just need to make sure we start moving forward in this day and age.

We need to make it easier. We have so many, so much technology to make things easier for our farmers to do, and that's the reason. It's time we need to do this. It's time to move toward—into our future that we live in right now.

Mr. Brar: My previous question was I—maybe I put it again. My question actually was to understand, once we decide to go ahead in this direction to set this up, to provide farmer identification number to our hard-working farmers, so to make that happen there would be some process. There would be some human resources required or some processes required.

So my question to the member is, like: Do they have any estimate of the costs required to do that or any other requirements to make that happen?

Mrs. Hiebert: This isn't something that we can just say it's going to have a certain cost. We actually can't—we don't, as opposition, we don't bring anything forward with money related or money bills related. We can't do that. Just so that the member knows the cost from me.

This is just something that we're basically changing and making it easier for the farmers to get that exemption, and only have to sign the form once every two years rather than signing it every single time they go out to buy a bolt or a nut or a tractor or a—anything, seed or feed for their animals. This is something that just makes it easier. It's not a money bill.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you to the member from Morden-Winkler for bringing forward Bill 228, an important piece of legislation.

As a producer myself, I understand how cumbersome and outdated a signature system is for the tax exemption that is owed to Manitoba producers, but could the member from Morden-Winkler please tell us how the system of a liquid ink signature is out of date and cumbersome in today's operations.

Mrs. Hiebert: Thank you for that question.

So, yes, in order for a—right now, for them to get that exemption, they have to physically sign a declaration every single time they go pick something up, so whether they're—wherever their farm is located, it's often two to three hour drive sometimes, and they need—they can't leave their farm; they're in the middle of seeding. They're going—they're trying to get their seeding done before the rain hits.

There's a lot of factors and we need to make sure we take away the older—like, cumbersome system to make it easier so those farmers can get that part, they can get—send somebody. It doesn't have to be them that has to make sure that signature gets to that person.

So that's the reason we need to do this.

Thank you.

Mr. Brar: I guess Bill 228 would still require vendors to collect the farmers' information and keep it for verification purposes. So did the member anticipate any benefits for the retailers in particular?

Mrs. Hiebert: Yes, thank you. That's a very good question.

This is something that actually was really brought forward by the retailers specifically to me, including farmers as well, but the retailers were saying to me

that for them, their systems, their electronic systems of payment, verification is—they don't actually—are not able to take that signature anymore. Most things are tap. It's very, very old, archaic system.

So, yes, this will make it much easier for them, be—what signature needing—the declaration only needing to be signed once every two years, and they just keep that on file. This actually alleviates a lot of extra paper work for the retailers as well.

Mr. Narth: I know that on this side of the House, many of our members are familiar with agriculture practices and this system. But some skepticism may be from the other side of the House that representatives of farmers now may be able to abuse the system by purchasing products that shouldn't be exempt from this PST tax.

Would the member be able to explain to us how specialized farm equipment has become and that parts for current farm equipment isn't translatable into anything off farm?

Mrs. Hiebert: Thank you, yes, thank you for that question.

All the checks and balances are still in place. This is just basically for taking away the extra signature every single time. There will still be accountability for farmers to make sure that—and for retailers—to make sure that parts are bought and purchased are specifically for farming, or needing—for their farm.

And, yes, there's so much technology now that's specifically just for farming and farming agribusinesses, for people who are raising animals, cattle—there's such a specific—and, yes, we need to make sure that we make it easier for our farmers and also make sure that we make it easier for our retailers also to keep track of what is for farming and what is not for farming.

Mr. Brar: I want to say there is no skepticism here. We are trying to understand the situation and the subject better through this question-answer period, and—which is great, which is what we are here for.

The member just mentioned that the current system is an old system. So I want to understand how old the system is, and were there any opportunities or efforts in recent years by any of the governments to make things better? If she can share that information with us, please.

Mrs. Hiebert: Yes, definitely. That's a very good question.

Actually, one of the retailers that actually—I consulted on this has been in agriculture retail for many, many years, and he said specifically he doesn't even know how long—old this is because it's been going on for so long. So I would say at least, like, past 20 years, 20, 30 years.

And so, yes, this is definitely an old, archaic system, and yes. So I think that's time for us to move forward, time to us—for us to put our farmers first and time to make sure we pass this bill. And also, they have consulted with the current government as well, so they have been there to see them as well to bring this forward. So it's a—they've been letting everybody know this is a need that needs to get passed.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is now open for debate.

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): I certainly wish the opposition had thought this bill was important enough to give us more time to debate its merits, but I'm really pleased to have a couple of minutes to express my deep support for farmers.

You know, Honourable Speaker, I grew up on a farm in southwestern Ontario, admittedly a small farm. My dad owned a lumber mill, so it was my friend's grandpa next door who actually farmed our land. But I grew up surrounded by wheat fields and dairy cattle, and rural agriculture life is a part of my DNA.

While my family said grace at the table every night, I also learned to thank a farmer when my head was bowed. And this deep respect for farmers and the work of feeding families stays with me today, and I see that value promoted in our caucus and at our Cabinet table.

We have an Agriculture Minister who has farmed his entire life, and that informs our policies through his lived experience. You know, farmers have endured many hardships in recent years, and the PC government raised costs and took services away from farmers and producers, turning their backs on them. Our government is listening to farmers and producers.

This is what farmers need. Our government is listening. We're making life more affordable for them—

* (10:30)

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

The hour being 10:30, when this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have nine minutes remaining.

Bill 233—The Lyme and Other Tick-borne Diseases Awareness Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)

The Speaker: As previously announced, we will now consider second reading of Bill 233.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I move, seconded by the member for Agassiz (Ms. Byram), that Bill 233, The Lyme and Other Tick-borne Diseases Awareness Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended), be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Cook: We are now in the thick of tick season in Manitoba and Manitobans are no strangers to wood ticks. Whether we've found them on ourselves, on our kids or on our pets, I would bet almost every Manitoban has encountered a tick.

Unfortunately, some ticks have the potential to make us very, very sick, but armed with the right knowledge and tools, there is actually a lot we can do to prevent tick-borne diseases. Blacklegged ticks that can carry Lyme disease, anaplasmosis and babesiosis are most commonly found in and along the edge of forests and in areas with thick woody shrubs or other vegetation.

But they can also be found in urban areas, including your own back yard. These ticks are typically found from snowmelt to snowfall, and activity peaks in the spring and the fall.

There are three reportable tick-borne diseases in Manitoba: Lyme disease, anaplasmosis and babesiosis, and, unfortunately, Lyme disease is becoming more and more common in southern Manitoba. The prevalence of Lyme disease exploded in Manitoba from one confirmed case in 2009 to 33 confirmed cases in 2022, and in 2024, there were 77 confirmed cases, the highest number in at least eight years. And recent studies suggest that Lyme disease is under-reported, meaning these numbers are actually low.

The good news is that, armed with the right tools, Manitobans can take steps to prevent tick bites. The most important offense is a good defense. Preventing Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases is the key,

but where prevention fails, Manitobans need the awareness and education to know what to do if they've been bitten by a tick.

Most Manitobans probably consider themselves pretty knowledgeable. I know I used to. For example, when one of my daughters was still under the age of two, we found a perfect bull's-eye rash on her arm. We didn't know where she'd been exposed to a tick and we had no idea she'd even been bitten, but we knew enough that we knew we needed to get her to the doctor right away, who thankfully prescribed antibiotics.

And just last fall, I found a tick on one of my kids in their hair. It had clearly been there for a while. But I was a bit of a loss. I didn't know how to safely remove it or if I should go straight to the doctor, or if I should wait for symptoms to appear. Was there a test for Lyme disease? I had no idea, and let me tell you, when you're in the middle of that minor crisis, that's not the time you want to turn to doctor Google for information.

