



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 15, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 204—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Reason for Traffic Stop)

Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry): I move, seconded by the MLA for Tyndall Park, that Bill 204, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Reason for Traffic Stop), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Wasyliw: Today I'm proud to introduce The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Reason for Traffic Stop) bill to ensure a greater accountability and transparency in policing.

It's a simple but important change. When a driver is pulled over the officer must state the reasons for the stop before doing anything else. If they don't, any evidence gathered from the stop becomes inadmissible.

This is about building trust between communities and law enforcement. That trust starts with respectful, clear communication and a legal guarantee that people understand why they're being stopped.

While many experience routine traffic stops, we know that racialized communities have historically faced disproportionate and sometimes unjustified interactions.

This bill helps ensure that every stop begins on a foundation of fairness.

I want to thank Chris Gamby, spokesperson of the Criminal Defense Lawyers Association of Manitoba for attending today in the gallery to support this legislation.

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

The motion is accordingly passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Public Accounts Fifth Report

MLA Jim Maloway (Vice-Chairperson): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

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

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts presents the following as its Fifth Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on May 14, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Chamber of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Annual Report and Public Accounts of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023*
- *Auditor General's Report – Public Accounts and Other Financial Statement Audits dated December 2023*
- *Annual Report and Public Accounts of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024*
- *Auditor General's Report – Public Accounts and Other Financial Statement Audits dated December 2024*

Committee Membership

- *Mr. BRAR*
- *MLA CHEN*
- *MLA COMPTON*
- *MLA DELA CRUZ*
- *MLA DEVGAN*
- *Mr. EWASKO*
- *Mr. GUENTER (Chairperson)*
- *MLA LAMOUREUX*
- *MLA MALOWAY (Vice-Chairperson)*
- *Mr. OXENHAM*
- *Mrs. STONE*

Substitutions received prior to Committee proceedings:

- *MLA BEREZA for Mr. EWASKO*

Officials Speaking on Record

- *Tyson Shtykalo, Auditor General of Manitoba*
- *Silvester Komlodi, Deputy Minister of Finance*
- *Ann Ulusoy, Secretary to Treasury Board*

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following reports as presented:

- *Annual Report and Public Accounts of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023*
- *Auditor General's Report – Public Accounts and Other Financial Statement Audits dated December 2023*

Reports Considered and Not Passed

Your Committee considered and did not pass the following reports as presented:

- *Annual Report and Public Accounts of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024*
- *Auditor General's Report – Public Accounts and Other Financial Statement Audits dated December 2024*

MLA Maloway: Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Seine River (MLA Cross), that the report of the committee be received.

The Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway), seconded by the honourable member for Seine River, that the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be received.

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

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): Honourable Speaker, I'd like to table the sequence for the consideration of departmental Estimates in the Committee of Supply, for today only.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Wildfire Update

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): Honourable Speaker, with the upcoming long weekend, we would like to wish everyone in Manitoba a happy and safe May long weekend.

But this time around, we also want to be sure to remind everyone not to have campfires and to listen to evacuation orders to make sure that first responders can quickly respond to the various serious situations taking place in our province right now.

As reported earlier this morning by the Manitoba Wildfire Service, we currently have 21 active fires and have so far had 80 fires to date. This is a significantly higher number than the average, so we encourage everyone to remain vigilant during this challenging time.

In The Pas-OCN, the fire is quite significant in size with the Manitoba Wildfire Service reporting that this fire is now under control and some evacuees are able to return to their communities.

In the RM of Piney approximately 300 people were evacuated last night. The fire near Bird River, around Nopiming National Park–Provincial Park remains very active and value protection efforts continue.

The fire in the Lac du Bonnet area is still listed as active, with crews making progress in the region but it remains out of control.

The fire near Ingolf, Ontario poses a significant threat to Whiteshell Provincial Park, so resources are being deployed to begin working on that fire.

The Province is declaring a state of emergency in the Whiteshell area, and we urge folks who do not need to be in the area to clear the way to allow emergency services to do what they need to do.

I want to thank the folks on the front lines, all of those responding to the call of duty. And I would like to sincerely thank the crew of 44 firefighters who are here with BC—who are here from BC to lend a hand; we certainly appreciate the extra help.

And as the Premier (Mr. Kinew) mentioned earlier this morning, as we come to grips with this situation, the news of loss of life turns these situations from emergency to tragedy. On behalf of the government of Manitoba and all of our colleagues gathered here today, I offer sincere condolences to the family, friends and community members who lost two of our own. As Manitobans, we join those affected in your time of mourning.

The flags at the Legislature are flying at half-mast as a small gesture of sympathy towards the family and their loved ones. I would ask—I would also like to take

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

Thank you.

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

We will have a moment of silence, please.

A moment of silence was observed.

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Today I rise with a heavy heart and with deep care for the many families, communities and responders facing what may be one of the most difficult wildfire seasons our province has ever experienced.

We are all heartbroken to learn of the tragic loss. Yesterday the RCMP recovered the bodies of Sue and Rich Nowell near Wendigo Road in the Rural Municipality of Lac du Bonnet. They were someone's family, someone's friend. Their loved ones we hold in our hearts during this unimaginable time.

This is a devastating reminder of how quickly these fires can escalate and how dangerous they truly are. Nearly 1,000 people have now been forced from the Lac du Bonnet area. Homes have been lost near Wendigo Beach. Entire communities are being uprooted in an instant.

To our firefighters, RCMP, emergency responders, Manitoba Hydro crews, volunteers and all who have stepped forward in the face of danger: You are our heroes. And to everyone—every evacuee, to every person waiting for news, wondering when they can go home, carrying the weight over loss or uncertainty, please know: The Province stands with you. We see you, we grieve with you and we will walk the road with you.

The days ahead will continue to test us. But I know that our—that we are a province built to rise up in moments like this. We rally together. We hold one another up. And we find our strength not just in fire trucks or helicopters, but in human compassion and the will to endure together. Stay safe. Stay connected. And let's continue to care for one another with all the strength and heart that make Manitoba home.

Thank you.

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equity): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.

As allies, we have a responsibility to call out acts of homophobia, transphobia and biphobia every time they occur. These can be obvious attacks on the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, like when members opposite ran a failed election campaign featuring bus benches targeting transgender youth. Or when the face of that same transphobic campaign, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan) and the new Leader of the Opposition, doubled down against Bill 43 and against more than 50 2SLGBTQ2IA+ Manitobans and their allies asking our government to enshrine protections for gender expression in The Manitoba Human Rights Code.

* (13:40)

I commend those brave Manitobans for showing up and sharing their experiences in support of this bill, even in the face of some members in this very Chamber speaking out against their right to safety, acceptance and their humanity.

I want to take a quick moment to acknowledge our colleague, the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Oxenham), who chaired those incredibly difficult meetings at standing committee, and he did so with such grace and compassion and pride. And on behalf of our whole team, we are so incredibly proud to work alongside him.

But homophobia, transphobia and biphobia can also be more insidious, like feeding into misinformation around pronoun use, or the 2SLGBTQIA community in general. Or it can look like the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) continuously and deliberately misgendering members of this House, who are his own colleagues of whom he's worked with for many years.

When members opposite can't even be bothered to address their own colleagues with respect in this Chamber, how can 2SLGBTQIA+ Manitobans expect any respect from any of those members opposite or from their party?

Around the world, we continue to see increasing attacks on the rights of 2SLGBTQIA people. There has never been a more important time in our history to make sure this community, our relatives, are protected.

I'd remind Manitobans, today isn't just about empty words recognizing the 2SLGBTQI community. It's actually about putting an end to homophobia, transphobia and biphobia whenever and wherever we see it.

Our government is committed to showing Manitobans and the 2SLGBTQ2I community these acts of ignorance, hatred and fear have no place in our province, whether they happen here in Winnipeg or in Steinbach or in La Vérendrye or in Borderland or in Springfield-Ritchot or even right here in this Chamber.

Miigwech.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): I am honoured to rise today to recognize international day against homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, which takes place this Saturday, May 17.

It was less than 30 years ago that Manitoba elected its first openly gay member of the Legislature. Our province and country have come a long way since then in recognizing the right of all people to dignity and equal opportunity.

Look no further than across the aisle, with Manitoba's first gender non-conforming MLA and its first openly transgender MLA. We acknowledge today something that has been dismissed for far too long: that the full participation of Manitobans from the 2SLGBTQ+ community in our society is vital to building a stronger social and economic fabric in our province.

That is why we do what we do in this Chamber, to ensure every Manitoban, no matter who they are, is afforded the dignity, freedom and safety that they deserve.

In this Chamber, we represent all Manitobans and stand with all Canadians. Being part of the 2SLGBTQ+ community does not make anyone less of a Manitoban or a Canadian. Bullying, hatred or violence will never be acceptable, no matter the community they belong to.

While the NDP thrive on division and hostility, we on this side prioritize fostering communities that are safe, healthy and prosperous for all Manitobans to thrive. And I encourage all Manitobans to treat each other with respect, dignity and as fellow human beings.

So as we enter Pride week this weekend, I want to assure the 2SLGBTQ community that my colleagues

and I will keep working to ensure Manitoba is the place where you can grow and thrive.

Thank you.

Vyshyvanka Day

Hon. Nellie Kennedy (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism): Today I rise to recognize and celebrate International Vyshyvanka Day, also known as Ukrainian embroidered shirt day, which is observed on the third Thursday of May each year.

This day marks an important commemoration for Ukrainian community members, as well as their friends and allies. The embroidery of vyshyvanka clothing, with its symbolic patterns, colour and historical significance, have been preserved by dedicated artists. Our—over time, the ancient and symbolic origins found in these garments have evolved to embrace modern fashionable styles, while continuing to highlight this prestigious and cherished component of Ukrainian identity.

As the Ukrainian 'dispore' of—has been—has expanded across lands and ocean, Ukrainian immigrants continue to play a vital role in Canada's diverse cultural landscape and identity. Over time, Manitoba has become a home for numerous Ukrainian immigrants whose contributions have been instrumental in the province's economic prosperity and rich cultural tapestry. Today, Manitoba is home to more than 160,000 people of Ukrainian descent, making us the home of one of the largest populations in the country.

On this day, by donning our own vyshyvanka, we celebrate the significant role of the community and their vibrant contributions to our ethnoculturally diverse identity.

Although Vyshyvanka Day is typically a festive occasion, it is important to acknowledge Ukraine's present struggle to preserve its sovereignty. For the last three years, the vyshyvanka has become a tangible symbol of the pride and tenacity of Ukrainian people in the face of external aggression. The pride it inspires will outlive attempts to erase Ukrainian identity.

Manitoba continues to extend its solidarity to those impacted by the war in Ukraine. I would like to thank the many organizations and institutions that continue to support the resettlement of Ukrainian newcomers in our province. Your dedication for your community outreach and support are helping so many.

Some such people join us in the gallery today. There is Joan Lewandowski [*phonetic*], Ivan Kutsak and Valentyna Hryshko.

I wish you all a very happy Vyshkavanka [*phonetic*] Day.

I hope that peace, prosperity and security will soon return to the Ukraine.

Thank you.

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Manitoba has a long and proud history of celebrating Ukrainian heritage. So it brings me great honour to recognize Vyshyvanka Day, an international celebration of Ukrainian culture, heritage, and resilience.

The richly embroidered vyshyvanka is more than just clothing. It is a symbol of Ukrainian identity that carries with it stories of family and tradition, and a sense of belonging. Each pattern and symbol, passed down through generations, holds deep meaning. These embroidered designs are believed to protect the wearer and bring strength and good luck.

Honourable Speaker, in both peace and conflict, Ukrainians have worn the vyshyvanka with pride as an act of remembrance, cultural pride and resistance. Today, we join millions around the world in wearing the vyshyvanka to stand in solidarity with our Ukrainian communities here in Manitoba and the people of Ukraine. I encourage all Manitobans, if you have one, to proudly wear your vyshyvanka today. In doing so, we send a message of compassion and unity.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Prior to members' statements, there's some guests in the gallery that will be leaving shortly. So I would like to point out that seated in the public gallery we have, from Gordon Bell school, 30 grade 9 students under the direction of Peter Vanderhout. And they're guests of the honourable member for Wolseley (MLA Naylor).

* (13:50)

We welcome you all here today.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

West Broadway and Wolseley Farmers' Markets

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): Farmers' market season is almost here. I'm thrilled that the Wolseley constituency is home to two markets that run throughout the summer and early fall.

The West Broadway Farmers' Market is hosted by the Good Food Club of the West Broadway Community Organization and takes place outside the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre every Wednesday starting on July 2. Rain or shine, community members will be able to find a wide range of local goods for sale: vegetables, baked goods, crafts and more.

The West Broadway market hosts pop ups throughout the fall, selling honey, bison and root vegetables, as well as a holiday market in December. I especially appreciate the fall feast that West Broadway market puts on for neighbours to celebrate the harvest and all the ways in which they promote food security through workshops, teaching the skills such as food dehydration or mushroom cultivation.

Wolseley Farmers' Market also draws in hundreds of folks seeking fresh produce, local grains, meat and fish, locally brewed beers, baked goods and locally roasted coffee. Skillful local makers sell their jewelry, candles, pottery and wearable art while live music adds ambiance to the experience.

Located at the corner of Westminster and Ethelbert, the Wolseley Farmers' Market runs every Tuesday and Thursday starting June 4.

Farmers' markets are a wonderful opportunity to bring communities together. We get to know our farmers while supporting local agriculture and many small businesses.

I'm so grateful to the West Broadway Farmers' Market and the Wolseley Farmers' Market for their dedication and efforts towards bringing our communities together and supporting local vendors. I wish both a successful and busy season, and I hope to see you all there.

Honourable Speaker, I have guests here today from the West Broadway Farmers' Market, the West Broadway Community Organization and Direct Farm Manitoba, and I wish to have their names included in Hansard. And I ask all members of the House to welcome them here.

Ailene Deller, Kelly Frazer, Deirdre Rooney, Kristie Schertzer, Nicole Sward.

Metcalf's Garage 125th Anniversary

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Today it is my privilege to acknowledge a remarkable milestone for Metcalf's Garage in Treherne as this family-owned business proudly celebrates its 125th anniversary.

This extraordinary legacy began five generations ago when Thomas A. Metcalfe founded the farm equipment business in Treherne, eventually expanding into the sales of Ford Model T's. By 1924, the company had achieved this impressive feat of selling 100 of these iconic vehicles in just one year.

Following Thomas, ownership passed to Clare, then to Hilliard, and subsequently to his two sons, Jack and Bruce Metcalfe. Today we honour Neil Metcalfe, along with his family and staff, as they carry on the tradition of excellence and uphold the distinction of being Canada's oldest Ford dealership. Neil has joined us here in the gallery today, and his staff have joined us virtually, watching from the garage.

The facility, a certified Ford Millennium dealership, spans over 16,000 square feet on more than four acres of property. Metcalfe's Garage boasts an extensive selection of new and pre-owned vehicles, a well-stocked parts department and a team of certified Ford technicians ready to serve you.

The garage currently employs 26 full-time staff members. And I've had the opportunity to visit the garage several times, and this spring, I got to see the dedicated team hard at work.

Metcalfe's commitment to outstanding sales and service has not gone unnoticed. They have been awarded Ford's President's Award continuously since 2009, which speaks volumes about their dedication to customer service and satisfaction. To celebrate this significant anniversary, an event is scheduled for July 11 at the arena in Treherne.

In celebrating Metcalfe's Garage, we pay tribute to the tireless efforts and commitment of the Metcalfe family and their team, who have made a lasting impression in the community. May Metcalfe Garage remind us that small businesses are the backbone of our towns, and through passion and determination, we can make a meaningful difference.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Moose Hide Campaign Day

Mr. Tyler Blashko (Lagimodière): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Moose Hide Campaign Day. This Indigenous-led movement recognizes the role men and boys have in addressing violence against women, children and gender-diverse relatives.

In 2011, Paul Lacerte and his daughter Raven were hunting near the Highway of Tears, a stretch

of road in British Columbia known for the many Indigenous women who have gone missing. They used the hide of the moose to create the first moose-hide pins.

While the campaign began in Indigenous communities on the west coast, wearing a moosehide pin has grown into a broader movement. Today, schools, workplaces, families and entire communities are actively building futures centring the safety of women, children and gender-diverse relatives. I want to thank all those taking action today, including those on the steps of the Legislature.