So this is the point in my remarks where I would like to acknowledge our guests in the gallery today. We are joined here today by Marnie Le Page of Lyme Manitoba, and another advocate on this very important issue. And most of the advocates for Lyme disease in Manitoba either have their own lived experience of Lyme disease, or one of their loved ones has Lyme disease and they have the experience of caring for them. Marnie is a long-time advocate who was generous with her time and expertise as I worked on this bill.

She sometimes speaks to groups to promote awareness of the dangers associated with a tick bite and these are some of the questions that she asks people: What is the best repellent to use to prevent a tick bite? Where are the ticks in Manitoba? Can you identify the type of tick that bit you? Do you know how to do a proper tick check on yourself? Did you know that removing a tick improperly can increase your risk of infection? Do you know the proper removal methods? What are the symptoms of Lyme? And do you know when to seek medical attention?

The fact is, most Manitobans probably can't answer all of these questions. And it's important that people be educated on Lyme disease and its symptoms to ensure they can get a clinical diagnosis and medical treatment after exposure, because not every case of Lyme disease has that classic bull's-eye rash.

I very quickly want to put a few words on the record about prevention and how to prevent tick bites. According to Manitoba Health, some of the best ways to prevent a tick bite when you're in the bush is to stay on trails, in the centre, and avoid the brush; to wear light-coloured long pants, because that makes it easier to see a tick; and long-sleeved shirts; and to tuck in your clothing; to tuck your pants into your socks, to create a barrier and to use an appropriate tick repellent.

And then, when you get back, you should perform a thorough tick check after spending time outdoors, to inspect yourself, your children and your pets for black-legged ticks and remove any found as soon as possible. And you also want to check all your gear and all your clothes.

Last summer I took my kids to the Narcisse snake dens and I can't even tell you how many ticks we came back with. They were all over our car, all over our clothes. We literally had each kid strip down in the garage before they went in the house and left all the clothes out in the garage, because we didn't want to bring them in the house.

Finding and removing ticks in a timely manner can significantly reduce the likelihood of disease transmission. But if you've been bitten by a tick, if all your attempts at prevention fail, you want to remove the tick as soon as possible. It's important to do it properly, to avoid spreading bacteria. You want to use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull up with steady, even pressure.

There's a lot of myths out there about how to remove a tick—don't smother it in Vaseline, don't take a lighter to it—those methods can actually increase the risk of infection.

You also want to mark the date of the tick bite on a calendar and save the tick. That's important. And if the tick is engorged, if you identify it as a black-legged tick or if you develop symptoms like the classic bull's-eye rash, it's important to see your health-care provider as soon as possible, because early diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease is important and can help prevent late Lyme disease.

Lyme disease can be debilitating. I've spoken with families who have dealt with late-stage Lyme disease. It can lead people to have to stop work, to have to stop school. I've heard of cases where people have lost their homes and relationships have deteriorated because this disease is difficult to diagnose. And that's one of the other challenges that

advocates have told me about, is the challenge with getting a diagnosis.

I am not a medical professional and I want to be careful not to put incorrect information on the record, but it's my understanding that a test won't pick up Lyme until it's well into your system. And that's why if you've been bitten by a tick and you know it's a black-legged tick or it's been on there for a little while and it's engorged, you should go to your doctor. And hopefully your doctor will know that it's okay to prescribe antibiotics right away, to prevent Lyme. That's what happened both times I took my kids to the doctor.

But sometimes, maybe doctors aren't aware of this, and that's why, on Manitoba Health's website, there's actually a letter you can download and take with you to your health-care provider. And it's a letter to health-care providers, to talk about what the protocol is if somebody comes in under these conditions and advises that it's acceptable to prescribe antibiotics in that situation, to prevent the onset of Lyme disease.

There's so much information out there that really can help people. Designating May as Lyme and other tick-borne diseases awareness month will serve to promote awareness and education about these serious diseases, their symptoms, and importantly how to prevent them or what to do when prevention fails.

And there are many low-cost, high-reward things government and others could do during Lyme and other tick-borne diseases awareness month; things like social media campaigns, education through schools and daycares about prevention and what to do if you find a tick; notifications in high-risk areas where black-legged ticks are known to be, like parks and trails; promoting awareness at major events. I know back when West Nile first arrived in Manitoba, I worked for an organization that contracted with the government and we hired kids to go to Folklorama and all the different summer festivals. And we had a tent set up and educated people on West Nile disease. We could do the same with Lyme.

And, of course, supporting health-care providers to provide timely access to treatment after a tick bite and educating health-care providers about the importance of antibiotic therapy within 72 hours of a tick bite and the importance of a clinical diagnosis for those dealing with Lyme disease. Knowledge is power.

* (10:40)

I would like to once again thank Marnie Le Page and Lyme Manitoba for their tireless work and

advocacy on this important issue that affects so many Manitobans.

Let's get this bill on to committee and passed without further delay.

Questions

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

The floor is now open for questions.

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): I'd like to start off the question period by welcoming Marnie Le Page as well as Lyme Manitoba here to the gallery. I am grateful for their advocacy across our province. Everyone in this Chamber has had their lives touched by tick-borne diseases. Course, we're a province that enjoys the outdoors, and so I thank the member as well for her work with these grassroots advocates.

My question to the member opposite is: What inspired her to introduce this bill?

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): Thank you to my colleague across the way for that question.

There were a few different factors at play here. One of them is that I represent Charleswood and Headingley, and running straight through the entire constituency is the Harte Trail and the Headingley Grand Trunk Trail, a very popular hiking destination for my constituents. They take their dogs for walks there, they cycle through there; it's very popular. It's also full of ticks.

We have a lot of deer in Charleswood—you may have heard, it's kind of our thing—and they carry the ticks everywhere with them, so it's a real problem in my constituency.

And I know that I've encountered them in my life and I hear from people all the time who are a little unsure of what to do when they find a tick on themselves or their kids or their pets, and I think that's why this bill is so important.

MLA Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Like to thank the member for bringing forward this important bill today.

As Manitobans are getting really weary of being inside and all that from the long winter, they get anxious to go hiking and, you know, ATVing and all these things.

I'm—my member to the question—I mean, my question to the member is: Should they be worried about ticks at this particular junction when they're doing these activities?

Mrs. Cook: Thank you to my colleague from Dawson Trail for that question.

Manitobans should be cautious and they should be aware and they should be educated. I would never advocate for panic, but education and prevention are the keys when it comes to Lyme disease. Knowing what to look for; knowing how to protect yourself; knowing what is an appropriate repellent to keep ticks away; how to dress to keep ticks off of you; how to properly perform a tick check on yourself, on your kids or on your pets; and how to remove a tick if you find one on you—those are all really important factors that should ease people's worry, but it is really important to be cautious and aware.

MLA Dela Cruz: Our government wants to help ensure the protection of Manitobans during tick season. We have online guides available to ensure Manitobans can protect themselves, their homes, their pets and their loved ones. We've also joined the new eTick platform that Manitobans can download with information about how to recognize, remove and protect yourself against ticks.

So my question for the member opposite is if she can share more about how we can tangibly raise awareness for Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.

Mrs. Cook: The member opposite is correct. Actually, Manitoba Health's website is very good; it's got a lot of information out there, but people have to go looking for it.

So the idea behind this bill is that by creating an awareness month, it will inspire action and awareness in the broader community.

Certainly, I know that media are interested in this issue; they tend to pick up on issues where there's an awareness month to refer back to. So, for example, we're talking about increasing awareness in daycares, in schools, in areas where people go camping and hiking and really just spreading the word.