I want to uplift the women who have been doing this type of community-care work for decades. For too long, gender-based violence has been framed as a women's issue. Campaigns on domestic and gender-based violence have often relied on the free and undervalued labour of women, particularly Indigenous and racialized women. They have ensured this crisis is part of the public consciousness, and it's well overdue that men and boys step up.

The Moose Hide Campaign and those like it play an important role in insisting men and boys have an active role to play in addressing this crisis. The campaign encourages men to challenge toxic ideologies surrounding masculinity and gender roles.

Whether you're a man in politics, the trades, sports, business, public service, a grandfather or a nephew, every day you have an opportunity to model a healthier way to relate to your communities.

For all who wear a moosehide pin, it is a commitment to contribute to safer spaces for all, and an assurance to challenge unhealthy behaviours that you see in yourself and other men and boys.

A huge thank you to Raven Lacerte and the entire Moose Hide Campaign team for creating spaces for these conversations and for ensuring communities have the tools to build safer worlds for women, children and gender-diverse relatives.

Thank you.

Manitoba Wildfires

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Honourable Speaker, today's statement is much more somber as I highlight the vast devastation wildfires are imposing on our province.

My heart truly goes out to the families of Sue and Richie Nowell who were tragically lost their lives a result of the Lac du Bonnet fire. My thoughts are with

their son Emmett and his girlfriend, who were able to escape injured but safe.

The wildfires in my constituency near the community of Carrick have now progressed into a full-scale forest fire, resulting in the evacuation and immediate threat to four communities, including St. Labre, Badger and Woodridge. The uncertainty of not knowing if your family home is safe is completely heart-wrenching.

I had the opportunity to visit the evacuation centres last night and see some of the devastation created by these fires. Through the loss and fear, I was able to see what I am truly proud of as a representative of those communities, and that is the tight-knit support for each other. Neighbours were helping each other while fire crews from more than eight different communities were battling some of the most intense fire conditions.

What amazed me most were the farmers and neighbours coming together to help one another stay safe. The greatest example of this was the de Jong, Wolfe and Hausammann farms, each from La Broquerie, more than 20 miles away come together with their own equipment to haul more than 300,000 gallons of water that not only helped to save Moonshadow Holsteins, one of the largest dairy farms in Manitoba, but also save the entire community of St. Labre, including the Justice Minister's family cabin.

My thoughts and prayers are with all those that have—that all the displaced families as they anxiously wait for conditions to improve.

I would also like to thank and encourage the hundreds of provincial and municipal firefighters risking their lives to protect those of others.

Thank you.

Winnipeg Boys' Choir 100th Anniversary

Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park): Honourable Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge and celebrate the 100th anniversary season of the Winnipeg Boys' Choir, a true Manitoba treasure.

Founded in 1925 by the Men's Musical Club of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Boys' Choir is the oldest free-standing boys' choir in Canada, a fact that fills us all with hometown pride.

I recently had the joy of attending their centennial concert titled All the Way Home, and I must tell you, it was an afternoon I soon won't forget.

Sitting in the Crescent Fort Rouge United Church, hearing those young voices fill the space with such pure sound, from the smallest treble chorister to the confident young men of the senior chorus, I couldn't help but think of how many Manitoban families have been touched by this organization over its 100 years.

* (14:00)

The choir currently features three ensembles, creating opportunities for boys ages six to 21. What struck me during the concert was not just their technical precision, but the obvious joy on their faces as they performed. That kind of enthusiasm comes from the nurturing atmosphere created by Artistic Director Carolyn Boyes, and conductors Albert Bergen and Spencer Duncanson. These educators don't just teach notes, they're helping shape confident young people who understand what it means to work together toward something beautiful.

Our Winnipeg Boys' Choir regularly performs alongside our city's artistic crown jewels: the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Manitoba Chamber Orchestra. When you see these young people holding their own alongside professional musicians, it makes you sit up a little straighter in your seat.

Their excellence was recently recognized at the 2024 Winnipeg Music Festival, where the senior chorus received the Lieutenant Governor's trophy for most outstanding solo or group performance.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the members of the choir, artistic staff, board members and proud parents who join us today in the gallery. Here's to another century of song.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Prior to oral questions, there are some guests in the gallery that I'm told have to leave before we'll be finished oral questions. So I draw all honourable members' attention to the public gallery where we have with us today from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Robyn Jones-Murrell, Dale Oughton, Derek Newman, Amanda McVicar, Tracy Mayede-Lok, Shannon Bayluk, Jackie Ratz, Stevie Goller, Kyla Siatecki, Christine Houde.

They are the guests of the honourable Minister of Health, Seniors, Long-Term Care, the member from Union Station.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Individuals Lost in Wildfire Condolences to Family

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, on behalf of myself, the member from Lac du Bonnet and our entire PC caucus, our hearts go out to the families and loved ones of the man and woman who tragically lost their lives in the wildfires near Lac du Bonnet. Names were just released: Sue and Rich Nowell.

This is an unimaginable loss, and we extend our deepest condolences during this difficult time.

To the fire crews, we thank you for your tireless service doing what you can to protect Manitobans from the devastation they witnessed.

To local residents, please be safe, listen to your officials, evacuation orders, because sometimes you only have minutes to escape.

To all Manitobans, know we have your back today as we fight to control the wire-wildfires today and tomorrow when we come together to mourn and rebuild.

I will have some specific questions for the Premier (Mr. Kinew), but I thought I will allow him the opportunity to respond to this.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Honourable Speaker, collectively, as Manitobans, we are all devastated at the loss of two beautiful and beloved individuals. We send our deepest condolences to their families, to their community, who are all grieving right now. This is a very difficult time for Manitobans.

I will say that we are seeing people come together in ways that are really monumental. It's important for people to stay connected. We cannot thank enough first responders, firefighters, emergency responders, who are working really, day and night, around the clock, to keep people safe.

Want to remind Manitobans to follow all safety orders as you hear them. It's a quickly evolving situation. We will keep you up to date, but certainly our deepest condolences to the families of—

The Speaker: Time has expired.

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

Campfire Use in Provincial Parks Request for Fire Ban

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, one of the most important actions a government can do during a time of crisis is to ensure consistency in messaging. The Premier announces a state of emergency and urges Manitobans to avoid campfires. However, at the same time, his Minister of Environment and Climate Change (MLA Moyes) has a different set of advice, which I table for the House today.

Under this NDP minister—guidance, quote—and I quote: Campfires permitted between the hours of 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. End quote. Including Pinawa, Whiteshell and Wallace Lake, to name a few.

During a time of crisis where people have sadly perished, properties destroyed and firefighters exhausted, why is the government not bringing in a blanket fire ban? Why take the risk?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Honourable Speaker, it's really disappointing to see the Leader of the Opposition politicize a very, very serious issue, the most serious wildfire situation we've seen in our province very, very early on in the season. We're not going to politicize this issue.

We are seeing already some devastating and tragic consequences of these wildfires. Our government is working with our emergency measures experts and teams, following their guidance and their expertise.

This is a quickly evolving situation. We're getting the information out through our platforms to make sure Manitobans have up-to-date details and we're going to continue to do so. We encourage and ask all Manitobans, please pay attention to that information; follow it exactly as it's presented.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Khan: Honourable Speaker, I'm not politicizing; I'm asking a question. That is our job, to ask questions of the minister. If they don't want to answer the question, then don't be a minister.

The rural municipality of Coldwell has put out a complete burn ban, which I will table. That includes—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan: —no firepits.

Lundar Beach Provincial Park, which is in the RM of Coldwell, has, according to the minister, no fire restrictions. Campfires permitted anytime. Talk about confusing.

The RM is telling people to stop burning, while the NDP—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

The government bench will come to order.

Mr. Khan: The RM is telling people to stop burning while the NDP minister says, go ahead.

Will the Premier (Mr. Kinew) pull his minister aside and explain that a blanket fire ban in provincial parks is required today to protect lives and property?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, our government is working directly with emergency measures office leadership. We're working directly with firefighters. We're working directly with reeves, mayors, municipalities, communities, park services office.

We're working with everyone. Everyone is at the table, working around the clock to make sure that Manitobans are as safe as possible and that our first responders and firefighters have clear access to keep people safe and do the work that they need to do.

Honourable Speaker, we have shared information, and the Premier this morning shared a very clear message on this. We need folks to fire—to follow, rather—apologies—the advice that's being disseminated to the letter to make sure they're staying up to speed. And we're going to continue with all of our partners, who apparently are not on the member opposite's—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Private Members' Resolution Request for Government Support

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, for this failing Premier, it's games before Manitobans.

They voted against justice for the Jordyn Reimer and for her family. They voted against removing interprovincial trade barriers. The NDP are more interested in playing games and taking credit than helping Manitobans.

Honourable Speaker, the NDP voted against removing interprovincial trade barriers, but I promise you, next week, this NDP government is magically

going to table a bill that's exactly the same as the one before. Why? Because they don't actually care about Manitobans; they care about playing games, just like they did when they forced the MLA for Tyndall Park to pull her Keira's Law bill so they could take credit for it.

What exactly in the free trade bill did the NDP find so objectionable—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan: —that they had to vote against it, Honourable Speaker?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Honourable Speaker, with the long weekend soon coming, we want to make sure that Manitobans stay safe. We want to ensure everyone does not have campfires, that they follow the advice of our firefighters and emergency measures offices who are keeping Manitobans up to speed.

Again, I want to thank the reeves, mayors, municipalities, emergency measures offices. I want to thank the other jurisdictions who are here in Manitoba putting their lives on the line to keep Manitobans safe.

* (14:10)

This is an all-hands-on-deck approach, rapidly evolving situation. Our government is working 24-7 to protect Manitobans and make sure they have accurate information, and we're doing that with everybody at the table as Manitobans.

Unfortunately, the member for Fort Whyte isn't on that team right now.

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

Mr. Khan: Honourable Speaker, I asked about justice for Jordyn Reimer's family—Jordyn, who was killed in a car accident. And this NDP government voted against it. I asked for answers on why they voted against the interprovincial trade barriers movement, and no answer.

Manitobans deserve answers; that's what their job is. It is our job to ask them.

It was shocking to see the NDP MLAs fake sympathy while the family was sitting in the gallery crying, Honourable Speaker. A simple referral to an outside agency would have gone a long way in restoring people's faith in our justice system, faith in the Reimer family and Manitobans, a faith shaken by this NDP government.

It is a failed Justice Minister—is so confident in his decision not to pursue charges in the Jordyn Reimer case.

Why will he not seek a second opinion? Does he not like being second-guessed, just like his toxic boss?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, our government stands with the Reimer family. We have multiple ministers and members of our team who have met with the family as recent as yesterday, and we'll continue to sit down and meet with them and make sure their voices are heard as we move forward.

Our Justice Minister has taken many steps—many steps—to strengthen laws here in Manitoba with the full support of MADD Canada and other organizations that our government is working directly with to move laws in the right direction, to make sure that we're mitigating tragic outcomes from happening again.

I encourage members opposite to take a different approach that really focuses on unifying around improving this area of our justice system instead of focusing on division.

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

Mr. Khan: Manitobans, you heard it right there—more misleading facts by this NDP government. They say they stand with the Reimer family, but they vote against the very resolution the family is calling for. If that isn't stabbing the family in the back, I don't know what is.

No ideas; only games by this NDP government. They talk about free trade; they vote against it. They talk about justice; they deny it for the Reimer family. They see a good idea; they steal it.

It's shameful, it's disgusting and it's today's NDP.

Will the Premier (Mr. Kinew) turn the page, stop playing games with Manitobans, by supporting good policy, regardless of who proposed it?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I think Manitobans, when they look around this Chamber, would probably argue that disgusting behaviour really lives on that side of the House. We can see it in the Leader of the Opposition's approach. This is the same person who has collected a tax rebate of \$160,000 for an ad that he ran under targeting murder victims of a serial killer.

Honourable Speaker, if you want to talk about disgusting, callous, despicable, shameful, unbecoming

of an elected official in this Chamber, take a look over at the member for Fort Whyte and the campaign he ran over—ran under where he's collecting a rebate based on targeting the families of murder victims.

Honourable Speaker, there is not a single Manitoban who can learn a lesson from him.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Legislation to Remove Interprovincial Trade Barriers

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): This NDP government is playing games with Manitobans and Manitoba businesses. They voted against the free trade and labour mobility within Canada act today for political purposes. Legislation that is actively before the House to remove interprovincial trade barriers was voted down by this NDP government.

When will this Premier quit playing games with Manitoba and Manitoba businesses for political purposes?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please.

Once again, I would call the government bench to order.

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): Honourable Speaker, I don't know if the member missed the memo, but yesterday, our Premier announced, alongside the Premier of Ontario, that we signed a new MOU to reduce interprovincial trade barriers between Manitoba and Ontario.

We're getting the job done, and we're doing the work to build a stronger economy, starting with our \$3.7-billion capital plan where we're getting the job done that the members opposite never did when it comes to building schools, building PCHs, building NEWPCC.

We're also, of course, investing in buy Canadian. We're bringing back dollars to Canada through changes to procurement. We're investing in trade-supporting infrastructure, like the Port of Churchill, the rail line that goes there, CentrePort. We are creating more opportunities for Manitoba businesses to get their goods to market because we are going to continue focus on building the strongest economy in Canada.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Midland, on a supplementary question.

Mrs. Stone: Honourable Speaker, that Premier (Mr. Kinew) also said that legislation was coming. They clearly want all the glory without doing any of the work because legislation was before the House today to recognize reciprocal provinces, and this NDP government voted it down—powerful, good legislation that would be consistent with what other provinces in the country are doing, and they voted it down.

For what reason did this NDP vote down reciprocal legislation to remove interprovincial trade barriers?

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, we're getting the job done. We're moving forward with reducing interprovincial trade barriers while we continue to take action to move our economy forward.

You know what's also important to move an economy forward? Energy. You know what they did for seven and a half years when it comes to creating new energy? Nothing, Honourable Speaker. They didn't build one single megawatt in seven and a half years. And, you know, to move our economy forward, we need to have energy to support more investment in Manitoba. We were proud to being in a—bring in an announcement: 600 megawatts. We're going to develop a win in partnership with First Nations.

We're moving our economy forward, and we're going to continue doing that every single day.

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

Mrs. Stone: The free trade bill was introduced on April 15, which is 31 days ago. This NDP government has had ample time to bring forward its own legislation, but they stalled for months. They want all the glory without having to do any of the work. Instead, they are waiting until the final days of session to bring forward legislation as a result of mounting pressure from Premier Doug Ford.

When will the failed minister quit playing games with Manitobans and Manitoba businesses?

MLA Sala: I invite the members opposite to get on team Manitoba, get on team Canada. We're doing the work with the biggest economy in Canada, and we're moving things forward.

Not only are we bringing down those trade barriers. Again, we're making incredibly important investments in trade-supporting infrastructure to help businesses get their goods to market. We've invested in energy infrastructure. We're moving forward with

critical minerals thanks to the good work being done by the minister for jobs. And, of course, we brought in a payroll tax cut to make it easier for a small- and medium-sized business to succeed.

As you can see, Honourable Speaker, this team, on this side of the House, we are building a stronger economy for tomorrow.

Death of Jordyn Reimer Request for Out-of-Province Review

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): As we've seen, the NDP loves playing political games with Manitobans. Shamefully playing games with the death of a young, vibrant lady, with her family up in the gallery, has to be addressed.

I ask the Premier: Why did he instruct his caucus to delay justice for Jordyn yet again today?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Honourable Speaker, once again I had an opportunity to speak with Karen today. Jordyn's death is still so raw, and it's still so raw for so many, not just the family but so many in the community, so many in this House and in this Chamber. It's why we're doing absolutely everything we can to make every step that we can take when it comes to strengthening our impaired driving legislation here in this province.

And we've shown we're ready to do this in a nonpartisan way. Once again, I implore the members opposite to put the partisan swords down. Let's get to work, and let's make our roads safer.

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

Mr. Balcaen: One signature is all it would take. The Premier didn't have the courage to answer my question of why the NDP denied justice for Jordyn.

* (14:20)

Second opinions are not new to Attorney Generals. Peter Nygård was charged because of a second opinion by a real Attorney General. Gord Mackintosh did it; Dave Chomiak did it.

Why does our current Attorney General not have the courage to do the right thing for the Reimer family?

Mr. Wiebe: Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) was the former Attorney General.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wiebe: He had the opportunity to ask for a review—it was within his department—of this case. He refused the family. He said no.

I said yes. I said that we would look at this case and we would bring every resource to ensure that everything was done to support this family when it comes to the prosecution of this case.

Now, the member opposite knows that we are taking steps when it comes to impaired driving, and all it takes is for that party to put down their partisan swords and come to the table, work with us, and let's make our roads safer. They continue to refuse to do that, and I—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Balcaen: Drop the 'pardiban'—'partimanship.' One signature is all it takes. The Premier (Mr. Kinew) refuses to answer; the Attorney General refuses to answer as well.

The members of the NDP government who have children, such as the members for Riel, Rossmere, Kildonan-River East, St. James and Concordia: will one of them stand up and answer why their entire NDP government denied justice for Jordyn today?

Mr. Wiebe: Every member in this Chamber cares about the victims of impaired driving. And every member of this government caucus is going to fight tooth and nail every single day to ensure there are no more deaths on our highways when it comes to impaired driving.

That's why we're stepping up. We're giving the RCMP more tools. We're building on our community programs and our education programs asked for by the Reimer family. We're supporting MADD Canada; we're supporting victims of impaired driving, and we brought legislation every single session in this House, including Bill 5.

The members opposite need to get on board, support that legislation and stop with the partisan games.

Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act Government Vote on Bill 227

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): The NDP are quick to wrap themselves in the flag, but they refuse to actually get off the sidelines and join team Canada. The hypocrisy of this NDP government to talk about

buy Canada and then vote against free trade within Canada.

Why did the minister responsible for government purchasing vote against The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act?

The Speaker: The honourable minister of government services.

Hon. Mintu Sandhu (Minister of Public Service Delivery): I want to thank the member for that question.

That member wants to be the 51st state of the States. It is not going to happen. Member from Midland wants—they had—she liked our budget so much, she have no complaints about the budget; only complaint was why Elon Musk wasn't getting the discount. And the member from Fort Whyte thanked Trump.

So I'll just—that side of the House, we will take no lessons from them.

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

Mr. Guenter: Once again, Speaker, that minister is a stranger to the truth. The Premier expenses a flight to Toronto to ride Doug Ford's coattails, and the very next day his entire caucus voted against inter-provincial trade.

They voted against ripping down bureaucratic barriers. They voted against opportunities for Manitobans and they voted against Canada in a trade war. We stand with Manitobans; we stand for national unity. Why did this minister vote against Canada?

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

The comments that the honourable member for Borderland made in his question about stranger to the truth had previously been ruled as being out of order, so I would ask the member to kindly withdraw those comments and apologize.

Mr. Guenter: Honourable Speaker, I'm asking for clarification. I did not use that phrase previously.

The Speaker: For the honourable member for Borderland's (Mr. Guenter) clarification, he just used it in his response or, in his question. Previous times that particular phrase has been ruled as being out of order, unparliamentary. So, rather than argue with the Speaker, I would ask him to apologize and withdraw.

Mr. Guenter: Thank you, Speaker. I apologize and withdraw.

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, let me be clear with—for you and for all Manitobans that we're a leader on internal trade and will continue to be a leader on internal trade. We are working with provinces and territories right across the country to break down barriers to internal trade and make sure our economy moves forward. And that's why we were out in Ontario signing a new MOU to break down internal barriers with the Ontario government.

That's real leadership, real action. We're getting it done while members opposite talk about thanking Trump for the tariffs. That's the last thing our economy needs. On this side we'll get the job done for all Manitobans.

Children in CFS Care Inquiry into Hotel Placement

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Yesterday, Global News revealed the shocking and disturbing truth that the Minister of Families would rather keep hidden.

To the minister: How many Manitoba children have been housed in hotels over the last 18 months?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): The member knows that I can't share details on specific CFS files. I've told her that repeatedly and she keeps getting up in the House and wants me to break the law. Unfortunately, I'm not going to do that.

What I can say to the member and to the Chamber is that the CFS standards are clear: hotels are not to be used as placements. There are, in some circumstances, hotel stays for medical appointments, family visits, or in the planning of family reunification. I am in constant direct contact with authorities and agencies and it is clear that the CFS standards are in compliance with agencies and authorities.

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

Ms. Byram: Just to be clear, I wasn't asking for specifics. I was asking for numbers. That should be a simple question, but yet the minister failed to say—the number should be zero, actually. She is, once again, housing vulnerable children in hotels.

When is the minister's—when, in this minister's mandate, was the first child housed in a hotel?

MLA Fontaine: Again, the CFS standards are clear: hotels are not to be used as placements. They are sometimes used as hotel stays for family visits, medical appointments, and planning in family reunification.

And the member knows that, under my administration, we have proclaimed kinship and customary care agreements. We raised the basic maintenance rates by 10 per cent, something that wasn't done in 13 years, and that we are actively moving towards jurisdiction here in Manitoba. And she knows, because I've said it many, many times.

Child welfare is going to look incredibly different in five to 10 years with more children with their families in their communities and in their nations.

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

Ms. Byram: Honourable Speaker, a 15-year-old was left in charge of multiple siblings under the age of 10 for two weeks. A 13-year-old ran away from the hotel.

Family members have asked the minister, and I quote: What is she doing to protect our children? What is she doing for the safety of our children?

So I ask: Will the minister answer those families here today?

MLA Fontaine: What I will say again is that the standards are clear: hotels are not to be used as placements. They are sometimes used as stays for medical appointments, family visits, or family reunification.

* (14:30)

What I will say is that it is incredibly irresponsible for any journalist to include pictures of children that are in care without their consent and that can be easily identified and traced. I take great exception as the Minister of Families for anybody that would put in harm's way children that are in child welfare; it's incredibly irresponsible and that's what the member should be getting up on today.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mining and Mineral Exploration Request to Modernize Provincial Laws

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Manitoba has incredible potential in mining and critical minerals, yet we've fallen to 12th out of 13 provinces and territories for exploration spending. Investors are choosing other jurisdictions because our system is outdated and uncompetitive. While other provinces have moved to a digital claims system, Manitoba still requires ground staking, that is costly, slow and intrusive.

What is the plan to modernize our mining laws to make Manitoba a competitive market again?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, I am so glad to get a chance to talk about the critical mineral sector, mining. We've just had prospectors and developers here this week and it's a great time for me to talk about the brand-new gold mine we opened in Lynn Lake, Manitoba.

This is a billion-dollar investment right here in Manitoba and it's going to put over 600 Manitobans to work during the construction phase, 450 to work during operations. This is a great opportunity economically and you know what's the best part? We did it in collaboration with First Nations in the community so that all Manitobans can benefit from our critical mineral industry here in Manitoba.

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

Mining and Mineral Industry Indigenous Revenue Sharing

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Honourable Speaker, provinces including Ontario and British Columbia are showing real leadership by partnering with Indigenous communities and sharing mineral revenues. These partnerships are unlocking economic growth and building trust.

How exactly is Manitoba pursuing Indigenous revenue sharing to strengthen relationships, attract investment and create opportunities across the province?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, it is very important to point out the work that needs to be done to make sure that we have First Nations and Métis communities engaged in the critical minerals sector, something that was ignored and failed by the former government.

On this side of the House we've already started to correct that work by working collaboration with First Nations and Métis, and we've actually struck a Manitoba Mining Advisory Council where First Nations and Métis have a place at the table to advise as to how we go forward and that works in collaboration with industry and with academia.

Honourable Speaker, that's how we move this industry forward; by doing so together, so that all Manitoba can greet the benefits from our critical minerals sector.

And I think that's something members opposite fail to understand, but Manitobans can rest assured that we will get it right.

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

Manitoba's Critical Minerals Competitiveness Concerns

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Critical minerals are essential for the global transition to clean technology. Our province has really fallen behind compared to other provinces, and this delay is costing jobs, pushing businesses away and causing us to miss out on opportunities that could benefit both northern and southern communities. This inaction is hurting workers, entrepreneurs and especially Indigenous communities.

What steps is this government taking to compete in the critical minerals economy?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, members opposite are, you know—from Tyndall Park, is right, that critical minerals are essential to moving our clean economy forward and that's why we take it seriously. That's why we launched our strategy last year. And that is why we are continuing to advance critical mineral projects in the right way, something the members opposite failed to do, failed to get done and failed to deliver on.

We're correcting that and we're getting it done and we're getting it right. Let me tell you, Honourable Speaker, that we invested \$1.5 million with the Mining Association of Manitoba to make sure that we can actually achieve and capitalize on the next investments, the next mine, the next opportunity for us to succeed in the critical minerals space. Not only do we have a new gold mine in Lynn Lake, we also have a potash mine here in Manitoba—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Wildfires in Manitoba Government Update

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Honourable Speaker, Manitobans and Canadians alike are watching anxiously as the emergency wildfire situation in Whiteshell develops.

We were devastated to learn that two Manitobans tragically lost their lives. Our hearts go out to their families, their community, first responders involved during this incredibly difficult time. And we also

extend our support to the evacuees who are anxious and facing challenges as they leave their homes, sometimes on very sudden and short notice.

And this is an emergency that our government is working with emergency measures offices and experts on managing.

Can the minister please update the House on any further developments on the wildfire situations across the province?

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): Again, our thoughts and prayers are with the family and the loved ones of the families that—the two that—Manitobans that we lost in this terrible tragedy.

I'd like to thank the member for the question. I'd also like to wish everybody a safe and happy May long weekend.

But at the same time, we need to be vigilant. We need to be vigilant as this emergent situation, this developing situation that changes not only on a daily basis but even on an hourly basis. And we want to be able to ensure that people have the opportunity to listen to evacuation orders and please, please, please be vigilant when it comes time to being able to allow emergency personnel to do their duties and do their responsibilities.

So we've also had—of course, the Whiteshell area is now in a state of emergency as well too. So we want to be able to have that opportunity to tell Manitobans to let our first responders, let our emergency personnel, let our Wildfire Service do their due diligence—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Rural 911 Emergency Services Call Not Reaching Dispatch

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): When Manitobans call 911, they expect someone to answer. But we're hearing alarming reports of how many of these calls are not getting through. This is a critical failure in our emergency response system.

Can the Premier (Mr. Kinew) tell this House how many 911 calls are not getting through?

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology): I want to thank the member again for raising this important question.

When someone calls for help, they should get it. That's why when we learned of the failures with

private telecommunications companies, that they had prevented a Manitoban from getting life-saving care, we took action. We spoke to the family to share our condolences and vowed to hold TELUS to account. We demanded TELUS investigate the incident and work with its partners to understand what went wrong.

We've reviewed the interim report from TELUS and the CRTC which confirms it was a TELUS outage that impacted 911 calls. We're meeting with TELUS later today to discuss both what went wrong and what steps are being taken to ensure it never happens again.

We've committed—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Interlake-Gimli, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Johnson: Honourable Speaker, other calls went through. It was only the calls to the 911.

Every second counts in an emergency, but in rural Manitoba, people are reporting that 911 calls are not connecting. This raises serious concerns about the reliability of our emergency infrastructure.

Can the minister tell how many 911 calls are not getting through?

MLA Moroz: Honourable Speaker, I have to confess I'm a little disappointed that the member opposite continues to make this a political issue when it needn't be. But if you're going to, then I feel justified in raising your record on this.

I want to quote from the Lac du Bonnet Clipper, September 7, 2023. Councillor Curt Buley of RM of Reynolds: we're only 45 miles from Winnipeg. This is crazy. I've been working on this issue since 2017 as it's major for us.

Your inaction on this issue, opposition, could have prevented some of the problems we're seeing now.

I want to table that article for the House so members can refresh their memory on the record.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Interlake-Gimli, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Johnson: If this failing NDP government doesn't know how many rural 911 calls are not connecting, that in itself is a serious concern.

* (14:40)

Honourable Speaker, shouldn't the minister know how the current state of the Manitoba 911 system is? Will the minister call a public inquiry into their 911 disaster?

The Speaker: Just before the minister answers, I would remind him to make sure his response goes through the Chair.

MLA Moroz: Of course. Apologies, Honourable Speaker.

I want to remind the opposition again that your record on rural cellphone coverage is appalling. You did nothing when a man in Alonsa died because he didn't have cell service to hear a tornado warning.

We're taking action. We're talking to the family. That's taking action. We're working with the telecom companies, with the federal government and the CRTC to make improvements. We're meeting with TELUS later today.

If the member has anything of actual value to add, he should do so now.

The Speaker: Just before the next question, I would once again warn the minister that he needs to think when he's speaking, because he did directly address members opposite by saying you again instead of through the Chair.

Wildfires Currently Burning in Manitoba Call Volumes and Staffing at 911 Dispatch Centre

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Honourable Speaker, a constituent of mine had a building on his yard burned down while a concerned neighbour was unable to access 911 services. The neighbour was eventually able to get a hold of the local fire chief on his personal line, and the fire was stopped before it spread to their home.

Has the minister expanded staffing at the dispatch centre to address the call volumes during this emergency situation?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Honourable Speaker, when someone calls for help, when someone calls emergency 911 services for help, they should be able to count on receiving that help. Which is why our government was so concerned to hear not only of this tragedy, but there have been other concerns raised under the previous government that went unaddressed for years.

That's why our government has demanded that TELUS Mobility and providers bring forward a report that outlines for our government what steps they are taking to ensure that this does not happen to Manitobans moving forward. We are demanding they

provide us all of the information necessary so that, as a government, we can make informed decisions and ensure that we have the support in the right places.

We expect our providers to deliver services to Manitobans that keep them safe.

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

Mr. Narth: Honourable Speaker, my situation is completely new.

The minister is responsible for Emergency Management Organization. EMO was responsible for the centre. If Manitobans are unable to access 911 in an emergency, it is her responsibility to address it. I have spoken with many Manitobans who have gotten left on hold when they called 911 recently.

What has she done to ensure Manitobans are heard during this emergency situation?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I'm concerned that the member opposite is really misinformed. Really doesn't understand the process or the structure in terms of how emergency response services are actually organized, and who is responsible for what.

I know that the minister would be more than willing to sit down with that member and walk him through it step by step so that when he stands in the House, he understands what he's bringing forward. But I also want to highlight, we're going into a long weekend, we really want for Manitobans to have all information, check out the websites, stay informed, keep yourselves safe.

I also want to say, Honourable Speaker, it's been really difficult being in this House, hearing members opposite share personal information of others in this House, invoke their children. It is disgusting what we're seeing on that side of the House.

It's a reflection of the failed leadership already of the leader opposite. Do better.

The Speaker: Your time has expired.

An Honourable Member: On a point of order.

The Speaker: The honourable member for—the time for question period has expired.

Point of Order

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): On a point of order, Honourable Speaker.

I do just want to raise the issue in this Chamber of some of the things that we've seen over the last couple of weeks. And again, I'll remind the House that it started with the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) when he asked really despicable questions of the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) and tried to infer that the Minister of Finance was doing something he shouldn't have been doing and really questioning the Minister of Finance in respect of, like, mental health supports.

And what we saw after that was that there was, you know, a statement in the House that ensured that members of the House know that we have privilege in this House to say pretty much everything, but without clarification or qualification.

And what that ended up doing is that it ensured that anything that folks say opposite is allowed in this House. But there are lines that aren't crossed. There were lines that were crossed that shouldn't have been crossed a couple of weeks ago with the member for Riding Mountain. And we saw it again today, just mere minutes ago, with the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen).

You don't invoke members' children in this Chamber or outside this Chamber. You don't invoke members' families. You—there is just lines, or a principle that we should have in this Chamber that our families, our children, our loved ones are not brought into this Chamber and into the toxicity of this space that they never asked for. They didn't sign up for it.

All of us in this Chamber signed up for, in some respects, some of that. But if the members opposite want to, you know, continue to disrespect the women and gender-diverse folks on this side of the House, unfortunately, that is their right in this Chamber. But there is lines that should not and must not be crossed.

And the member for Brandon West, alongside his buddy, the member for Riding Mountain, crossed lines. It's unacceptable.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Obviously, the content of the questions and sadly, the content of the answers are just mere disputed facts and they don't fall under your purview, Honourable Speaker, of what the actual content contains.

And I just find it amusing that this point of order is coming from somebody who's been called out 13 times in this House in the last couple of weeks.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

The points that have been raised are very important points, which is why I'm going to take it under advisement to make sure that I come back with a well-thought-out, well-researched and thorough response.

Multiple times, I've asked us all to be more respectful of each other and I will continue to ask that of all of us.

PETITIONS

Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

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

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

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

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

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

(4) Other provinces have taken proactive steps to strengthen bail—

The Speaker: Order, please.

If I could just interrupt the member for a couple of minutes. If I could ask members to please stay for a minute. I've got an announcement to make as soon as this member's done with his petition.