Social media is another great tool for this, for spreading awareness about what to do if you get a tick bite and how to prevent a tick bite in the first place.

I think there's a lot more that can be done—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I want to, again, thank the member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook) for bringing forward this important bill.

I know my family member—I've had a family member who was treated with—or for—treated for Lyme disease some years ago, so I do feel that there's some importance in bringing this forward here today.

I just want to ask the member, although she did make reference and provided some general guidelines around Lyme disease, can she share with us here in the House: Is there a cure for Lyme disease?

Mrs. Cook: Thank you to my colleague from Agassiz for that question and for seconding the bill today. I know she has a personal connection to this.

The answer of whether there's a cure for Lyme is complicated. A lot of cases of Lyme can be treated with antibiotics, but I've spoken to advocates who are dealing with late-stage Lyme disease, and in those situations, people tend to end up on long-term antibiotic therapy to keep their symptoms at bay. But the most important cure, if I can use that word, is to get antibiotic treatment within 72 hours of a tick bite.

And that's why education and awareness are so important. If you've been bitten by a black-legged tick, if a tick has been latched on, embedded, has been there for—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Dela Cruz: Manitobans love the outdoors, and getting outdoors these upcoming summer months is looking to be more and more complicated.

Our NDP government, of course, wants to ensure that they're protected as we navigate tick season. We want Manitobans to be able to enjoy this year's free admission to our beautiful provincial parks, in spite of needing to navigate tick season.

So my question for the member opposite is: What precautions can Manitobans take to prevent the risk of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases?

Mrs. Cook: That's a really important question. There's a number of steps people can take. One is to carry a proper tick repellent, such as one with DEET, when you're going to be in wooded areas, or if you're

even going to be out in your backyard for any length of time.

Another is to wear light-coloured clothing, so that you can more easily spot any ticks that have crawled onto you and to cover your skin. So you want to tuck your pants into your socks if you're going to be hiking, because if you're brushing up against the bushes, that's where the ticks like to latch on; they start at your ankle and they make their way up.

It's equally important to be aware of what types of wood ticks we have. Not every tick carries Lyme disease, so you want to be able to identify ticks when they bite you.

Ms. Byram: The member from Roblin indicated what we can do, the general public, to prevent Lyme disease.

Can she share with us here in the House what this government can do to help prevent Lyme disease?

Mrs. Cook: Thank you, again, for a really important question.

And I think one of the reasons that this bill is important is because it will spur government to action. And frankly, this is very low-cost, high-reward actions here the government can take. Social media campaigns to spread awareness about prevention, and also not just prevention, but what to do if you've been bitten by a tick, because I think that might be where people get a little bit lost.

I know for myself, when I found ticks on my kids, I was a little bit like, oh, I don't—I'm not sure what to do here. If people know how to act, they can act quickly, because speed is really important. So social awareness campaigns, spreading awareness through education are—through schools and daycares, getting out to summer festivals where people are—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Dela Cruz: Like I mentioned earlier, everyone in this Chamber knows someone who's life was uprooted for months, for years, due to tick-borne diseases. I myself have a family member who lost up to six months of their time at work last year because of a tick-borne disease.

And so this is an important opportunity for us to share a little bit more information about what we can do as Manitobans to support Manitobans with Lyme disease or other tick-borne diseases, if the member could share a little bit about that.

Mrs. Cook: Thank you to my colleague across the way for the question. And I am sorry that someone in her life has had to deal with this.

I think one of the most frustrating things in speaking to advocates who have dealt with Lyme disease or other tick-borne diseases is how isolating it can feel. And that the challenges in getting a diagnosis, because a lot of the symptoms of Lyme disease are pretty non-specific. It can take years for people who maybe didn't know that they were ever bitten by a tick to get that diagnosis and to get the treatment that they need.

* (10:50)

And in the meantime, they experience symptoms that are quite debilitating, and I think for them, the most important thing is having a health-care provider who's well versed in what Lyme disease looks like and is willing to consider a clinical diagnosis and the treatment—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Lagassé: Having spoken to constituents in my riding who have also had Lyme disease, I know that quite a few of them actually—it doesn't appear like there's anything wrong with them.

Could the member touch a little bit further on some of the symptoms that come with Lyme disease and some of the things that can be done to support them?

Mrs. Cook: Thank you for the question.

The earlier stage of Lyme disease can look like the classic bull's-eye rash along with other rashes, fevers, headaches or joint aches.

As Lyme progresses, it can become quite serious with multiple areas of rashes, facial paralysis, heart issues and numbness. And untreated late Lyme disease can include swollen joints, brain fog, nerve damage all over the body, pain, really debilitating symptoms, and that's why it's so important that we get this bill passed so we can prevent more Manitobans from getting Lyme disease.

The Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is open for debate.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): It's really unfortunate this morning that already I'm hearing people shouting over that we should hurry up this democratic process and trying to rush through the legislation.

I will say, I mean, it doesn't surprise me, given the fact that their leader, their new leader, unfortunately, has been thanking Trump for interfering with our democracy here in Canada. But they continue that process by trying to rush us through this legislation.

I was just going to speak to the fact that it's incredibly important that we speak about these Lyme and—the Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases, here in Manitoba. And as someone who spends a lot of time outside and has picked a lot of ticks off of my kids and my dog, I was—actually, I got a couple off of them this morning. It's incredibly worrisome because, yes, you think of them almost as pests in one way, right? But then, if you're not aware of these serious, serious illnesses that can result from these ticks, it's deeply troubling.

And I will just say, quickly, personally, I grew up with this neighbour who was really close with our family; was over lots and I was young. I didn't necessarily know what was going on, but they got quite sick all of a sudden, seemingly to me. And just not quite sure what was going on. There was a lot of pain, a lot of—an inability to be as mobile as they once were and, you know, really degraded over the next couple of years. And I didn't know what was going on.

It turns out that he had contracted Lyme disease, unfortunately, and was seriously affected by it. And so, when we're in this Chamber speaking about this issue, and I know everyone has had this personal connection to this issue specifically, it's just really important that we make sure that Manitobans are aware of the serious consequences following contact with a tick.

And so make sure that you do get out to see a physician and get tested if you develop any of the symptoms that we're talking about today. And on that note, I do just want to point out quickly that there is more and more access under our government to access that primary care that can help you deal with something like Lyme disease. We actually just announced that, as of today, at the Victoria Hospital, there is an extended-hours clinic that you can attend.

If you're in south Winnipeg in the constituency of Waverley, for example, which I represent proudly, you can attend Victoria, see a doctor. They'd be able to run tests, get you antibiotics. So if you do find a tick or anything like that on yourself this summer, just know that there are more and more options. While the members opposite cut quite a few of those and we lost a lot of physicians and nurses in the system, there are

more and more opportunities for you to seek out that care quickly.

And one other point, very quickly, Medinav.ca is an incredibly helpful tool if you find a tick on one of your kids and you need to go and get them that care. You can go in; you can book an appointment on your phone, effectively, quickly, and you'll be able to see that physician to make sure that they're taken care of.

Now I also was just told there are high profile—lot of high-profile folks who brought attention to this. Shania Twain was one of them that was mentioned to me, and so this affects people all over the place, you know—

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hour being 10:55, when this matter is next before the House, the honourable member will have seven minutes remaining.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 227—The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act

The Speaker: In accordance with rule 5, and as previously announced, I'm interrupting debate to put the question on second reading of Bill 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: Did I hear a no? I heard a no.

Voice Vote

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

The Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): I'd like to request a recorded vote, please.

The Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested, and in accordance with rule 24(7), the division will be deferred until 11:55 a.m. this morning.