* (14:50)

Mr. Khan: I forgot if I was on three or four, so, sorry.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

Honourable Speaker, this petition has been signed by Ryle-ann Steeden, Rachel [phonetic]—Rochelle Rant [phonetic]—Rands and Ruth Aucoin and many other Manitobans.

* * *

The Speaker: At this point in time I wanted as many members here as possible because after two years of serving as a page here in the Legislature Building, Mai-Anh Huynh is sad to say goodbye.

Having the opportunity to work as a page was initially daunting, even a bit intimidating, but she grew to immensely enjoy the work whether it was the liveliness of question period or the calm committees late in the evening.

This June, Mai-Anh is graduating from Collège Churchill High School. She's planning on taking some personal time for growth and development by going to a school abroad for a year before deciding her time to her—before dedicating her time to her future academic studies.

With a growing interest in public policy and governance, in part thanks to paging, she is to pursue them in the future in the hopes of perhaps ending up back here.

Mai-Anh is incredibly grateful for the experience she has gained as a page here at the Legislative Building and for everyone who made it an educational and supportive environment.

She would like to thank all the wonderful pages she's been able to work alongside with for the past two years as well as the rest of the Chamber Branch and anyone else who works in the building. It's only because of them that she has had such a great experience, and she appreciates every single person and what they do to keep the proceedings of this building going.

The lasting impact of this experience has had on Mai-Anh will no doubt stay with her forever, and she will always look back on it with appreciation and gratitude.

And we all thank you.

Thank you. We can now return to petitions.

Death of Jordyn Reimer—Judicial Review Request

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

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

* (15:00)

And, Honourable Speaker, this petition has been signed by Skim [*phonetic*]-Kim Skoc, Kevin Nelson, Linda MacDonald and many, many other fine Manitobans.

The Speaker: Seeing no other petitions, grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology): I wish to table a response to written questions seven through 11 from the member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte).

House Business

Mr. Josh Guenter (Chairperson, Standing Committee on Public Accounts): I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on Monday, May 26, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. to consider the following: the Auditor General's Report, Addictions Treatment Services in Manitoba, dated July 2023.

The Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on Monday, May 26, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. to consider the following: the Auditor General's Report, Addictions Treatment Services in Manitoba, dated July 2023.

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Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): Can you please resolve the House into Committee of Supply for the consideration of Departmental Estimates.

The Speaker: The House will now resolve into Committee of Supply.

Will the Deputy Speaker please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

ROOM 254

BUSINESS, MINING, TRADE AND JOB CREATION

* (15:10)

The Chairperson (Diljeet Brar): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation.

Questioning for this department will proceed in a global manner.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): Well, it's great to be here on a beautiful afternoon on a Thursday with the minister, who I have known for many years, way back to our days in River East school division.

And I know everybody on committee is thinking: Oh, I bet you they went to high school together. But I—no, it wasn't that. I was a school trustee and he was a student, and I believe the minister was also very active on sports teams at River East Collegiate and maybe he wants to reflect a little bit. I don't actually

remember all the sports he was involved with, and very active at River East Collegiate.

I don't know if one is allowed to say this here, but I think he was one of the stars. Not sure—did—if he got athlete year of the year award, I don't—did he get—yes, maybe he should—you know what, it's good to sort of know where we all come from.

I mean, it has been a few years since he graduated and since I was on the school board, and he actually went to River East Collegiate with my nieces, and he was a bright, dynamic young student, and—was he athlete of the year for grade 12?

I don't remember, but could the minister inform us on his sports career?

The Chairperson: Thank you member for the question. It's always interesting and good to talk about sports, but I would respectfully advise the member to bring it back to Estimates so that it's relevant. So, you can add your comments to bring it back to the Estimates.

Once again, I appreciate sports talk.

Mr. Schuler: How did all of those athlete of the year help him as minister of this department?

The Chairperson: I'll let you give it another try. Anything related to minister's salary is usually discussed at the end of Estimates, so I would request the member to please bring it back and make it relevant to the Estimates.

Mr. Schuler: Okay, I seem to be confused here. I don't think I ever asked about the minister's salary, but I would like to also ask the minister who his chief of staff is, on top of his other sports activities.

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Thank you, honourable Chair, and I appreciate your guidance through this situation. The line of questioning, which I appreciate from member opposite, very happy to indulge about my athletic history, and perhaps you might even say, prowess.

Yes, I attended River East Collegiate and I won, I believe it was, four athletes-of-the-year awards in the three years that I went there. Yes, the—actually does—that is actually true; they gave out two different awards, and one year I won both of them. And I also won the provincial athlete of the year in my grade 12 year, as well as three provincial basketball titles while at River East, so I'm very happy about all that time.

But spent some time coaching basketball afterwards—high school, and that was a lot of fun.

But now to the business in hand. My chief of staff or, as we call them, director of ministerial affairs is a very important role, and I'm very happy to have a good person doing excellent work in that position who has a lot of experience and has the attitude, the in-depth knowledge, the, I would say, you know, commitment, stamina and, I would say, dedication to do the job in an excellent fashion.

And happy that his name is recorded in the order-in-council, available for all public to see. And so anyone who wants to know the—my staff people, their—that political staff, their names are all listed in the order-in-council, and so folks—all Manitobans can go ahead and look at the staff information there.

But happy to continue to answer any question from members opposite.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: Well, that just shows what a athlete we have as minister, and I think he also went to school about the same time as Chad Posthumus. I don't know if he graduated with Chad. And as many of us know, unfortunately, Chad had a incident and passed away.

I know the family well. In fact, his younger sister played sports with one of my kids and his son with my younger children and—his sister and brother, pardon me—and know the Posthumus family. In fact, the mom, Diana Posthumus, was a principal of the River East Collegiate at one point in time.

So, you know, it's all in the family, but River East Collegiate has certainly produced some amazing athletes, amazing business people and individuals in the arts section. Just an—Jeff Kula was an amazing band teacher and music teacher. His—what he did with that school and giving it prominence was just unbelievable. And the success of even my family members was just amazing.

So—but all of these things do really bring us to a point of where we are today, right. Like, we go to school and we get to learn under some really dynamic individuals, and then we move on. And so today, we have a graduate of River East Collegiate and sports athlete.

I don't know if I'm allowed to ask. I don't even know what the minister studied at university. And I'm—from what I understand, he was even a recognized athlete at—I don't know if it was University of Manitoba or University of Winnipeg. May just—it just speaks to how great this province is that we can have individuals grow and flourish through—and I'm particularly biased

about River East Transcona School Division—and move on.

And today, he's a minister, and that's just really cool and it just shows, you know, the greatness of this province and the greatness of the school system.

And I thank the minister for pointing out that we don't go with a chief of staff. I know under the previous Conservative government, we had special assistant and executive assistant. Now it's kind of like chief of staff and assistant chief of staff.

Manitoba just doesn't seem to want to use those terms; it's used everywhere else in the country, but we don't and that's fine.

And so to the minister: Who else does he have in his political staff in his office? And if he wants to reflect a little bit on his post-secondary education, it'd be interesting to hear, but I understand this is about the department, so leaving it there.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler).

* (15:20)

Mr. Moses: It's a very interesting time we're spending this afternoon in Estimates. I do think that athletics and sports; time is—in your youth certainly shapes your future, and I think it's important for young people to be able to live up to their full potential by having opportunities to engage in activities that they feel relevant or important in their lives.

For me, it was being involved in many things growing up, like athletics and like music and other things, and, you know, and find interests and passions that help drive you forward. And so, very clearly, my message to young people and Manitobans is, take as many opportunities as you can to find a fulfilling and worthwhile activities during your youth when you have the ability to do so. It's—can be—while bringing forward lasting memories, strong friendship and honestly, teach you much about yourself that you might find useful as you grow older in a variety of perspectives.

Played football at the University of Manitoba; proud Bison. And it's a very exciting time to be there. And glad to have had that opportunity and also played football with the Winnipeg Rifles.

So I have three political staff: a director of ministerial affairs, as was mentioned; as well as an executive assistant and an issues manager, all of which have OICs.

But I do want to just get to one other item here that was actually brought up the previous day in Estimates for this department, brought up by the member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux), around royalty rates. And so I just want to put it in the record for members around some of the royalty rates, and I'll just read out some of the 'rayl'—royalty rates here. And these are for quarries: stone and rock.

So for quarry minerals, there's a variety of rates, and I'll just put them on the record here. These are per kilogram. So for amber, it's \$5.58. Bentonite, it's 67 cents. Kaolin, it's 67 cents. For other clays, it's 36 cents. Gypsum, the rate is 50 cents. Limestone greater than 90 per cent calcium carbonate is 36 cents. Silica sand greater than 95 per cent silica content is 50 cents. Heavy mineral sand containing minerals such as 'illumite,' 'rutile,' zircon, garnet, monazite, magnetite, 'kaonite,' tourmaline, sphene and 'apatite,' 'biotite,' those are 39 cents—and forgive me if some of my—to all the geologists out there, if my pronunciation wasn't a hundred per cent perfect there. Coal is 56 cents. These are all, again, per kilogram. Shale is 56 cents. Salt is—sorry. Salt is 56 cents, shale is 36 cents. Peat is 6 cents per cubic metre. Gravel is 50 cents. Mining backfill is 21 cents. Those are all quarry minerals.

Now for rock and stone. There's common stone—there's two specific types: common stone and processed stone. So for common stone, it's 15 cents. Processed stone for—it's processed stone that's screened, crushed or pulverized, that stone; that's 36 cents. Dimension stone, which is shaped or cut, is \$1.07. So all these rates were as of—updated, last updated in 2013.

And the last section there that the member from Tyndall Park might want to know as she asked the question in the previous session of Estimates, was around—might be also around the rehabilitation levy for quarries. And that, at the industry's request and lobbying, was actually increased from 12 cents per ton to 24 cents per ton in 2025.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: Well, I'm sure the member for—the Liberal independent member will certainly appreciate those numbers.

While we're on that topic, what is the royalty rate for oil?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: I—you know, when I woke up this morning and I—if I put on my list of things on my bingo card

where that if he's talking about the provincial championships I won at River East Collegiate, I would not have suspected this would be in the line of discussion during Estimates today.

* (15:30)

But you know what? Life surprises you sometimes, so take every bit of joy out of life as I can, and so having an opportunity to answer the member's questions regarding former athletic triumphs, I think, is a, you know, often—doesn't happen often, and so I take joy from every bit of it as I can.

But I also want to say that to all the athletes who are out there right now, who are doing an amazing, incredible job and in many respects surpassing heights that I even—would never have imagined, I commend them. And just think that we all should salute their remarkable achievements that they make, and find more ways for young people to—and people of all ages—to reach their full potential.

I know seniors in my community who are achieving incredible highs at pickleball, you know, and I'm sure would be able to—who would be able to mop the floor with me in pickleball, I'm sure. So I commend all people who take advantage of those particular opportunities.

And as the member opposite did mention in his last—or his previous question around Chad Posthumus, I did want to just send my, obviously, sincere condolences to his family. I've had a chance—had the pleasure—of not only getting to know Chad over the time, even though I did not go to school with him at River East; we were different years. Getting to know him and getting to know what a wonderful person he is, what an advocate and champion he is, on and off the basketball court. Particularly his work with diabetes, I think, was incredibly remarkable and he was such a passionate advocate for him.

I even had a chance to play pick-up basketball with him, and I can truly say that he lives up to the name of being the Beast from River East. And so I certainly want to send deep condolences to him, especially as the new Sea Bears team will be kicking off their season opener tomorrow, and they'll be certainly missing their dear captain, Chad Posthumus.

So as to the member opposite's question for royalty rates, royalty rates are based on the class of oil here in Manitoba and there are a variety of different classes of oil. There are actually four different classes of oil: new oil, old oil, third tier oil and holiday oil, and the

ranges of those four classes—the rates for those four classes of oil range from 2.5 per cent to 10 per cent.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

I appreciate the sports talk again, but I think we should be focusing on the Estimates. I again appreciate your not just sports—enthusiasm for sports, but also for performing arts that has been briefly mentioned. I would like that more, but let's focus on the Estimates. So that's an advice from the Chair—[interjection]

Order, please—[interjection] Order, please.

It's part of the responsibility of the Chair and the staff to call on irrelevance, so that's what I just did. I would advise the members, while they're allowed to talk about certain things surrounding the subject, fine, but we need to bring it back to the Estimates. That's what we are discussing right now.

Mr. Schuler: It's great celebrating your achievements. Thank you for the rate on oil.

My question to the minister is, is there any other fees that are placed on oil pumped here in Manitoba, or is it just the percentage range that the minister raised? Like he mentioned, it's about 2 and a half to 10 per cent, depending, I take it, on the quality of the oil. Is there any other fee that is imposed?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: I thank the member opposite for the question. You know, our oil and gas industry is one that is—plays a significant role in Manitoba, not only in our economy, but also in a very specific area geographically in our province. So you can think of the southwest Manitoba area, Virden particularly, as being the oil and gas hub of Manitoba in our province there.

I know the operations—is very significant operations of Tundra, Corex being the two major players there in Manitoba, and I had ongoing dialogue with them about our industry. And I think it's very important for us to acknowledge all the people who work in that sector and ensure that our economy can continue to function and move on in terms of having the oil and gas products just that we need on a daily basis. And I think it's very important for us to just acknowledge the hard work that Manitobans put—play—in that industry and the jobs that are created out of the sector.

Now, when it comes to a very specific question the member asked on any other fees for oil, I just want to say the way that oil and any other fees are: first, when you think about just really the only fees that would be on top of the oil and gas tax, which is we

have a tax here in Manitoba, are the fees around getting a permit application for drilling, for the permitting oil and for the exploration as well.

So it's really the fees associated with drilling, permitting and exploration. Those are the other fees on oil, as well as the royalty and the oil and gas tax.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: Thank the minister for that information.

Also, the government announced that they were going to open up a trade office in Washington. Can the minister tell us how is that going?

* (15:40)

Mr. Moses: Thank the member—I thank the member for the question on the US Washington trade office that we've announced that we're going to be opening.

You know, I think it's very important to signal how important that is, right? This is our largest trading partner, the United States of America. We export billions of dollars, and over 70 per cent of what we export goes to the United States of America. So having a strong trade relationship is essential to our ability to export goods. That's something that drives our economy.

And it was really, in my opinion, very short-sighted for the former failed government to close down representation there in Washington. And we're very happy to not only be doing it but doing it alongside calls from the business community, who have been advocating, saying that they need to have Manitoba represented on the international stage, and particularly with the largest trading partner for Manitoba businesses.

So it's very important for us to have that. We've taken strong steps to have that open. We're going to be having some news to share about that soon.

But I also want to say that in the meantime, we've done—taken some very significant steps when it comes to our relationship and navigating—relationship with business and with the United States—as we navigate the landscape of tariffs coming from the White House.

And so we know that we've already begun and had several meetings with our US Trade Council. That's the group of business leaders and sector leaders who are coming together so that we can share the up-to-date and live information with them, and also they can provide their feedback with us to ensure that their business needs and their business impacts of the Donald Trump tariffs, as well as the tariffs from China, that we have an awareness of how they're very

specifically impacting our business community and that we can have the ability to work with them to navigate them.

Our department has done significant amount of work to understand those concerns, listen to them and react and respond, in many ways a very proactive response to those tariffs. We know that steel, for example, has been a very impacted industry, and we've been very active on that file, as well as manufacturing and secondary manufacturing has been very impacted.

We also know in agriculture, canola producers have been very much impacted by the tariffs from China, and so us—myself, and working in collaboration with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kostyshyn)—are working very hard to address and make sure we have the resources to move our economy forward.

We're also opened up a trade hotline to make sure that Manitobans can email or call us and make sure that they can get the updated information and share with us what they're seeing and hearing when it comes to trade with the United States. So that tariff hotline, which we opened up in February, I believe, was—has already received over 300 emails, and over 100 calls. It's a lot of significant work. A lot of Manitoban businesses that we're able to work directly with, help them navigate the changing landscape that is the Donald Trump tariffs.

And so that's just a snippet of some of the work that we've done. It doesn't include working on Buy Canadian Act and new procurement policies and rules or direct visits and conversations and meetings with trading partners in the United States of America, that all go towards making sure that we—that Manitobans know they have a government that is not only responsive to the ever-changing landscape of US, White House, Donald Trump tariffs, but also that they have a government that they can trust in and know it's going to put their needs as economic force as the centre of our trading relationship and our—on our policy when it comes to growing our economy.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: So with the trade office in Washington DC, can the minister tell us what is the budgeted amount for this fiscal year, and where do we find it in the budget?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: So, as I mentioned in my previous response, we're going to have some news to share

about the Washington trade office soon, so I think that's where the member opposite and Manitobans should make sure they stay tuned for that announcement coming soon.

But I want to say that, you know, I—it's so much work that we've done to respond to US tariffs, and I want to share more of what we've done with the member, just so that he's fully aware of some of the really great work that's happening here, in addition to some of that direct advocacy work, which includes a trip down to meet with US governor in North Dakota, and have a direct individual meeting with him and myself and the Premier (Mr. Kinew).

* (15:50)

It was very interesting to hear Governor Armstrong's opinion and understanding—the strong trading relationship between North Dakota and Manitoba. So we value having—and continuing to have—strong, positive relationships because we know that people on both sides of the borders have—can benefit when we have the ability to trade with each other and move our economies forward. That direct advocacy work is significant.

We've also, as member opposite and Manitobans would know, we pulled US alcohol products—US booze off the shelves—as a strong signal that we want to not only have an impact on some of the US suppliers of alcohol, but also that we think Canadian booze is pretty good. And that we can encourage Canadians and Manitobans to find avenues to shop locally here and maybe pick up a 1919 instead of one of the US brands if they so choose to.

And with that buy local campaign in particular, that's a very significant piece of effort, and I've heard from local business communities, where they've—business leaders where they've seen an uptick in business because of our buy local and buy Manitoba and support local and support Manitoba campaigns.

This is something that we launched early on in the trade discussion, and it's really about Manitobans finding the ability to support our own economy here in Manitoba. You know, the website that we launched in February 5 has been promoting local businesses, and the platform has done very well; over 32,000 views and has been something where Manitobans have been able to say, hey, this is a great way for me to do my part to navigate the conflict with the US over tariffs and do my part.

And I think that's something that goes not only to have an economic benefit for us as Manitobans and

our economy, but also for Manitobans feeling really united, and knowing that we all can do something when it comes to growing our economy here, and buying local and supporting Manitoba businesses is one of those very things. So we're very happy and excited with the success of that program.

I think our investments to grow trade around the world and diversify is also something very important, and that goes to the question around the importance of having a trade office in Washington, that trade is important. Trade with our largest partner is important, but trade with the rest of the world is really important, too.

And that's why we want, and why we are super proud about investing \$36.4 million over two years in the revitalization of the Port of Churchill. This is going to go to help strengthen our economy, diversify our economy, and at the same time, support northern communities and Manitobans from every corner of the province.

These are the sort of initiatives that are significant, that we've taken in response to the tariffs, but also that we've done to make sure that we're—making sure our economy is more fortified, more robust for the future. And providing businesses and our industries here in Manitoba with the tools they need to succeed, and ride the wave of the tariffs, but also come out even stronger on the other side.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: So the question really was about the trade office in Washington, DC, and I'm not asking the address or who's going to staff it. I've gone through the budget, and I wouldn't know it as well as the minister's department, but I don't seem to be able to find that a trade office in Washington, DC, is ever referenced. I'm on page 20; I don't see it mentioned there.

Can the minister point to me, in the Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure Budget '25-26 for the department, can the minister point to—me to the page where a trade office in Washington, DC, is even mentioned in this particular document?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: I love the questions about the Washington trade office.

I think this initiative is fantastic. It gives us chance to have an advocate for Manitoba, for our business industry, in Washington—the capital, the 'policetty'—policy-setting place—with our largest trading partner. It's

a fantastic idea that we should be very excited for as we get that online. And we—as I mentioned earlier to the minister—will have some important news to share about that soon.

So I won't scoop myself or scoop our government by giving any more, but I will say that I'm so passionate about this. And I'm also thankful for the question on this, and I also feel like it's very curious of the member to ask questions about this, because it's his former government that closed the office down—that closed the former office in Washington. Manitoba's former representative that we used to have there was closed because of the former government.

And I'm thinking about now. I'm thinking about, you know, how under all of what we've seen happen with the ups and downs to business and industry as it relates to the pandemic and the ups and downs that businesses have been facing as a result of Donald Trump's tariffs on Canada and whether or not members opposite and the former government—how they feel about that decision to remove Manitoba's trade representative in Washington—again, a trade representative with our largest trading partner—how they feel about that decision now in hindsight.

I wonder whether the member opposite would maybe feel like they should have taken a different course with that or whether they would double down on that, I would say, objectively poor decision.

And, I mean, at the same time, we've seen other jurisdictions in Canada who have continued to have a presence in the United States, in Washington. We've seen other jurisdictions across Canada, 'ac' fact, open trade offices in other countries besides the United States and Canada, around the world, in an effort to grow their economic footprint, their trade opportunities and further diversify their markets.

Now, former government felt that that not only was not the right approach, but closing down the office with our largest trading partner was the direction they took. And I think it did not serve us well as Manitobans and did not serve our business community well.

So, we're reversing course. We're actually listening to the business community by reopening this Washington office. And we're going to have some really good news to share on that soon.

And so I welcome more questions about this Washington office from members opposite, and I think that it's a right move, a move that's supported by businesses here in Manitoba. And it's one I think is

going to have real positive gains and make a lot of sense for our businesses here and for advocating on behalf of Manitobans.

* (16:00)

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: Well, I think it's time to nominate the minister for a fifth athlete of the year award, and that would be in political dodgeball, because he has yet to answer a question.

In his Estimates book, nowhere does it list a trade office in Washington, DC. There's no money allocated; there's no line item; it's not even mentioned. No mention of it. No money. So the minister's going to make a big announcement and there'll be no money.

So, my question then is: Is that office going to be under his department or will it fall under a different department? Because currently, within this budget that is presented, there is no money budgeted. There's not even a mention of it, and the minister wants to talk about it. And he's very good; he's very good at dodgeball; you can tell he was a very good athlete because he's very good at dodging the question.

If it's not even mentioned, there's no line item, will it fall under his department?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: So I think the member, you know—let's be very clear with Manitobans. It is very clearly mentioned in our budget on page 58 of our budget document, the Budget 2025—Building One Manitoba—our document, page 58, and I can read the text for the member opposite.

To be very clear, so Manitobans can also be very clear, that says in the section titled Trade Office in Washington, DC, a section of it reads, and I quote: Our government has made trade with the US, Manitoba's largest trading partner, a priority from day one.

While the previous government cut the Washington, DC, trade representative, Manitoba will stand up an office in Washington, DC, this year with a focus on building relationships with lawmakers and businesses who understand the mutual benefits of a strong trading relationship with Manitoba and Canada. The position will be based in Washington, DC, but will also work with Manitoba companies and industries to strengthen ties in states with a strong Manitoba presence, like Illinois, Georgia and Minnesota.

Very clearly there, end quote. So very clearly there it says in our documents describing the Washington trade office, we're going to have really good news about that soon.

But what I think member opposite, and I'm so excited again to talk about this, is that this is a great initiative, an initiative where we listened to the business community, saw and recognized very early on. Quite frankly, before the election happened in 2023, we were able to get former premier, former ambassador Doer as our trade adviser. Using his list of knowledge and experience to advise us, to navigate the trade landscape with our 'largeng' trade partner, I think has been an invaluable asset to our government.

As well, you know, I think it's very obvious and clear to Manitobans, the failed approach of the former government to close down our trade representative in Washington. And I think the member opposite should really reflect on whether or not that's something that he thinks was a good decision for Manitoba and for Manitoba businesses.

When I talk to businesses, they say we should have had a presence in Washington. They say that we should continue to be advocating about the amazing strength we have here in Manitoba. Businesses I talk to say that, yes, we should let the rest of North America and the world know about the fantastic trade corridors we have here in Manitoba, where you can reach east, west and south with there being a set line, all the way up north to the Port of Churchill, the only deep-sea Arctic port in all of North America.

More business communities here in Manitoba say that we ought to be telling Manitobans about the incredible opportunities we have here, telling Canadians and Americans about the opportunities that businesses could have with our low-cost and affordable and clean electric hydro grid that can power industries affordably with clean energy.

Businesses tell me that we should be telling Americans in Washington about the fact that we have some of the largest manufacturers—specialty manufacturing here, third largest aerospace sector, incredible opportunities in critical minerals where we work in partnership with First Nations with the highest environmental standards.

And on top of that, we can get projects done with a streamlined regulatory and permitting approach. That's evidenced by the new gold mine we opened up in Lynn Lake, Manitoba. Was at a ground-breaking there not too long ago.

These are incredible stories that we have to tell. And how do we do that? We do that by having a representative who can represent us and tell these stories. And where better else to tell that story but with our largest trading partner, with the United States, and having that person working for us on our behalf in Washington is going to be essential to growing our economy here in Manitoba well into the future.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: So, today we are in Estimates for Manitoba Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, and we are dealing with the Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure, which I referenced. And I asked the minister: Where in this document does it list the trade office in Washington, DC? He said it's on page 58. Conveniently, there's only 52 pages in this Estimates.

So I—again, I'd like to point out—[interjection] I think—and this is a—if the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) would like to ask some questions, I'm prepared to cede the floor and he can do so.

But the document that we are dealing with right now, our Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure—and I went through it, which I know he's got in front of him. There's only 52 pages. So I like the fact that he mentions there's 58 pages and there's not.

Again, will the trade office in Washington—the expenditures come out of his departmental budget?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: This is a great opportunity to talk about the terrific things that we're doing in growing our economy and how we want to tell the story around the world and what's—particularly with our largest trading partner.

You know, you think about anything that you want to get done; you've got to work with other people, right? We as a province have got to work with other provinces and—we've got to work with municipalities. We've got to work with the federal government.

* (16:10)

I know member opposite understands this concept, or at least I assume he does. And us, as a province, have also got to work with our trading partners around the world. And there's that saying that goes—that's very important for us to keep in mind: You've got to relate before you negotiate.

And us building strong relationships with the US is only going to help us navigate challenges that might

come up in the future and also put a good foot forward for us, make sure that sometimes those policy-makers can have Manitoba on our mind, can have our incredible pork industry on the mind—largest pork producer in the country, have that on their mind. And understanding how many times, you know, before we buy that bacon on the shelves, how many times it crosses the US-Canada border, right? And if we can understand that, we can really make sure that we have an advocate telling that story and the impact that tariffs would have on that industry.

And so we're happy to open up the trade office in Washington. I think I've explained that very well. I think I explained that in my last answer that on page 58 of our actual budget is where we talk about our trade office. And I've been very clear.

So I think it's a little bit disingenuous for the member to talk about page 52 and page 58 of different documents. I think it's very clear it's on page 58 of our actual budget, Building One Manitoba, Budget 2025, where I was reading from and quoting that document.

But it still doesn't explain why members opposite thought it was a good idea to close down the office in Washington. It still doesn't explain why that trade representative stopped representing Manitoba under the former government. And I think it's very important for us to dig into that because that, you know, really is why we are now having to set up a new office here, which we're very happy to do, but it's a lot of work.

And it really set Manitoba back; it set us back when it comes to growing our economy; it set us back when it comes to advocating for the potential of Manitoba and the great things that are happening here; it set us back in terms of building relationships with the United States, with those folks in Washington, and it's important that we re-establish that, and that's exactly what we're going to do today.

And so if the member opposite, in his next question, wants to continue to ask about the US trade office we're going to open up in Washington—it's going to be terrific and we'll have some good news to share on that soon—I'm very happy to continue talking about it. But as he thinks about how he frames out his next question, perhaps he should also let Manitobans know what his thinking is about why they closed down and ended the trade representative there in Washington in the first place and how he reflects on that decision years later, whether he thinks it's a good decision he would stand by or whether he would say that he regrets that decision and wished they had taken a different course.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: So we are in a Estimates process where ministers and departments are asked about the finances and how they fund things and how they account for the finances. That's what Estimates is about.

So we're asking the minister, where in his budget, departmental budget, is the financing, the funding, for a trade office in Washington, DC? If it's not in his department, we understand it's in a different department, and he needn't even have to say which other department.

If it's in his department, where in his budget does the funding come out of to fund the trade office in Washington, DC?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: Well, I thank the member opposite for that question because, again, it's another opportunity for me to talk about the great things that we're doing with—it comes to growing trade here in Manitoba.

But I do want to just start by saying I'm a little disappointed the member opposite didn't take the opportunity he just had to explain to Manitobans why they closed down the office, why they ended the trade relationship—representative in Washington, why they didn't want to have good relationship with our largest trading partner. Sometimes it a little boggles the mind in some respects.

And thinking back on the—you know, it was almost hard to quantify all the missed opportunities that we could have had if we had a representative advocating for Manitobans, putting our good foot forward as we enter into conversation with our largest trading partner.

And just to highlight a few things that was missed without a trade representative in Washington. The negotiation of our current trade agreement, CUSMA. We had NAFTA; now we have CUSMA. And we—while that was being negotiated, we had no trade representative in Washington making sure that we had the voice of Manitoba at the table negotiating that trade deal. It's such a missed opportunity, a complete missed opportunity that we could have had the voice of Manitoba there advocating for our best interests as we—as Canada and the US negotiated that trade deal.

And so, you know, we're going to rectify that error by opening up the new trade office. So we're excited to share some news on that very soon. But the member opposite's wondering about specific funding that we're putting forward. So let me tell the member some very specific funding.

Like I said, we've put \$36.4 million over two years into revitalizing the Port of Churchill. That's a very specific amount of funding that's going to help strengthen the Port of Churchill, give us new infrastructure to expand our trade with other countries, with jurisdictions, particularly those in Europe, at the same time growing our northern economy and giving new access to markets for Manitoba companies and also companies in western Canada.

Another very specific number to grow our economy is \$1.5 million that we're investing in trade diversification and partnering with the Canadian manufacturers of exporters for a made-in-Manitoba program. It's going to support companies impacted by tariffs.

That's the sort of investment that not only helps to deal with the uncertainty of tariffs in this very moment but also gives support to companies here in Manitoba and at the same time sets them up for greater success in the future and help them grow their economy—grow our economy and grow their businesses—regardless of whether there's tariffs or not and regardless of who's in the White House. This is how we're going to set ourselves up for greater success in the future.

And if the member opposites wants another specific funder number, I'll give him another \$1.5 million that we're doing in partnership with Mining Association of Manitoba. And that is specifically to go to market Manitoba's critical minerals around the world and internationally, help us get more of that foreign direct investment, help diversify some of our export markets, help to ensure that we have more critical mineral opportunities, more mining opportunities here in Manitoba. Opportunities that will help to grow our economy in rural and in northern areas. Opportunities that will go to benefit the lives of First Nations and the Métis. Opportunities that will go to put more Manitobans to work. And those same opportunities will ensure that we have and respect our environment.

So we're very happy about all of these things, and I can give the member opposite many more specific numbers. But I'll close by—my comments for this question by saying that the US Washington trade office is going to be funded out of Intergovernmental Affairs and area.

* (16:20)

And it's important that we work together as different departments to make sure that we have a very cohesive and collaborative approach to growing our

trade with our largest trading partner, the United States of America.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: Is the government of Manitoba looking at all in opening a trade offices in China?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: Well, I thank the member opposite for the question, honourable Chair, and thanks for recognizing me. And as we continue on this discussion, it is, again, very interesting to see the line of questioning from member opposite.

Again, this is a question coming from—and I just want to break down the history here for Manitobans who are watching. This question's coming from a member who is part of a government that closed down the Washington office, that made that decision to roll back our representative, our advocate from our largest trading partner, right. They made that decision. Then we had no trade representative during the negotiation of our largest trading agreement with our largest trading partner, CUSMA, away from NAFTA over to CUSMA.

We didn't have a representative as we navigated the uncertainty of the pandemic. We didn't have a representative as we were going through this trade uncertainty with President Trump. And now our government is finally getting on board, reversing the mistakes of the past, putting out a new trade representative into Washington, which we will have some good news to share on that soon.

And the member is asking us questions around this, and I just wonder if the suggestion around the question's that we shouldn't be going down this path. I wonder if that's the line of questioning and what the member's trying to infer from his questions on this or not.

And now he extends a question out to whether we will have a trade representative in China. And so I'm wondering whether the member opposite is advocating for us to have a trade representative there or not. Again, coming from the member who closed down the trade office—trade representative with our largest trading partner.

And so I'm very unsure whether the member opposite is trying to suggest that we should or should not have this 'opposite,' whether he's saying he's for or against it. We know that he closed it down in the first place. We don't know whether he wants to re-open it now. But we do hear him asking questions about

whether there should be trade offices in other parts of the world, namely China.