* * *

The Speaker: So the hour now being—oh, the honourable Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Johnson: Could you please call Bill 222, the criminal trespass act and amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act.

Bill 222—The Criminal Trespassers Act and Amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act

The Speaker: Been announced that we will now resume debate on Bill 222, The Criminal Trespassers Act and Amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act, standing in the name of the honourable member for McPhillips, who has 10 minutes remaining.

The honourable member for McPhillips, you have to unmute yourself. There you go.

MLA JD Devgan (McPhillips): I'm going to relinquish the remainder of my time to the next speaker.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The floor is open.

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): I'm pleased to get up in the Chamber today to put some much-needed words on the record in respect to Bill 222.

First, I want to begin by saying—I want to give some shout-outs to our team and folks in the community that are doing really important work, and those that are on the front lines dealing with the fires that we're having in our province.

I know that the ministers and the Premier (Mr. Kinew) had a press conference today, and I think it's really important that folks heed the words and the advice and the wisdom that the Premier has put on the record today, as well as our ministers that are actively engaged in ensuring that this emergency is managed in a good and capable way.

And I think that all of us in the Chamber can agree in this moment how important it is for us to support Manitobans that are dealing and—with these fires, but also to acknowledge and honour those that are on the front lines of doing this really important work—

The Speaker: Order, please.

While the member's comments are important, we are debating Bill 222, so I would ask the member to keep her comments relevant to that bill.

MLA Fontaine: Yes, I appreciate that advice and words of wisdom from yourself, Honourable Speaker.

I do think it is pertinent to Bill 222 in respect of, you know, investments for law enforcement and our justice system and the way that we keep our community safe. So I would argue that there is a connection to what we're seeing with these wildfires and Bill 222.

What I'll share with folks in the Chamber on this morning is that, as members opposite know, our government has increased funding to law enforcement, something that the members opposite didn't do. In fact, what they did was they cut funding to law enforcement, and as we've said many times in this Chamber, not only did they cut funding to law enforcement, they went out and made fictitious announcements about programs that they never intended to actually execute.

And a really good example of that is the—

* (11:00)

The Speaker: Order, please.

As previously announced—when this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have—oh, honourable minister, will have seven minutes remaining.

And give me one second here.

House Business

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader on House business.

Mr. Johnson: Pursuant to rule 34(8), I am announcing that the private members' resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson). The title of this resolution is Ensuring Reliable Emergency Services in Rural Manitoba.

The Speaker: Pursuant to rule 34(8), it has been announced that the private members' resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli. The title of the resolution is Ensuring Reliable Emergency Services in Rural Manitoba.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 15—Justice for Jordyn

The Speaker: And now, the hour being 11 a.m., we will now move to the resolution No. 15, Justice for Jordyn.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler),

WHEREAS Jordyn Reimer was killed by an impaired driver on May 1, 2022 while acting as a designated driver for her friends; and

WHEREAS the Reimer family has tirelessly advocated for the individuals responsible for her death to be brought to justice; and

WHEREAS the driver was convicted, but the Crown Prosecutors decided not to prosecute the accomplice (JF) who gave the keys to the driver and allowed him to get behind the wheel; and

WHEREAS the Winnipeg Police Services (WPS) had reasonable grounds to believe that the actions of the accomplice (JF) directly led to Jordyn's death; and

WHEREAS WPS investigated and presented a package of evidence and recommendations to the Crown's office that charges be laid; and

WHEREAS the family of Jordyn Reimer have called for the prosecution of the accomplice and the decision to prosecute to be reviewed, but their calls have been unheard and unanswered by both the Minister of Justice and the Premier; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government can review a decision to not lay charges by seeking Crown attorneys from another province to review the evidence; and

WHEREAS there is precedent for referring criminal files to extra-provincial Departments of Justice for review of decisions to not proceed with prosecution, most recently in 2022 the Peter Nygård file was referred to Saskatchewan by the then Minister of Justice and Attorney General, currently the Member for Steinbach; and

WHEREAS in New Zealand there is case law and precedent for charging and convicting individuals of aiding and abetting in the case of impaired driving when a passenger has given the keys to an impaired individual and permitted them to get behind the wheel.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to immediately seek Crown attorneys from another province to review the evidence in the decision not to prosecute the accomplice, JF, in the death of Jordyn Reimer.

The Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen), seconded by the honourable member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to immediately seek Crown attorneys from another province to review evidence in the decision not to prosecute the accomplice, JF, in the death of Jordyn Reimer.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Provincial Government to immediately seek Crown attorneys from another province to review the evidence in the decision to not prosecute the accomplice (JF) in the death of Jordyn Reimer.

Mr. Balcaen: Before I start my response to this, I would ask to seek leave to enter the names of my guests into Hansard.

The Speaker: I'm sorry, if the member could repeat his request?

Mr. Balcaen: I seek leave to enter the names of my guests into Hansard.

The Speaker: Is there leave for the honourable member from Brandon West to have the names of his guests entered in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Julie Frederick, Carm Kjartanson, Dwight Kjartanson, Barb Kolomi, Keely Lyons, Rob Lyons, Tyler Lyons, Cindy Petric, Ida Marie Poitras, Roger Poitras, Doreen Reeves, Andrea Reimer, Doug Reimer, Karen Reimer, Jeff Riddell, Sarah Riddell, Evan Shaw, Grant Shaw, Signy Shaw, Dianne Lee Sousa, Joe Sousa, Jenefer Swanson, Heather Tabin, Brian Wait, Cheryl Wakaluk, Sarah Yachison.

Mr. Balcaen: Thank you to the members of this Chamber for allowing that leave request. It's very important that we recognize the family and the friends that are here today, joining us in the gallery for this very important resolution.

It's important, also, to note that this is the second time this resolution has been brought forward, outlining the importance that we feel on this side

of the Chamber that needs to be looked at by the Crown attorneys, but also, it's supported strongly by all Manitobans.

We have collected—and when I say we, it's through the work and the efforts of the Reimer family—over 2,200 signatures on the petitions that have been put forward, and so that shows that not just people in Winnipeg, but all across Manitoba support this call to action to make sure that justice for Jordyn is served.

So with that, I ended my speech the last time that this was before the House on October 3 of 2024 with words from Jordyn's mother, Karen, and again, I spoke with Karen last night, and she's provided me with a statement that she would like to have read out in the Chamber here today. And because she doesn't have the opportunity and the privilege that we all do to be in the House, here on the floor and make these decisions, I think it's powerful and it's impactful and it's important to have her words and the words of the family resonate in this Chamber before we make the decision of voting on this resolution.

So, on May 1, 2022, Jordyn Reimer was an innocent victim acting as a designated driver when she was killed by an impaired driver and his accomplice. We are not a family out for vengeance; we are a family seeking accountability for the person that set the travesty of Jordyn's death in motion.

We are asking for an out-of-province decision—sorry, an out-of-province, independent review of the prosecution's decision not to prosecute this criminal. In this case, the criminal culpability extends beyond the driver, Tyler Scott Goodman, to the accomplice. The person's actions were overt, calculated and directly responsible for Jordyn's death.

All MLAs and ministers voting for or against a recommendation to proceed with a review must vote with integrity based on ensuring they have done the work required to make an informed decision. This decision must be based on fact and understanding of the charging standards and the boundaries of prosecutorial discretion. Voting must not take place to appease other members of their party.

I will not review evidence of the crime, as I trust all MLAs and ministers have read the previously provided details of the case. I will only highlight a few salient points.

Had this individual driven a getaway car during a robbery or supplied the bullet for a gun that killed someone, he would be prosecuted for aiding and

abetting the crime. The fact that it was keys and a vehicle should not be minimized as a vehicle is a dangerous weapon in the hands of an impaired driver. The impaired driver has been convicted, but the accomplice still needs to be charged and held to account.