So I think that's very interesting and I—maybe the member opposite wants to take an opportunity in his next chance to clarify his position on trade offices outside of Manitoba: whether he likes them in Washington, whether he doesn't; whether he wants one in China or whether he doesn't.

But I'll certainly say that we're charting the course very clearly for Manitobans' businesses. We're charting a course that is steady in the face of uncertainty—of Donald Trump's uncertainty caused by his tariff approach. We're charting a course that is going to build a sustainable and growing economy well into the future.

And that economy that we're growing, and that plan that we're developing is part of our economic development strategy that we are working on right now. We know that we're doing consultation on that and we're meeting with business communities to grow our economy and develop a strategy that is reflective of that.

And so Manitobans can rest assured that our government is (a) listening; that we're working with them to build a stronger economy. Manitobans can rest assured that we have their priorities at heart; that we know we have got a great story to tell here in Manitoba and that we want to be able to tell it, right? And (c) we want to make—Manitobans can rest assure that we're not going to make the mistakes of the past. We're not going to make the mistakes of the former government, and that, quite frankly, we are going to be a government that grows our economy for all of us here in Manitoba.

And I can point to a number of instances where our government has made significant investments throughout our entire province. Northern Manitoba, in Churchill; it's a new gold mine in Lynn Lake in the northwest to significant investments in Westman—throughout the Brandon and Westman and region as well. And visiting—I was just in Steinbach two weeks ago, talking to business leaders. I was meeting with folks in—Piney, Manitoba, last week to understand their economic needs. We've been out—the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) and other folks were just in Morden-Winkler area last week and, of course, the strong work we do with manufacturers and exporters and businesses here in Winnipeg.

We're growing an economy that works for all Manitobans. We're going to continue to do that in the face of Donald Trump's tariffs so Manitobans, our

business community, can know that we are government that is working for you.

The Chairperson: Thank you, minister.

Mr. Schuler: Right. The NDP Premier (Mr. Kinew), the minister's boss, has indicated that the government wants to diversify away from the United States.

Can the minister tell us, has he been tasked with the job of diversifying Manitoba's economy away from reliance on the US trade market?

The Chairperson: Thank you, member.

Mr. Moses: I thank the member opposite for the question.

I think diversification is a smart thing to do. Any business leader or anyone in financial will tell you that risk management is done in a part by diversification. Anyone with a portfolio would know you don't want to have all of your eggs in one basket, so diversification is certainly important.

We know that diversification means reaching out into new markets, and so we are doing that work, but we also know that with 70-plus per cent of our exports going to the United States, they will continue and will remain as a large trading partner for Manitoban exporters.

And so it's important for us to both strengthen that relationship, do the work of building good relationships with US trading partners and businesses and states, and making sure we have an advocate there, but also at the same time look an eye towards diversifying with other global markets.

I'm very pleased to welcome to Manitoba the ambassadors from 19 EU countries recently and have a great discussion about many things—about growing our—and working together to grow our industries. Mainly, we talked very specifically about our pharmaceutical industry, which is one of the largest—in fact, we're the second-largest exporter of medicines in the country.

We talked a lot about our specialized manufacturing space, being a manufacturer of one of the largest EV buses in the world, right here in Winnipeg. We talked a lot about the potential of our critical mineral space, and that's how we develop projects in the right way.

We work in combination; we work in collaboration; we work together with First Nations and Métis communities to ensure that projects—mining and mineral projects—get off the ground in the right way; where we work to hold projects to the highest environmental

standards possible to make sure that we also know that the world knows that we have clean, affordable, hydroelectric grid; where your critical mineral project can get powered by hydro and ensure that you have—that we can market critical minerals of the highest human rights and environmental standards anywhere in the world.

We know that we have a significant amount of critical minerals in Manitoba. We have 30 critical minerals out of the 34 on Canada's list, 19 of which are being actively explored or produced. We have 45 out of 50 on America's—the United States of America's—geological survey list of critical minerals, and we have 24 out of 34 on the European Union's 2023 list.

* (16:30)

Now, this just goes to show the world is looking for what Manitoba has. And since that's the case, we ought to be doing a good job of not only looking for more diversified markets for what we have here in Manitoba, but standing up these projects in the right way.

So we're certainly taking those avenues, and at the same time as doing all that, talking about Manitoba, we're also making sure that businesses have an opportunity to find their own markets of diversification. That's why, this year, we're very happy to continue our export support program, a program that allows Manitoba companies, small and medium size, to go out and participate in more trade shows. Do that marketing material work, prepared for—preparedness for trading market research and all these types of initiatives that help them diversify into new global markets.

This export support program directly goes to Manitoba companies to ensure that they have the resources to find new markets, grow their companies and build good relationships with global partners. And so not only did we continue to do that this year, but in the face of Trump tariffs and tariffs from China, we actually did more this year than we've ever done before, by allowing more companies to go into the export support program.

And we helped to support 48 companies—were approved in 2024-25 that attended 82 national and international events, trade shows and missions. This is just part of the work we're doing to diversify our economy for Manitoba businesses.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: So the NDP Premier (Mr. Kinew), the minister's boss, wants diversification; he said so. Is the

minister the point minister that—is his department and the minister, are they the lead on the process of diversifying Manitoba's economy away from reliance on the US economy?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: Our team is very happy to be working together—and thank you, honourable Chair—very happy to be working together. I work very closely with the Premier and happy to do so.

Our team is also very happy within Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation to be working—happy to be working collaboratively with many other departments, including the Department of Agriculture, where they—and certainly know very well the impacts of the Chinese tariffs on agricultural producers. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kostyshyn) and I have been in many meetings together where not only have we been talking about how we can best navigate and support producers who are impacted by the tariffs from China, particularly on canola products.

But we've also met with stakeholders, including KAP, and to hear directly from them, jointly, about how we can work through the challenges that they're facing. And this is collaborative work that I think is—should be par for the course when it comes to government. Obviously, if the member opposite is surprised to hear that, it only goes to show the maybe isolated nature they took when they ran government in the past. Perhaps that's what he expects is the norm.

But on our side, on our approach, when it comes to working and running government for the people of Manitoba, we take a collaborative approach. And that goes not only with working with stakeholders and industry and Manitobans, but also comes with working with each other across departmental lines.

So I pointed first to the Minister of Agriculture, but I also point to the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala). We work very closely together with his team, whether that be on his files on financing and that initiatives there in the budget, in construction and rollout, but also with his responsibilities on Hydro and intergovernmental affairs, as well as the Premier (Mr. Kinew) on those files as well.

So we do a significant amount of work collaboratively to develop these sort of initiatives and approaches. And all this work is to benefit Manitobans, to ensure that we have the tools we need to navigate the Donald Trump tariffs that is, you know, impacting our economy.

And tariffs, honourable Chair, that I'm—would remind you, these same tariffs were those tariffs that were—that member opposite, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan), said thank you to. You know, it was the member for Fort Whyte who—again, this isn't previous; this isn't years ago in some, you know, taken-out-of-context quote. It was a quote that was delivered this year while we're in the face of Donald Trump's tariffs, where member opposite for Fort Whyte went out of his way to thank Donald Trump for his tariffs.

Yes, I'll repeat that for Manitobans who might be in disbelief right now. It was the member for Fort Whyte, went out of his way, while Donald Trump was talking about tariffs, to thank Donald Trump for those tariffs. I think it's shocking, and I agree, members around the room who are shocked to hear that.

But I will say that while that's happening, while members opposite take that approach, we are not distracted by that. We're very focused on working collaboratively with myself and various other ministers to put forward plans and support the business community, the agricultural community, to make sure that we can navigate together what we're seeing. And that goes—includes our ability to work with other jurisdictions and provinces, and I'm happy to be taking that leadership role on many of those tables—those federal, provincial and territorial tables—including the table on internal trade where we are breaking down trade barriers—internal trade barriers—including the table on labour market ministers where we work to ensure that we can have a strong labour force across the country.

And these are the work that we do together to build a stronger economy across Canada, to build a stronger united country. And it's too bad that members opposite perhaps take a different approach, but we will use this opportunity to unite ourselves as a province, unite ourselves as a country, become stronger, become better off for it.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: So, I mean, the question was: Is this minister the lead minister on the diversifying the economy file. And he's not going to answer, whether that's by choice or he doesn't know. Maybe it hasn't been decided yet who the lead minister is. I mean, it would be seemingly a natural that this minister would be the lead on that file, but guess we'll have to wait for that big, big announcement the minister keeps talking about.

There was a meeting with the NDP Premier and ambassadors—the minister mentioned 19. Were there any agreements signed at that meeting or coming out

of that meeting with the 19 ambassadors representing 19 different countries? Were there any agreements signed with any of those countries, even if it was an agreement to talk further?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: I thank the member opposite for the question.

It's really important for us to make sure we clearly communicate the work that we're doing with Manitobans on the—on this file because it is very important. You know, we are growing our economy here by working collaboratively within government, but we're working together with other jurisdictions in other countries around the world.

* (16:40)

This is work that's important to help move the needle in terms of growing our economy, and building strong relationships is part of that. That's why I was so happy to ensure that we had those conversations with the EU ambassadors when they were here. Ambassador Tuts from the European Union and 18 of her colleagues, you know, were very strong.

And actually I will say to the member opposite, most of the Manitobans, honourable Chair, that we are and have already begun to have those continued conversations about growing trade relationships, and those are meetings and conversations that we have had, and that's something that we've committed to doing beyond the meeting.

But I will, just for the member opposite and for Manitobans' awareness, give them an understanding of some of the conversations and countries that we are doing business in, we're working and building strong relationships with. That includes Austria, who was at the meeting with the European Union ambassadors; Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany. And I'll continue to say these because they're important for us to understand the work that we're doing, but also to understand that we've had many—we had really strong conversations and we're going to continue to build on those relationships.

In addition to Germany, we've also met with Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. Now, these are just the ones who attended as part of this group of ambassadors delegation. We've actually had a number of other visits and meetings and calls and work that is following up with other ambassadors as well from a variety of other countries, and that work is ongoing and continues.

And so I think that there's going to be a lot of fruit to show from the labour that we're putting in, and I'm confident of that. But I'm even more confident that none of this happens if we don't work together.

So I'm very glad to be taking that approach on behalf of our government to make sure that we have that right, putting that right foot forward and extending that warm and hearty hand shake and doing the work to make sure that Manitobans know that the government is working with other partners in other jurisdictions around the world. We're very happy to be doing so, happy to be playing my role as part of that great team on team Manitoba and team Canada. And we'll continue to do that work on behalf of Manitobans.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: Interestingly enough, the minister didn't mention France, England or Poland.

Do we not do business with any of those, and were they not invited as part of the 19?

The Chairperson: Thank you, Member.

Mr. Moses: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

Yes, I think there's a lot of great countries that we should meet with and continue to build strong business and relationships with, and we're going to continue to do that work.

The list I gave before was just the EU ambassadors who attended that meeting, and that was organized by the EU, and so we're very welcome, very open to meeting with other countries and ambassadors and we've already done some of that work.

So, you know, to the minister—to the member opposite's question, I've met with the UK ambassador this year already. And so, pretty—previous had a meeting with him. Premier (Mr. Kinew) was in France 'zosten' less than a year ago meeting with business leaders.

We're very open to having more conversations, and some of that work the member's trying to point to, we've already begun doing. And I think it's also important to know that we've met with other countries—maybe the member opposite might not be aware—with ambassadors and business leaders and politicians and ministers from other countries, including Czech Republic, Swiss—Switzerland, Japan, Korea. I've met with folks, ministers from Australia as well.

And so, you know, we're taking a broad approach to growing our markets not only in Canada, and as we

break down barriers, not only as their largest trading partner, the United States of America, but also with European markets and Asian markets as well.

So this all goes to show that our government is taking a real and serious approach about growing our economy. We're very happy to be doing it on behalf of the business community, who we work with collaboratively, and we're very happy to do it in a way that—it shows that we know our economy is stronger when we work together.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Schuler: No further questions.

The Chairperson: Hearing no further questions, we would put a question on the resolutions now.

Resolution 10.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$35,126,000 for Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, Investment and Trade, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 10.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$132,541,000 for Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, Workforce Development and Training, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 10.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$13,570,000 for Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, Minerals, Petroleum and Geoscience, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 10.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$570,000 for Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

* (16:50)

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 10.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$60,000,000 for Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, Loans and Guarantees Programs, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

The last item to be considered for the Estimates of this department is item 10.1(a), the minister's salary, contained in resolution 10.1.

At this point we request that the minister's staff leave the table for consideration of this last item.

The floor is open for questions.

Mr. Schuler: I move that line item 10.1(a) be amended so that the Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation's (Mr. Moses) salary be reduced to \$1.

The Chairperson: It has been moved by the honourable member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler) that line item 10.1(a) be amended so that the Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation's salary be reduced to \$1.

The motion is in order.

Are there any questions or comments on this motion?

Seeing no questions, is the committee ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Chairperson: Shall the motion pass?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

An Honourable Member: No.

The Chairperson: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

The Chairperson: Those in favour of the motion, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

The Chairperson: Those in favour—in—opposing the motion, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

The motion is accordingly defeated.

* * *

The Chairperson: Resolution 10.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$6,009,000 for Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

This completes the Estimates of the Department of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation.

The hour being 4:53, what's the will of the committee?

Some Honourable Members: Committee rise.

The Chairperson: Committee rise.

ROOM 255

NATURAL RESOURCES AND INDIGENOUS FUTURES

* (15:10)

The Chairperson (Rachelle Schott): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will now consider the Estimates of the Department of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures.

Does the honourable minister have an opening statement?

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): Thankful for the opportunity to share a few opening comments. And I'd like to welcome everybody who is potentially watching online as well as the member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk) and the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) to the table here as well, too.

As well, too, my colleagues, the member from Kirkfield Park; Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage; and the member for Fort Richmond (MLA Chen).

It's—it gives me great opportunity to share a few words, but before I begin, I do want to acknowledge the current situation that we're in here in Manitoba and the wildfire season. And I encourage folks, whether you're directly impacted or indirectly impacted, to not only show your support but do your due diligence, to do your part.

We're in extreme wildfire season significantly earlier than we traditionally have been by quite a number of weeks, so this may, in fact, be our new normal. I think we need to take that into consideration. There's very tinder-dry conditions, and I think, as the makeup of what we are in Manitoba is significant challenges it sometimes faces, and this extremely dry spring is more cause for concern for us to all do our due diligence.

So I encourage folks to be fire smart and to be very cognizant of the fact that emergency services, Office of the Fire Commissioner, Wildfire Service, local reeves, local volunteers are doing their part to

help us combat this issue. And I do want to say an extreme thank you to them as well too.

And I do want to acknowledge the loss of life that we had yesterday, and our thoughts and prayers are with the families that were affected by that loss of your loved ones.

Again, we're into extreme situations, so I do want to be able to address that kind of at the outset.

But if I can get into my comments here, 2025-26 marks the first year of the new Department of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures, a department that brings together staff dedicated to protect and preserve our province's critical natural resources, including our forests, peatlands, wildlife and fisheries, with those working together in partnership with our Indigenous peoples to build a stronger economic future on the lands that have sustained our communities for generations.

Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures' 2025-26 summary budget of \$148.9 million reflects a net increase of \$16.3 million—or 12.3 per cent—from the 2024-2025 level, primarily due to funding for and not limited to our partnership in the federal 2 Billion Trees initiative and a multi-year wildlife equipment fund to renew and replenish equipment, added legal surveys for land transfer obligation with First Nations and advancing long-standing responsibilities relating to the Northern Flood Agreement.

Budget 2025 includes a significant investment in the reforestation of our woodland areas through a \$3.8-million increase in funding to the 2 Billion Trees program, focused on tree planting throughout Manitoba to combat climate change. This funding is partially offset by the 50 per cent cost-shared revenues from the federal government through the 2 Billion Trees bilateral agreement.

Sadly, we have all seen the devastating impact of wildfires on our communities here in Manitoba. Our hearts, again, are with the Manitobans impacted by these tragic situations, and we are thankful for the dedicated and skilled crews that put their lives at risk every day to fight the fire, and we want you to know that we have your back and we're here to support you.

We're investing now through this budget providing \$2.4 million through the Fighting and Managing Wildfires in a Changing Climate equipment fund. We are also investing in the future and will continue to find ways to add support for our front lines.

We recently announced our plans to enhance Manitoba's outdated water bomber fleet to better protect

our province, and Budget 2025 reflects and illustrates our commitment through capital budget spending to make additional down payment on this purchase. And it was important that we got ourselves in the queue as that is time sensitive and still a number of years away, so it was a priority for us to be able to invest in that water bomber fleet.

Conservation officers also provide a critical front-line service that protect public safety, our natural resources and the environment through education and enforcement. We are focused on making the Conservation Officer Service a rewarding place to work again. We have a mandate to listen to conservation officers, Indigenous land guardians and the communities they serve and work with them to improve respect, relationships and a workplace culture in the spirit of reconciliation.

This will involve historically filling vacant positions and enhancing resources for these dedicated staff that work in challenging conditions all over our province by providing tools and support they deserve to best serve Manitobans, build relationships and safeguard resources, help make us a have province when it comes to our people and our natural resources.

Our government is committed to fulfilling our obligations which begins with ensuring commitments made under long overdue Treaty Land Entitlements are kept. We are budgeting to spend an additional \$2 million in 2025-2026 for cost of legal surveys required to perform—to confirm boundaries in accordance with signed and pending land transfer agreement obligations. We have set targets of the land we intend to transfer to Canada and are committed to exceeding these.

* (15:20)

An additional \$1.4 million is being provided to add to the Northern Flood Agreement liability account to address settlement costs and other expenses for Indigenous communities impacted by flood associated with past Manitoba Hydro expansion. Excuse me.

The Indigenous economic development fund was first established in 2024-2025 to lead the full inclusion of Indigenous communities and businesses in all aspects of Manitoba's economy for the benefit of all Manitobans in the spirit of truth and reconciliation. And again, the Indigenous economic development fund was something that never existed in this government's history.

Working closely with other departments, we are adopting a whole-of-government approach to grow

our economy by increasing economic participation and creating opportunities for Indigenous Manitobans and communities.

Manitoba's a province with a significant and under-developed potential in our resources and our people. In this respect, we are a very have province. This is also true with respect to Indigenous communities and businesses. The potential impact of removing barriers to the full inclusion of Indigenous peoples to Manitoba's economy is one of the most significant economic opportunities facing the province.

And I'm proud to say we participated in a First Nations leadership forum and leadership summit just the other day. And we heard from leadership all across Manitoba, how greatly it was to have those voices at the table and to really have that engagement back and forth.

And I was quite honoured to actually speak at VisionQuest yesterday morning, which is now in its 28th year in business, if you will, to be able to really kind of kick-start the global Indigenous economic economy, so it was great to be able to share some words over there yesterday.

This new department has a mandate to work collaboratively with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and partner organizations to improve economic participation and opportunities for Indigenous Manitobans and communities through the efforts of the Consultation and Agreements Branch and Indigenous Business Development Branch.

The important work of the department includes the co-development of an Indigenous economic engagement strategy with First Nations, the Manitoba Métis Federation and the Inuit. The department is mandated to work meaningfully with Indigenous governments and partner organizations and departments to grow the economy by increasing economic participation, with a special focus on education and jobs for Indigenous Manitobans and Indigenous communities all over.

Budget 2025 makes initial investments to establish an Indigenous loan guarantee program to support Indigenous nations in accessing financing for wind-power projects by reducing financial risk for lenders. The program may evolve to include other sectors in the future—again, something that was unheard of in government's history.

The development is also directly supporting economic development in Indigenous and northern Manitoba communities through the Communities Economic

Development Fund. Last year's Estimates provided CEDF with new loan authority, and this year's budget request provides operating resources to carry out related programming that will provide support for Indigenous business development that complements existing CEDF programming and our government's larger focus on loan guarantees for wind-power projects.

Thank you much—thank you very much for the opportunity to say a few words. This concludes my opening remarks, but first—but before I finish, I wanted to extend a heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated staff in the department, and their dedication and hard work play a vital role in ensuring a stronger, safer and more environmentally sustainable province for all Manitobans.

Thank you.

The Chairperson: We thank the minister for those comments.

Does the critic from the official opposition have an opening statement?

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): I thank the Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous relations for being here today and look forward to collaborating with you as we cover a lot of topics that are so important to Manitobans because our natural resources are precious for all Manitobans.

And I want to also echo some of the opening statements you made in thanking our—the people out there, the staff out there, all—as I call them—the heroes out there for working so hard in keeping our province safe during these challenging times.

I know we have a lot of things happening out in the eastern part and the western, and kind of across the province. We got the—both scenarios. We got kind of flooding in southwestern Manitoba right now and we got extreme fire hazard in the eastern part of the province, and that's challenging times for everybody, and really appreciate all the staff that's working so hard in co-ordinating, you know, these—the things that are occurring.

I just want to say that Manitoba stands as a shining testament to nature's generosity, a province rich in resources and breath-taking landscapes. And we see that throughout, right from the southern part of the province, from the sandhills, you know, right across to the northern Cambrian [*phonetic*] shield and up to Churchill. It's a 'provin' rich in resources and of course, breathtaking landscapes and had the opportunity to travel a lot of this.

Beneath its soil, we got a wealth of minerals. We got, you know, nickel, copper, gold, lithium, fuels of innovation that power industries across the nation. These treasures, coupled with the province's fertile land and abundant forests, makes Manitoba a cornerstone of Canada's national wealth.

But beyond its mineral riches, Manitoba's landscape is nothing short of mesmerizing, from the golden prairies that stretch endlessly to the west, of course, to the rugged beauty of the Canadian Shield in the east, and the province is a masterpiece of nature's design.

Many people find a lot of gratitude in visiting these landscapes and its countless lakes and winding rivers that provide a vast opportunity of resource-related activities for families, for individuals, and a sanctuary for diverse wildlife and other moments of tranquility to those lucky enough to explore them.

I look forward to working with the minister and his staff, working together to preserve and protect our province cherished natural resources, and our natural resources are treasured by all Manitobans. But now more than ever, they are threatened by climatic changes, and we've seen a lot of stuff—you know, that fire season comes earlier, and it extends later into the fall.

And I also want to thank all the natural resource staff for their hard work, because I know they put a lot of effort—they're very dedicated to their jobs, and they're really compassionate about what they do every day, and I thank them for that, and we truly know how hard they work.

I thank you for the opportunity to share those few words.

The Chairperson: We thank the member.

Under Manitoba practice, the debate on the minister's salary is the last item considered for a department in the Committee of Supply. Accordingly, we shall now defer consideration of line item 25.1.(a) contained in resolution 25.1.

At this time, we invite the minister's staff to join us at the table, and we ask the minister introduce the staff in attendance.

Mr. Bushie: Thank you, Madam Chair—honourable Chair—I apologize.

Just a quick correction, and I know the member opposite is going to correct himself, as well, too. The department is Natural Resources and Indigenous

Futures, not Indigenous relations. I just wanted to clarify that, as well, too.

With me today is my Deputy Minister Bruce Gray; also with me is Don Hallett, the assistant deputy minister of Indigenous economic departments, joined by my director of ministerial affairs Marty Gautron, as well, too, Matt Conrod, the assistant deputy minister of Natural Resources Stewardship, Darryl Villeneuve, executive director Engagement and Collaborative Policy, and Kristin Hayward, assistant deputy minister of Conservation and Wildfire Service.

I also have with me Mike Sosiak, assistant deputy minister of financial and administrative services and executive financial officer who provides leadership in our budget development and financial management.

The Chairperson: According to our rule 78.16, during the consideration of departmental Estimates, questioning for each department shall proceed in a global manner, with questions put separately on all resolutions once the official opposition critic indicates that questioning has concluded.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Wowchuk: Okay, I thank you, and I'd also like to correct myself on that where I made a, you know, on the Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous relations, I said—should've been Futures, and I apologize for that.

* (15:30)

So I'd like to start out by asking, you know, the minister if the org chart is up to date, and also the names and positions of his political staff, if that could be provided.

Mr. Bushie: In the 2025-26 Supplement to the Estimates of Expenditure document on page 18, if that's the org chart that the member opposite was referring to: yes, that is currently the accurate chart; and on the political staff side, I have James Thunder as a policy manager, Marty Gautron as the director of ministerial affairs, and also Janelle McLean, who is not in a document, who just started on Monday as the executive assistant.

Mr. Wowchuk: Okay, I thank the minister for that.

So I'm going to start out there with a diversity of things, but one of the first areas is on some of our wildlife management plans that I would like to ask the minister on. I want to ask the minister about the upcoming moose management plan that is planned for this year, and also if he could share with me the last

two winters, the interim hunts that have occurred in the Duck and Porcupine mountains.

Mr. Bushie: Just for clarification, your last point was the interim plans? *[interjection]* Hunts? Okay.

Mr. Wowchuk: Okay, and so I'd like to ask about the moose management plan, you know, that is in—going to be in place for this fall, and the interim hunts that have occurred with the First Nations and the Métis in the Duck and the Porcupine mountains in the last two years.

* (15:40)

Mr. Bushie: Thank the member for the question.

So, as far as the moose management plan, I would refer the member to the Manitoba Hunting Guide, gov.mb.ca/wildlife. And for the last couple of years, what's been in there is accurate in terms of the moose management plan.

I will also say, on the interim hunts in the moose conservation—or, conservation closure areas, in 2023, the allocation was 46, for 2023-2024; and for 2024-2025, the allocation was 55.

I do also want to mention that the Wildlife Branch is committed to working with Indigenous governments and citizens towards long-term sustainable moose management plan through a meaningful co-management process. And I think it's important to emphasize that those conversations have been long overdue, not just with Indigenous nations but also with citizens in Manitoba across impacted areas and wherever they may reside, and those are continuing conversations we have on a regular basis.

And it's a priority for us to have that engagement as we develop and we work towards sustainable management practices of our natural resources, in this case our wildlife. It's imperative that we're all at the table and we're all part of the conversation.

And when you talk about grassroots people in Manitoba and being able to engage, I think, as Manitoba goes and as we talk about it in hunting, for example, the grassroots people are all over Manitoba; it's not just specific to one area of the province; it's all four corners of the province.

So that engagement is key. And when you have boots on the ground, the front-line people out in the bush that can see the impacts and the potential changes that are on the horizon, I think those are important conversations to be had. And for us, as government, it's the right thing to do.

And, in some cases, there's a significant history of not having that engagement and people feeling that they're not heard at various tables; they're not heard out in their communities; they're not heard out in the bush. And we've heard that quite a bit over the last few years and towards they've—what they've been going through and the difficulty they've had in being able to engage and not having a top-down approach.

So the engagement is very welcome and very exciting to see and to hear from the communities, and it goes both ways. They're also very excited about that opportunity to engage, that opportunity to develop long-term sustainability and viability of our natural resources. And it's wildlife, for sure, but it's also a significant part of forestry and water stewardship and what have you, that we engage Manitobans from all over the province.

And I know, as the makeup of what Manitoba is is very important, and we're made up of all kinds of different locations in Manitoba—constituencies, if you will, but just sections of Manitoba that are going through different challenges in some cases, in different times a year, but I think there's a very common theme that we hear is just the need to engage.

And, for us, that's a priority to be able to have those conversations, to see those first-time impacts because a lot of people, when we talk about hunting, fishing, sustenance, management of our natural resources, it's important to engage our young people. It's important to engage our elders as well, too. And we see the generations that can have and be very solid contributors to that conversation to really bring a sense of what they've experienced in their lifetimes and we'll experience in our lifetimes as well. So there is a sustainable and viable wildlife natural resource for our children, our grandchildren as well, too.

So when we talk about the sustenance side, and myself being an Indigenous as well, too, is that's part of the conversation, but it's also part of the conversation to have that with all of Manitoba, and for us that's a priority, to open that up and open up that conversation so we can hear from all parts, all sectors, all lifestyles, all areas of the province. And it's engaging and it's refreshing, and I've been told that many times, is this is such a refreshing conversation to be had because it's something that never existed before under previous government.

And it's very eye-opening to be able to get out to those communities and see what these impacts are and also to see the ideas that come forth and see the potential solutions that exist in those communities.

And it's great that engagement is a key piece because we're all in this together; we're all one Manitoba and we all want to be able kind of thrive and really see the sustainability and viability of our natural resources and our wildlife here in Manitoba.

Mr. Wowchuk: Thank the minister for that.

I would like to ask a very direct question. When will the updated population counts that were—that have been completed and submitted be released to the public?

Mr. Bushie: I just want to make one correction, and the member can take note of this as well.

* (15:50)

To the first question on the interim hunts, there was a correction and error on our side to be able to do that. So the 2024 number is 30 and not 46—no—the 2024 number is 30 and not 46, correct?

So to answer the member's question, the 2023 report on the survey, the numbers have already been shared with Indigenous communities and stakeholders and resource users as well. The updated report on that will be available publicly in the next couple weeks or in the coming weeks to be able to do that, to share that publicly.

The 2024 report, those are ready and those will be shared also in the next few weeks. The 2025 report, that's still under development as the data analysis is still ongoing.

I do want to make mention of the fact, though, that the accuracy of population numbers and where that went was a priority for us. So for us as government and for me as minister, one of the very first things that I brought in was actually enhancing the survey and enhancing that investment in the survey to actually triple that, triple those dollars and triple that budget for the survey so we can use that to truly get a real closer reflection of what that is and what those population numbers are in Manitoba. And that is something that is—was welcomed by stakeholders, by resource users, by Indigenous communities.

So we do that by enhancing the survey and increasing that budget to be able to do that on one side of that equation, which is a significant part, but also having that dialogue and that engagement to—again, further to my answer earlier—of having those conversations with folks such as the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, Manitoba Lodges and Outfitters, First Nation communities, Métis communities, Indigenous

communities all across Manitoba, to really see what are you seeing as well, too.

Because it's easy to say, you know, I see more of this or I see less of this, and have those one-off conversations, but it's really a priority to have that true fulsome engagement in the community and to have those conversations on an ongoing basis as it relates to whatever area you may be talking about or whatever community you may be talking to. So to enhance on our perspective and do our due diligence as good government, to really invest in that and invest in what that would bring.

So enhancing the survey in terms of tripling those dollars to be able to get a lot more clear and concise and reflective figure of today and a snapshot of today is a priority. It's not something we want to put by the wayside and have a conversation every decade.

And I know members opposite are familiar with the fact that it's also difficult to kind of survey the entirety of the province at any given time so you have a clear snapshot in the moment the entirety of the province. So there is no bottomless dollar to be able to do those surveys, but we're doing this in the right way too. So we're furthering that investment, like I said, tripling the survey so we can get more accurate figures so we're not, you know, potentially going over an area once every few decades.

I think it's a priority for us to do our due diligence in a more reflective and really kind of shorten that window so you can really see the accuracy of those numbers reflected in a more timely manner. And so then when you have those engagements and when you have that communication with communities, with Indigenous nations, with resource holders and stakeholders, you can really have a sense of where that is.

Because the common theme that I hear, quite honestly, across all of those dynamics and all those conversations is the responsibility to management. And every person I've talked to in regards to moose management, in particular, has talked about the priority of realizing that if numbers are low, we need to do something collectively and we need to be all in this together.

So we need to be part of that conversation together, and that's something we're welcoming. We're welcoming that conversation to say, yes, we're with you. Yes, we're partners at the table. Yes, we're going to sit there and have a real conversation back and forth, and if there's something we need to address in terms of numbers, population, dollars, and there's

something we need to be able to do on one side of the equation, people are all in and they're all want to be part of that conversation. It's very exciting to see that engagement.

Mr. Wowchuk: Thank the minister for that. I guess one of the things with new technology, you know, you're always going to run into little kinks where possibly you've got to work with the modelling. Possibly there's going to be some flaws in the modelling that are going to occur, and that creates a lot of challenges.

Now, the minister had mentioned, in '23-24, the interim hunt had 30 moose. In '24-25, 55, because he—there was no correction on that. That was under the premise of 2,400 moose, because in a public meeting in Swan River and Roblin, that was shared by the government that, you know, they—that was the numbers.

I always look back and I remember because I was on the grassroots of the Moose for Tomorrow in two thousand—or, in 2011 when we implemented a conservation closure that had a lot of conversation, and I respect—one of the most respected elders present there was Buddy Brass and another one was Thomas Nepinak from Pine Creek. And Buddy Brass, who will always be remembered as a real hero—I mean, not only was he in the hall of fame for baseball, but he was also a real hero when it came to making sure that sustainability occurred.

And we had a lot of conversations. And at that time, a very respected wildlife biologist, Vince Crichton, said at a 13 to 14 hundred animal population that the population was on the verge of decline, meaning mortality was going to exceed recruitment. And I always respected Vince for that.