There may not be case law in Canada for prosecuting an impaired driving accomplice, but there is case law in New Zealand. Taking this case to court would send a strong message of deterrence and would be a monumental opportunity to set precedence.

The Attorney General (Mr. Wiebe) has said he has faith and stands behind the prosecution's decision not to prosecute. This is then to say that he does not have faith or stand behind the Winnipeg Police Service, WPS, MADD Canada or MADD Winnipeg, who all recommend and support charges be laid.

Standing behind the prosecutor's office is not mutually exclusive to ordering an out-of-province review. This should be ordered in the pursuit of full transparency and accountability. If the original decision is sound, then the results of the review will support that.

It is not our intention to open Pandora's box, but there must be a process in place for families to challenge decisions when warranted. Unfortunately, there is now—no due process for families at the prosecution's office. When a decision not to prosecute is entered, a criminal process does not unfold.

Canada has a Victims Bill of Rights, which states that victims have equality rights under section 15 of the Charter, and I quote: The right to equal protection is not exclusive to the accused. Individuals are equally protected by law, and therefore, they are supposed to have equal right to access to the criminal justice system when they are harmed by lawbreakers. End quote.

* (11:10)

Prosecutors are entrusted with the responsibility to bring criminals before the courts, not to serve as judge and jury. We learned that in the Nygård case, that prosecutors are human, and human error occurs. Making an error is not the problem. Standing behind an error at all costs is the problem. Integrity and transparency must be the standard.

We have over 2,200 signatures of Manitobans on our petitions supporting this review. These signatures only represent a sample of Manitoba constituents that are expecting high standards from the

NDP government. This speaks volumes to the significant public concern and support for this review.

The public is looking for faith in the judicial system and the government, and they are watching. We cannot allow this kind of criminal behaviour to be normalized or excused. Justice must be served, not only for Jordyn, but the safety of all Manitobans.

The NDP talks frequently about helping victims and families of violent crimes with their grief and healing journey. Ordering this review is certainly one way of supporting that.

Karen Reimer, Jordyn's mom.

Honourable Speaker, I'm wondering again why we are revictimizing the Reimer family time and time again. This would be ended; this would be a simple task.

We are asking the one and only person, the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General for the province of Manitoba, to send a letter to another Crown attorney outside of the Manitoba jurisdiction to review this file. He can stand behind the Crowns—and I know our Crowns in Manitoba do a fantastic job—but we have seen where errors happen.

None of us are infallible, and it's human nature to error. But what takes courage is to address our errors, and we've seen that courage being taken prior in the Nygård file, and we are asking for it again. It allows for transparency, it allows for openness and it allows for victims in very serious incidents to have a say and to be assured that prosecutions are done in a transparent manner.

Again, this comes down to only one person, and I look forward today to hearing from the Attorney General, the Minister of Justice, to why he is not simply authoring a letter and sending it to another Crown attorney in this—outside of this province to review the file. That is a simple and—as simple of an act as possible, and one that could be done literally in minutes. And I would hope that the Attorney General for our province takes the one minute to sign the letter and place it in the mail.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: A couple of things before we move on.

If I could ask the honourable member to please table the document he was reading from.

And also is there leave to have the resolution recorded in Hansard as written, as there were a couple of mistakes when it was presented? *[Agreed]*

Questions

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

The floor is now open for questions.

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): I'd like to start off this question period by lifting up the work of the folks that have joined us in the gallery. Karen, Doug, Nikki and the rest of the Reimer family was just one of many families who've received the unthinkable phone call that the life of their loved one was stolen by an irresponsible and foolish impaired driver.

There's a lot of emotional labour and heart work from the community that has been translated into meaningful change. Many members of this House saw this—an example that was demonstrated just this past Tuesday at committee.

So my question for the member opposite is: How has the work of the community made a difference thus far?

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I think the work of the community has been noted with 2,200 signatures on the petition that has come forward and the work of the Reimer family, but the action is what needs to be taken.

The work of the committee—or of the community can continue, but there's only one person and one way that this can move forward, and that's through the Attorney General (Mr. Wiebe) for the province of Manitoba to send that request out to another province and ask for this review to be done.

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Once again, we want to thank the Reimer family for their vigilance and their fight for justice for their daughter, and I want to thank the member from Brandon West for his advocacy on this tremendously important issue.

The NDP previously rejected this resolution. Can you tell us why it is so important to bring this forward once again?

Mr. Balcaen: Well, I'd like to thank my colleague from Selkirk for that question, and yes, this resolution was, in fact, not supported by the NDP the last time we brought it forward on the 3rd of October. And I have to question that, as well. It is so important to

bring this forward. I've said it in this House many times: justice delayed is justice denied, and this has been delayed for long enough.

It's time for the Attorney General for the province of Manitoba to put pen to paper, sign that order and send it away to an out-of-province Crown attorney's office and seek a second opinion in this prosecution.

Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park): I just would like to take a moment to express my condolences to the family and friends of Jordyn Reimer.

I'm just going to ask the member opposite: Who did the member consult with when drafting this resolution?

Mr. Balcaen: I thank the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Oxenham) for that question. I would direct him to look up to his left, up in the gallery, and that's who I consulted with. I consulted with a family who is grieving, who is wanting to see transparency, who is wanting to see justice for Jordyn, their daughter.

So with that, I must reiterate that this can be solved today. This can be ended today if the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General for the province of Manitoba, sends a request to an outside Crown attorney, an agency, for a review of this case.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I want to thank my colleague from Brandon West for bringing forward this bill today, and, again, welcome the family here and just commend them for their courage and their continued advocacy for Jordyn.

I do want to ask the member: Can you remind this House about any recent precedent of Manitoba Justice engaging in out-of-province services?

Mr. Balcaen: I can speak to many cases that I know of from the Brandon Police Service, alone, that were referred to outside agencies, specifically when there is controversy or it involves somebody in law enforcement or somebody who may have some sort of influence.

But what's important on this case is that precedent has been set for an outside review being sent in the Nygård file, and that showed that human error has occurred in the past and can happen. We're not all perfect beings.

But what would be perfect is if the Minister of Justice would sign an order, the Attorney General for this province, and send it for an out—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

* (11:20)

Mr. Oxenham: With this resolution on the table, what can we all do to continue to raise awareness about the dangers and harms of impaired driving?

Mr. Balcaen: What we can continue to do is make sure that bills that impact impaired driving are supported and moved forward. But what can really be impactful and help out is to send this on for a third-party review, have the Attorney General (Mr. Wiebe), and I would encourage all of the members opposite to speak with the Attorney General directly and ask your question as to why.

Close your eyes for five seconds and imagine that this is one of your family members. Would you want justice for them? The answer is yes. This can be solved in seconds with a signature on a piece of paper.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): I, too, want to welcome the Reimer family and friends once again to the gallery and to the Manitoba Legislature. And I certainly want to let you know that your advocacy definitely hasn't gone unnoticed from this House and all of Manitoba. And I thank my colleague from Brandon for bringing this resolution forward once again.

Minister likes to talk about presenting a single impaired driving bill annually. Is this—does the member see a need for a larger jurisdictional review as a more vital aspect to ensure similar cases don't fall through the cracks?

Mr. Balcaen: I would like to thank the member for Lakeside (Mr. King) for that very important question.

It's always important to do a jurisdictional scan and a jurisdictional review when we talk about laws. And impaired driving is one of those that intersects both provincially and federally. And we have the opportunity now to look at how those intersections meet and where we can support provincial law to enhance federal law and where federal law can be enhanced by advocacy from the Province.

But specific to this resolution, the Attorney General needs to sign a request and put it forward for an out-of-province review, and it can be done today.

Mr. Oxenham: With this resolution on the table, what can we do to continue supporting families and friends of victims of impaired driving?

Mr. Balcaen: That is probably the best question I have been asked today.

What can we do? We can collectively ask the Attorney General to sign an order and ask for a review of this case to be sent out of province for a third party, independent review.

That's how we can support victims. That's how we can support the victims that join us in the gallery today. That's how we can support all victims of impaired driving, is ensuring that we have a transparent and accountable system.

Human error happens, but we can look at it for a review and make sure that we are doing right by the families and the victims of impaired driving.

Mr. Perchotte: The member just spoke to a little bit of my question.

Why is the potential prosecution of the passenger important not only in the terms of holding that accomplice accountable, but for showing young people the consequences of their actions?

Mr. Balcaen: I thank my colleague again for an excellent question.

And it's important that this prosecution move forward because, as a province in Canada, we could set major precedent on this and make sure that people that aid and abet and in-be involved in impaired driving that causes death or serious bodily harm—are held to account. It is something that is already on the books in another Commonwealth country, in New Zealand, and I think it's important that we support this.

Bill 232 also supports the fact that we can commemorate days of victims of impaired driving and make sure that their lives are never forgotten.

The Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is now open for debate.

Mrs. Rachelle Schott (Kildonan-River East): Honourable Speaker, it's always an honour and a privilege to stand up in this House to put a few words on record on behalf of my constituents of Kildonan-River East.

You know, what happened to Jordyn Reimer is an absolute tragedy that should never be allowed to repeat itself, and it should also not be politicized. But what we can all agree on, on both sides of the floor, is that this is absolutely a tragedy and our hearts and—go out to you as a family, and I just want to acknowledge all of your advocacy, so thank you so much for being here today.

I also want to make it clear, based on some of the comments from opposition, to reinforce that our Justice Minister has met with the family multiple times. He personally has gotten up in this House to show support to the family. And other members of our NDP caucus have personally met with the family, so any suggestions of anything otherwise being the case is just absolutely not acceptable.

You know, but impaired driving is a reckless action that causes unnecessary deaths and injuries, impacts hundreds of Manitobans every year. The members opposite had seven and a half years to help those impacted by impaired driving, but failed to help Manitobans. Conveniently, they're trying to spread a false narrative now to say otherwise.

Our government has been working hard over the past year to crack down on those driving impaired by closing loopholes and enacting stricter penalties.

Jordyn was only 24 years old when she was killed by a drunk driver on her way to pick up a friend. I want to acknowledge—note that Jordyn was trying to be a designated driver and doing the right thing to help others, and how, you know, every time we see someone trying to help others in our community by being a designated driver, we need to reinforce that messaging and encourage folks to help others in our community, to keep our streets safer and help others to make better decisions.

You know, it was also implied by opposition that young people are mostly perpetrators of drunk driving. I think that middle-aged men is what I often see, you know, if we want to frank about who is often doing that, and also just give a shout-out to a number of amazing young people in Kildonan-River East that I saw recently making the right decisions and helping to support their friends while they were out having a social evening.

I saw a group of young people, you know, consuming a lot while they're watching a Jets game at a local establishment, and I was quite concerned. Like, I was all night watching it and my husband told me not to go say anything and to leave it alone, it was none of my business. And then all of a sudden, these young folks showed up, and they patiently waited 'til their friends were done having a social evening and I, as an awkward middle-aged person, of course, went up to them and just thanked them to make sure that they knew that their efforts were really important to our community and keeping our straits—streets safer and that their efforts didn't go unnoticed.

You know, it is sometimes awkward to have those conversations with people, whether they're at your own home or you're at a social gathering, but we all have a role to play in making sure that folks are not driving impaired.

And we—all members of this House can be leaders in that and to plan a safe ride home. When you know that there's an event or some kind of gathering that you're going to, then you need to make alternate arrangements or leave your car and then figure it out the next day. Like, that's something everyone in here needs to make sure that they're also doing, and leading by example.

You know, prevention and education is key. As mentioned, this is an absolute tragedy that occurred that should never be allowed to repeat itself, and more education's required; for example, catching young people to make sure that messaging's ingrained before some of those bad habits start.

In grade 12 at my high school, we were approached by MADD Canada to do a presentation for the whole school, and I remember some folks on student council said, oh, that costs so much money to do a full assembly; like, we shouldn't do it. And I had some of my fellow students at school say, oh my gosh, like, this was too real and this was too intense of a presentation. But we need to have more people understand and see what can—the possible outcomes are when we're not planning ahead and we don't know the realities.

* (11:30)

So I really encourage folks to keep working with MADD Canada. Our government's been working closely with MADD Canada. And that these types of presentation opportunities to young people possibly in high schools, during their driver's ed is something that can really make a difference. I know that that messaging always stuck with me and some of my peers would never think twice about driving under the influence.

Again, in the seven and a half years that PCs were in government, they failed to introduce legislation such as this to crack down on impaired driving. Our government is committed to making our roads safer, and we stand with the Reimer family in their time of grief. The Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), like mentioned, has met with them many times and we will continue to work with your family so—and friends.

Thank you so much for being here today and just wanted to emphasize that we all stand with you.

We've already started implementing stricter legislation against impaired driving so that no other family has to ever feel the grief of losing their loved ones. I want to acknowledge some of the very effective ads that are running currently. Some of you might have seen those commercials. I'm not going to start to sing the jingle and embarrass myself, but it's so catchy that it sticks in your head. There's a few folks watching TV, likely a Jets game, but it could be another sports game, and they're all gathering socially and, you know, someone says to their friend, how are you getting home? Because they have been consuming alcohol, and the person says: Oh, I'm only going to have one or two. And then they all start singing with them and saying: You know, even if it's one or two, you know what to do.

And I think that's really important to have, all of this preventative advertising going on. And that's why MPI and MADD Canada are working so closely to make sure that there's investments in those kinds of resources to make—get the message out there and make it clear to folks that it's not okay to consume alcohol and to drive. You have to be planning ahead and to—finding alternate arrangements.

Operation Red Nose is another incredible program to help keep our streets safer. It's the beginning of December. I remember hearing on the radio they were short drivers in the holiday season, and so I personally volunteered and I encourage all members of this House to try and do that at the holiday season. Some of the folks that were volunteering there had incredible stories and they either had been touched, you know, by a loss of a loved one, or some kind of incident with impaired driving, and they just felt, like, called—some others felt called to be an example for their teenage children that were starting to drive and so they wanted to just feel like they were part of something and—in our community. And, again, Operation Red Nose does such great work in our community, and I just want to uplift them and give them a big shout-out.

So, you know, we've put harsher penalties on those who make the decision to get behind the wheel while they're impaired. Like mentioned, MPI has been working closely—a good close working relationship with MADD—to take the necessary steps to prevent impaired driving. And I just want to uplift all those folks for the preventive measures and reinforce that all across this House, on all sides of the floor, that we need to be leaders in our community and every day and have our actions follow the words that are being said in this House, to make sure that we're having

those tough conversations with people, making sure that you are not allowing anyone to be driving after they've been consuming alcohol so that we can hopefully have less tragedies and we can make the streets safer for everyone.

So thank you so much for the opportunity to have—put a few words on the record today.

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): And the only thing we should be talking about today is justice for Jordyn. Holding somebody accountable for their actions is what this resolutions is about.

I'm going to back up. Just about 51 years ago, I was a young boy, just two months before my sixth birthday, October 4, 1974. I was a little boy, I got up on a Saturday morning, like I did many other Saturdays, all excited, went and turned on cartoons. Wasn't very long into those cartoons, my day changed. Somebody came to my door: two police officers and they asked to speak to my father. I went and woke up my father and told him there was two police officers at the door. The events that transpired changed my entire family from that moment on.

We found out that my uncle, my dad's brother, had been out with a bunch of friends that night and he, himself, was a designated driver, driving someone home, and his vehicle was struck and he was killed. At 31 years old, he was taken from our family. Every family dinner, every family event, every visitation that I had with him changed.

I was a part of the travelling notification team, which was my two siblings, my mother and my father, that travelled out to St. Claude, Manitoba, for my father to tell the rest of his siblings they had lost their brother. I remember, even as a young boy, how devastating that travel was. My face was wet the entire time. I could not understand. My father, realizing how emotional I was throughout this whole ordeal, suggested that I do not attend the funeral because it would probably be too much for me. I can assure you he was correct in that decision; 51 years later it is still hurtful.

Now the person who callously took his life was prosecuted, and I was trying to find out some more of the details when this important resolution came forward, and I wasn't able to find too much information as 51 years have passed. But that person was prosecuted. I could not imagine if somebody took my child's life, an accomplice would have taken my child's life, and they would not be prosecuted. This is not about who is right or who's wrong; it's about

justice. It's about you have to be accountable for your actions.

I've watched an entire lifetime of my aunts, my uncles, my cousins, my siblings go through event after event without my uncle Claude there, and although I was only just about six years old, I remember him vividly. I'm not certain sometimes if the images I have are actually true or if I've made them up from the stories that were being given to me but whatever they are, I hold on to them generously in my heart. I hold them tight, and I would urge everybody in this Chamber to put partisanship aside. Look inside your heart and understand what this family is going through. They want accountability for what has happened to them, and they want to make sure that this does not happen to anybody else.

Fifty-one years have passed for me and it breaks me apart. I cannot believe your courage to come and fight here every day. For that I commend you. You are pillars of heroes in my mind.

Thank you so much. I want to thank everybody.

Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): I just really want to begin by giving my deepest condolences to the family, to the friends that are here in the gallery, as well as the whole community that surrounds Jordyn.

I didn't know Jordyn at all. I remember reading about the story in the media, and since that time, I've learned more about Jordyn. I've heard such good things about her character, about her spirit; that she was a lively, full of joy and love, and that she was the one that would really rally her friends, whether that be in hockey or just in everyday life, and so I've heard such good things about Jordyn. And I just really want to commemorate her in that, you know, it's such a tragedy, and it is so hard to hear a story like that. You know, life, it just honestly isn't fair sometimes.

* (11:40)

Like, we live in a beautiful country; we live in a beautiful province and many of us have so many advantages and we're privileged in so many ways to be legislators, to work on behalf of our communities and—but at the end of the day, there's things that impact us and in this case impact a family and an absolute tragedy occurs.

You know, as a father of two kids, well, teenagers now, they're a little bit younger than what Jordyn was when she passed, but I feel that heartbreak. I feel that

emotion with the whole idea of losing a loved one, and in such a way that is—that's just heartbreaking.

Like, Jordyn's doing the right thing, she's doing what we tell young people they should do, that—what we tell anyone that they should do if your friends or family are going to partake in, you know, some—a social event where there's either alcohol or cannabis or whatnot—that she was going to be a—she was being the designated driver. She was trying to ensure that her friends were safe. And to lose her in that way is just a really harsh—it's just not fair, I guess, is the bottom line.

And I'm actually really taken back when I look at the statistics at how prevalent this problem still is nowadays. Like, we should know better. And this isn't, you know, it's—this is something that has been around for a long time. I think previously it was more socially acceptable. You know, I've only had a couple drinks or whatnot, and I think that message is starting to come to—it's starting to get better.

What we're seeing though, according to the stats is that there is an increase, however, with impaired driving with cannabis, which is problematic and something that needs to be addressed. And that education piece, and that prevention piece, as well as accountability, needs to happen, because while we used to call it just drunk driving now it's impaired driving for that very reason, that if you are impaired, obviously you should not be behind the wheel, but we need to take steps to ensure that happens.

You know, when I look at a stats where in 2024 police stopped 3,900 vehicles or so and there was 124 drivers that were impaired. That is way too high. Now if you look at, you know, if you were looking at the percentage, you're like, well, the majority is not, but 124 people in 2024 that were pulled over out of those—that 3,933 vehicles is way too high. It is—it like, it just boggles my mind that that's 124 times where someone—a tragedy could have occurred. And in some cases it did, where there were—there was collisions involved and people were hurt.

And so as legislators we need to do our job and ensure that we're taking steps to ensure that the roads are safe, that our loved ones and family members and friends, community, are safe, especially when they're not the ones doing anything wrong but trying to get from A to B or in this case with Jordyn, trying to do the right thing and help her friends.

And so there's more to be done and that's why our government is taking action. We, I think on all sides

of the House, this isn't a partisan issue, we want to take steps to ensure that our roads are safe to decrease and eliminate, ultimately, impaired driving.

Like, there's no excuse for it, there really isn't. And so I really appreciate the advocacy that the family has done in their time of grief, in their time of pain, in their loss, to continue on to really push us as legislators to take the next steps. And that's what we're doing.

You know, I do—I've heard our Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) speak out, both in the Chamber and also around the caucus table, around the Cabinet table, speaking out on issues like this. And we're committed, as a government, to doing better, to ensuring that our laws reflect the values that impaired driving is not acceptable, that we need to hold people accountable and at the same time we ultimately want to get to a place where there's prevention. And that comes through education and that comes through a whole variety of things.

And that's what we're trying to do with legislation, and so I appreciate the work that's being done on this file. And whether that's, you know, working through MPI to ensure that that education piece and that is happening, and also, they play a role in that enforcement piece in ensuring that third-party liability doesn't apply in cases where there's impaired driving and whatnot but—as well as with law enforcement ensuring that our roads are safe.

But ultimately, it comes down to that education piece and that prevention. You know, my son is—has recently got his driver's licence. You know, he's—I hope and he appears to be a very safe driver and as a parent, that's something that we all want for our kids and want to ensure that they're being safe.

My daughter's about to, you know, enrol in driver's ed which is one of the programs that hopefully will help educate the next generation of drivers so that our communities are safe and that they will learn about the dangers of impaired driving and what that impact is.

Like I mentioned, with cannabis, there's too many people in our society that believe that it's not the same, that they're not impaired if they're high, and that couldn't be further from the truth. You know, there's delayed reaction. There's a whole variety of physiological responses, and so any time that someone is partaking in cannabis or in drinking alcohol that they need to not get behind the wheel, like, full stop.

One of the things that I personally believe is that we should be and we are taking steps to co-ordinate with the federal government. I personally believe that cars should have—that we should be using technology to our best advantage. That's something that I strongly would advocate for, that if we have anti-impairment technology, that that's something that we should move towards or at least look at and see, you know, what is—how can we utilize technology to make our roads safer. That's what cars and vehicles do and that's something that hopefully, in the future, can lead us toward a better future with less and ultimately no impaired driving.

You know, I just want to take the last minute or so just to really outline that we are dedicated to continuing this work, both in terms of with the family, with community, with MADD Canada and other organizations that are trying to do that good work. You know, we lift all of you up; we lift up the work that MADD Canada does each and every day. And we're going to keep working at it.

We're not going to get—be able to solve this problem overnight. We're not going to be able to solve this problem with one piece of legislation, but I think with continued effort across all parties, that we're going to be able to really move the needle, so to speak, in terms of addressing this really significant issue.

And I also just want to end on really, once again, thanking the family and friends of Jordyn. Our hearts just go out to you. Everyone in this Chamber: our hearts go out to you. Like, this is not a partisan piece and we really just need to continue working and realize that driving is a privilege; it's not a right. And I just want to thank you for your tireless efforts and advocacy to ensure that tragedies like this don't occur. And so, thank you so much and just, you know, a lot of love to you today and moving forward.

So thank you very much.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business.

The Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader on House business.

Mr. Johnson: I humbly seek leave to immediately put the question on this resolution without further debate.

The Speaker: Is there leave to immediately put the question on this resolution?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no. Leave has been denied, so we will then resume debate.

French spoken

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): La conduite avec facultés affaiblies est un acte irresponsable qui cause des décès et des blessures évitables touchant chaque année des centaines de Manitobains. Ce qui est arrivé à Jordyn Reimer est une tragédie qui ne devrait jamais se reproduire, et j'aimerais offrir mes condoléances à la famille qui est ici présente.

* (11:50)

Notre gouvernement travaille d'arrache-pied depuis un an pour combattre la conduite avec facultés affaiblies en comblant les lacunes juridiques et en imposant des sanctions plus sévères.

Malheureusement, chaque année, des milliers de Manitobains sont blessés à cause des conséquences de la conduite avec facultés affaiblies.

La conduite avec facultés affaiblies est responsable de près de 10 pour cent de toutes les collisions mortelles au Manitoba en vingt mille vingt-trois. Cela affecte non seulement les personnes impliquées dans l'accident, mais aussi les familles et les amis des victimes.

L'ancien gouvernement progressiste conservateur a eu sept ans et demi pour adopter une législation contre la conduite avec facultés affaiblies, mais il n'a pas pris les mesures nécessaires pour protéger les Manitobains et les Manitobaines. Notre gouvernement veut prévenir les décès sur nos routes causés par les conducteurs avec facultés affaiblies. C'est pourquoi nous travaillons activement à assurer la sécurité des Manitobains.

Présentement, nous imposons des sanctions plus sévères à ceux qui prennent la décision de conduire avec les facultés affaiblies. Beaucoup trop souvent, nous voyons des histoires de Manitobains tués par des conducteurs en état d'ébriété. Et chaque année, MADD soutient les forces de l'ordre dans la mise en œuvre d'un programme de barrage routier pendant les fêtes pour protéger les Manitobains des conducteurs avec facultés affaiblies.

Rien qu'en vingt mille vingt-quatre les résultats de ce programme ont été alarmants, et démontrent à quel point de nombreuses personnes continuent de conduire sous l'influence. Cette année, en 2024, la police a intercepté 3 933 véhicules. Cent vingt-quatre conducteurs ont été trouvés sous l'influence d'alcool ou de drogues, ce qui comprend 18 personnes

accusées de conduite avec facultés affaiblies au niveau criminel, dont quatre soupçonnées d'être sous l'influence de drogues. Ceci est inacceptable.

Et il y a aussi eu 106 interdictions immédiates de conduire et 12 personnes ayant échoué au test de dépistage de drogues, dont 11 positives de cannabis et une personne positive à la cocaïne. Et ensuite, 93 contraventions pour infractions routières. Avec notre corporation de la Couronne, MPI s'engage à éduquer le public sur les dangers de conduire sous l'influence de l'alcool ou de cannabis.

MPI entretient une relation étroite avec MADD afin de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour prévenir la conduite avec facultés affaiblies. Nous avons déjà certaines des lois les plus strictes au pays contre la conduite avec facultés affaiblies. L'an dernier, MPI a annoncé que les personnes qui conduisent avec facultés affaiblies en cause un accident se verront refusées la couverture de la responsabilité civile envers les tiers.

La conduite avec facultés affaiblies est un crime grave qui entraîne des sanctions sévères au Manitoba. Notre équipe est déterminée à protéger le droit de chacun à la sécurité sur nos routes. En matière de conduite avec facultés affaiblies, aucune personne devrait jamais prendre le volant lorsqu'elle est en état d'ébriété. Les Manitobains méritent de conduire et d'arriver à destination en toute sécurité, sans craindre d'être victime d'un conducteur avec facultés affaiblies. Ils s'attendent également à ce que leur gouvernement provincial travaille contre la conduite en facultés affaiblies.

Le Manitoba était autrefois la province la plus stricte en matière de sanctions—

Translation

Impaired driving is an irresponsible act that causes preventable death and injury to hundreds of Manitobans every year. What happened to Jordyn Reimer is a tragedy that should never happen again, and I would like to offer my condolences to the family here today.

Our government has been working hard over the past year to combat impaired driving by closing legal loopholes and imposing tougher penalties.

Unfortunately, every year thousands of Manitobans are injured as a result of impaired driving.

Impaired driving accounted for almost 10 per cent of all fatal collisions in Manitoba in twenty thousand twenty-three. This affects not only the people involved

in the accident, but also the families and friends of the victims.

The former Progressive Conservative government had seven and a half years to pass legislation against impaired driving, but failed to take the necessary steps to protect Manitobans. Our government wants to prevent deaths on our roads caused by impaired drivers. That is why we are actively working to keep Manitobans safe.

Currently, we are imposing tougher penalties on those who make the decision to drive while impaired. Far too often, we see stories of Manitobans killed by impaired drivers. And every year, MADD supports law enforcement in implementing a holiday roadblock program to protect Manitobans from impaired drivers.

In twenty thousand twenty-four alone, the results of this program were alarming, and demonstrate just how many people continue to drive under the influence. That year, in 2024, the police intercepted 3,933 vehicles. One hundred and twenty-four drivers were found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including 18 people charged with criminal impaired driving, four of whom were suspected of being under the influence of drugs. This is unacceptable.

There were also 106 immediate driving prohibitions and 12 failed drug tests, including 11 positive for cannabis and one positive for cocaine. Then there were 93 tickets for traffic offences. Our Crown Corporation, MPI, is committed to educating the public about the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol or cannabis.

MPI maintains a close relationship with MADD in order to take the necessary measures to prevent impaired driving. We already have some of the toughest laws in the country against impaired driving. Last year, MPI announced that impaired drivers involved in accidents will be denied third-party liability coverage.

Impaired driving is a serious crime that carries severe penalties in Manitoba. Our team is determined to protect everyone's right to safety on our roads. When it comes to impaired driving, no one should ever get behind the wheel while impaired. Manitobans deserve to drive and arrive at their destinations safely, without fear of being victimized by an impaired driver. They also expect their provincial government to work against impaired driving.

Manitoba used to be the toughest province when it came to penalties—

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

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

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

(Continued)

Bill 227—The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act

The Speaker: As previously announced, I'm interrupting debate to conduct a recorded vote on second reading of motion 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act.

And, as a recorded vote has been requested, please call in the members.

Recorded Vote

The Speaker: So the question before the House is the passage of bill—second—passing at second reading of Bill 227, the free trade mobility act within Canada.

Division

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

Ayes

Balcaen, Bereza, Byram, Cook, Guenter, Hiebert, Johnson, Khan, King, Lagassé, Lamoureux, Narth, Nesbitt, Perchotte, Schuler, Stone, Wasyliw, Wharton.

Nays

Asagwara, Blashko, Brar, Bushie, Chen, Compton, Corbett, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Fontaine, Kennedy, Kostyshyn, Loiselle, Maloway, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Naylor, Oxenham, Pankratz, Sala, Sandhu, Schmidt, Schott, Simard, Smith, Wiebe.

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Ayes 18, Nays 29.

The Speaker: The motion is accordingly defeated.

* * *

The Speaker: And the hour being 12 o'clock, this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 this afternoon.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 15, 2025

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