And I am wondering how the minister is going to deal with the flawed modelling of the infrared that occurred that is more pointing toward, like, 1,167 moose instead of 2,400. And that number is out there, and I beg if I'm wrong on it—and I want him to say that I'm absolutely wrong—how are we going to deal with that this coming winter to ensure sustainability for our moose populations for all user groups? That's including the Indigenous people and the future for the generations to come.

* (16:00)

Mr. Bushie: I mean, we've been tossing a couple numbers back and forth, and I just wanted to be clear when I shared that earlier. On the interim hunt, 2023 is 55, and 2024 is 30. I just didn't want those numbers to be kind of misunderstood.

In regards to the member's question about bringing forward and having the conversations about what the survey's done, the—and he referenced 2011. First off, the member talked about, you know, being called right or wrong. I guess I'll leave that up to that member if he wants to determine for himself whether he's right or wrong in this question he's bringing forward. So that's entirely up to him.

But he also referenced 2011 in terms of technology and reporting and conversations that were happening. And I think it's important to articulate that we are here in 2025. So data and conversations that the member would talk about from potentially a decade and a half ago are not necessarily the exact same conversations and messaging and numbers that we would talk about today.

And the enhanced survey program and the enhanced aerial surveys that are taking place today—clearly, again, just to be very clear, they're also kind of a snapshot in time in the moment that it's happening. But we want those snapshots in time to be a lot more closer together. So that's why our investment in tripling—enhancing the survey dollars was significant.

But also, the science of that is key as well, too. And the advancement that we've come—and, of course, the member will be very well aware that any advancement in technology, we don't need to wait 15 years to see how vastly that changed; we can just talk almost in 15 minutes and see the advancement in technologies across various sectors. And, of course, surveys of sample would be no exception to that.

So for us to be able to go out and not only enhance those survey dollars, but enhance the accuracy and the technology that's available to be more reflective of what those numbers are, but to also—there's the science side of this as well, but there's also a significant part of the traditional and a local conversation to be had as well, too.

And I know the member is referring to that a little bit in his question as well, too—is talking to experts in the field. And sometimes experts in the field do not necessarily mean somebody with a doctorate or a degree. Sometimes the experts in the field are those people that are out in the bush, that are out in the community. And I know the member, and I've heard him talk many times about being a hunter himself. I'm sure he can relate to the fact that maybe some of the best conversations, and really the best information to come about what's changing on the land, comes from the people on the land. And I know I, for one, can attest to that too, because I've had many of those conversations.

So there is also an emphasis on the traditional and the local conversations to be had, because they truly see what that is. And the member talked about something from—and conversations in 2011. And, again, those conversations, I'm sure, have pivoted and changed to some degree, but also, some things have stayed the same.

So I think it's imperative of us to be able to take that conversation as well, too, but enhance it and build upon it and build upon the changes that have happened over the last decade and a half as well, too, and the change that'll potentially happen over the next decade and a half into the future, because who knows what the technology will look like by the time 2040 comes around, but also, what will the traditional and the local contribution be to that as well, too. Because, in a sense, maybe some of those conversations are timeless because the important aspects of what that is can potentially be lost.

So those conversations are important parts. So for myself, my grandfather's not around, but my dad is still around, 86 years old. So I have a conversation with him on wildlife all the time, and he tells me about things that he sees and things that he's experienced in his 80-plus years as well, too. So that's important knowledge to be able to take forward as well, too.

And that's one conversation in one community. So it's a priority for us to have multiple conversations, and hundreds if not thousands of conversations across all of Manitoba, because when we talk about the technical side or the science side of this, like I said, the traditional local side is key as well, too.

So those conversations from 2011 that the member referenced, I think it's important to build on those. I think it's important to see the importance of what those were a decade and a half ago, but it's also important to see what that conversation is like today on the local side, on the traditional side, but also on the change and the enhancement in the science side.

So I think there's a real place for both of those to go hand in hand and to really compile a lot more accuracy. As I mentioned, the aerial survey's a potential moment in time. It's a—you know, if you go out and you take a picture, I mean, that's a moment in time, obviously, and that picture may look different tomorrow. But if you take multiple pictures over a shorter period of time, you're going to get more accurate figures, and that's the hope that we do why—by tripling the survey.

Mr. Wowchuk: Okay, I thank the minister for that, and I just—I don't want to ask the question again on those populations because we've been bouncing back and forth because he'll just burn up another 10 minutes.

But I do have 30 for the late fall, early winter of '23-24, and I have 30 for '24-25, so I'm assuming those are correct. Now, when you look at the modelling that occurred on the infrared, which was new technology, and an ideal thing would've been to have the traditional survey parallel to it, and that would've gave us a lot of corrections in what happened in the past.

But I'm looking at that and I'm thinking to myself right now: if, in fact, the modelling was erred—which I am confident that it was—and we have under half of the population under the premise of the interim hunts that had occurred, then we are really, really putting our moose population in the Duck Mountains and the Porcupine mountains in jeopardy for sustainability, having half the numbers from 2,400 down to, you know, under 1,200.

So we'll be watching very, very closely on what the decision is going to be in this department because this is not about politics; this is going have to be about sustainability for the future, sustainability for every generation to come, whether you're Indigenous, whether you're Métis, whether you are non-Indigenous. This is about the future, and these resources belong to all Manitobans.

And we'll be—I'll be anxious to see if government admits that there was a huge error in the infrared modelling that occurred to come up with the number of 2,400. So I just want that to be on the record, and we will be watching very, very closely because that is almost scary, knowing that the population could potentially be half.

And, as the minister said, and I really appreciate the elders, the hunters, the loggers, the skidoosers, the people in the forest industry, the conservation officers, everybody for the last two years has been echoing a huge decline in population since the winter of 2019-2020, which we had a very healthy moose population. And I knew of 47 animals that succumbed to winter that year. I had it all on paper: 18 calves and the four—there—and there was four animals that were taken by predators. And there was also a large number of mortality amongst—winter moose ticks, plus there was significant hunting in the fall of 2019, into the winter of 2020.

And after that, that population became very, very noticeably suppressed and it became collapsed and I

feel—and it's been collapsing ever since by the people on the ground who have been giving those reports, which the minister admitted that these are the people that we got to look to, not the ones with doctor degrees or anything like that—the people who are out there every day.

And they all indicated, and we are seeing a continuous collapse—we've seen a continuous interim hunt, and it's going to continue further if we don't recognize that there was an error in the modelling that occurred on the infrared. So I just want to put those few things on the board.

Now, I just want to ask the minister if, you know, his feelings, and if there's potential in the moose management plan—and this is shared amongst many, many Indigenous people too. I know it is, because I talk to them every day.

* (16:10)

And a lot of them have shared that, that there should be absolutely no harvesting of cow moose in this—in the province of Manitoba.

And I want to ask the minister: Is this something in the moose management plan that he would be willing to look at, since it's shared by so many Indigenous, non-Indigenous people?

Mr. Bushie: I appreciate the member's comments and the member's reference to my feelings. I appreciate that. It's very good to know that he will be watching. I don't know how to really take that.

But it's interesting; the member also talks about will the government admit their error. I know he could look to the member sitting to his right and talk about why he didn't invest in natural resources, why he didn't invest in the survey, why he didn't engage the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, Manitoba Lodges and Outfitters, Indigenous communities.

So when he talks about echoing the thoughts of various organizations, civil servants, the conservation service, wildfire service, Indigenous communities and, first off, the member does not speak for me as an Indigenous person. I want to make that very clear as well, too. But I do—it does beg to ask the question and to whether or not the member's credibility to be able to ask about all of these things that they never did in government. And it's not an apples-to-apples comparison.

He's talking about methods from 15 years ago, so it's not a clear comparison. There's going to be better data going forward, more accurate data, more reflective data, more cost-efficient data, also. But as much as the

member talks about this not necessarily being part of politics, he also never chooses to improve the system. He also never chose to improve the surveys, to enhance, to build on that as well, too.

So—and I know that the member's attempting to create division when we're attempting to close those gaps. And that's something that across all of government we talk about time and time again, closing those gaps and closing and fighting against that attempted division that the member opposite tries to bring forth each and every day.

So in regards to talking to Indigenous communities, we do it every day. I did it this morning, going to do it again when I go home, because that's what we do, and that's what all of our government does.

We—I was proud to be part of a First Nation leadership forum, leadership summit, if you will, just the other day with Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and a vast number of leadership in Manitoba from all over the province that talked about that engagement, that talked about that desire and really feeling a sense of optimism because not only did they talk about those doors being open, those phone calls being answered, those emails being responded to, in a vast comparison to the fact that many of them did not even know what the inside of this building looks like because the doors were locked. They were shut out. Those phone calls weren't being returned.

So for the member to say he's spoken and is standing here representing and advocating for Indigenous communities, it's very disingenuous for him to be able to say that because we clearly know that's not the case. And I know member cannot even say the name Brian Pallister when it comes time to that, but clearly the leader of division in that party and in that government.

And, again, you can go back a number of years: Brian Pallister, Heather Stefanson had every opportunity to enhance the survey program, to bring more accurate data—to create that, and close that gaps of—and create that unity, and did not do that whatsoever.

Instead, tried to drive that wedge in between Indigenous, non-Indigenous communities. So for me it's really about closing those gaps and really having that engagement with all folks at the table, because all folks need to be part of the discussion.

In regards to the member talking about cows versus bulls, I guess, you know, I'm kind of paraphrasing there, but I guess that's really what he's talking about. That's a conversation to be had across all Manitoba, and I know when the member is—in his

question or his preamble, references Indigenous, non-Indigenous, rights-based hunters versus non-rights-based hunters—it's just hunters. It's just Manitobans.

And, again, by attempting to create that division, by using that kind of language a lot of times is really an attempt to do that. So for us we want to be able to have that conversation in a very sustainable way, so yes, I have had those conversations with Manitobans, with hunters, about that sustainability and that viability about that cow-bull conversation in regards to what that is for all wildlife in Manitoba, because the sustainability and the viability, that absolutely needs to be part of the conversation.

And that is actually being driven by the communities, and by Manitobans.

Mr. Wowchuk: Okay, thank the minister.

I just would like to say, when you have a passion for—and a concern for sustainability about the future, about our grandchildren, our great-grandchildren, your children, your great-grandchildren, your great-great-grandchildren, and all of the peoples out there, you know, that's not creating division.

That is showing a concern and wanting to see a future for the future generations on something that will not be there if we are not cautious and we do not take the right steps to make these things happen. So I just—and in regards to looking to my right, I want to—I just want to give a shout-out, because in a lot of our travels, and my travels, I am still hearing about the previous minister—how engaged he was, and I'm very proud for him and I give him a real pat on the back for that.

And that's coming from a lot of staff people too, that he was very engaged, and people want to see that. People want to see communication, they want to be heard, they want their ideas, and when we get into the next question on elk, I'll be talking about that a little bit more.

But those are a lot of the things, and I know that, you know, there's a lot of things out there, and I will use the word all Manitobans, because that's the way people want to be treated. They want to be treated equally, and as all Manitobans, and there's no attempt here to divide.

This is all about sustainability, all about the future, the future when we are long gone—who is going to pick up the pieces if we don't make the steps right now toward making sure that there is that opportunity?

And when I asked a very simple question about the flaw—yes, there's going to be mistakes. We've got to work on perfecting different types of surveys we do, and we've got to look at the modelling, and then we've got to admit we're wrong from time to time, and we've got to pick up the pieces and then we have to do it right.

But right now, we've got a very daunting task in front of us to make sure that we are listening to everybody out there that is telling us something different than what we are hearing, and it's all about transparency. And when people are not transparent, you do not trust people, and until people become transparent, then they gain your trust and your respect.

And I—you know, I'm not here to take shots. I can say Brian Pallister, in case—you made mention that I can't even say it. Well, I just said it, so that's one of the things. But I think that it's quite important that we work—I think it's quite important that we work together, and not try to discredit what happened; when something happens, that we can see that an error has been made. We got to pick up the pieces and we got to say, hey, we erred on this. Let's correct it together.

* (16:20)

And, you know, unfortunately, a lot of times in QP, there's a lot of cheap shots taken across the floor; we all see that. But we got to put those aside, and we got to think about the future. We got to think about our grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and want them to have, as I—in my opening remarks, I talked about all the great things Manitoba has to offer.

I'd like to just pivot a little bit here toward our elk. Now, I'm getting a lot of calls. People are concerned with rising elk populations—which is different from moose—especially in the southern part of Manitoba, that they want to see increased hunting opportunity.

They are all echoing the same thing: that we are running the risk of getting a mutation within the population, whether it's CWD or the Mexican strain of TB, that we are going to get, possibly, the Riding Mountain strain of TB, and no offence to my colleague here to the right, being from Riding Mountain, but that strain—we know 25 years ago what happened in the Riding Mountain. And we don't want to see it again.

And there seems to be a reluctance right now from people up top listening to people from the bottom in the department saying we need an elk—increased elk hunting opportunity, and it's not happening. And most of this is on private land.

So I look forward to the minister's comments on—

The Chairperson: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Bushie: Sorry, I didn't hear the question right at the last—*[interjection]*

The Chairperson: The member for Swan River.

Mr. Wowchuk: Yes, just the opportunity on increased hunting opportunity to avoid the possible outbreak of TB or chronic wasting—or disease mutation that may have an impact on the cattle industry. Okay?

Mr. Bushie: I'd like to thank the member for the question, and I think it's a significant part of the conversation as an all-of-government approach as well, too. So when you talk about T-W-B, Mexican TB—I'm not sure, did you say Riding Mountain disease, as well, too? Riding Mountain disease, or—okay, I won't say anything further to that because I know the member's still sitting there.

But this is a big part of the conversation, and I appreciate the acknowledgement and the recognition. I do want to hit on two things first, before that, though. When the minister—or, the member talked about up top to down in the bottom, I want to be very clear that the department works as one. And the department and our government works as one as well, too.

So discussions that we have, whether it be at these tables or whether it be out in the communities or at the offices, across different departments, know that that's—those are unified voices and everybody has the chance to share their voice, share their ideas. And there's a lot of expertise in the departments as well, too. And, of course, the member would be very well aware—and I also look at the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) to know that there's very good people in the civil service, there's very good people in government, there's very good people that are boots on the ground out there as well, too.

So when new government comes in, it's not an automatic, you're going to do a one-eighty on whatever's being done in the departments or in government, because there's a lot of good voices around those tables. So I take a little bit of exception to the member, you know, saying that the top's not listening to the bottom and vice versa, because I think if you truly want to have informed decisions, you need to be able to engage your folks throughout the departments and really have the back of your people. And I do want to say that, through our department in Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures, and I think I speak for all departments across government to know that we, in fact,

have your back and we—your voices are appreciated and your voices are really, kind of, taken to heart and the expertise. So I do want to categorize that as well, too.

I have had the conversation to meet with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kostyshyn) as well, too, as it relates to elk, as well as even the producers—beef producers in particular. They had some concerns that they wanted to be able to bring forth in regards to the impacts that the elk population has on their industry. So we have had those conversations, and I think it's important to realize that that's a—not just an NRIF conversation to have; it's obviously a significant part of Agriculture, because you see those impacts across a number of different departments as it relates to Agriculture, relates to Municipal and Northern Relations as well, too—the impacts that that has and what that means.

So recent surveys have indicated that elk populations, of course, are relatively stable. And they're increasing in some cases. And there have been licensed hunting opportunities that were increased—more tags, if you will—in southwestern Manitoba in 2024 and 2025 to help address some of these issues of, perhaps—I don't really want to use the word overpopulation, but abundance of elk and the impacts that it's having on the various sectors, in particular in ag.

And as things go forward, I think it's imperative for us as government to have the conversation and to see what an impact would be, what a potential change would be, what a potential increase to, you know, whether it be tags for elk or whether it be a hunt on elk; what that would be or whether—or the impacts of not doing that. I think, as a responsible government, you want to be able to kind of look at all aspects at what an increase or a decrease in whatever facet it may be, the impact that would have. Not just in the—today, but what that would have on future generations.

* (16:30)

And to the member's point, when he talked about, you know, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, I mean, that's not just synonymous with Indigenous communities. And sometimes maybe people misinterpret that to mean that's only Indigenous communities when we talk about seven generations. That's really seven generations of us as Manitobans. So we want to be able to take that to heart across all aspects of what we want to be able to do.

So when we talk about elk, in particular, when the member talks about the elk and the impacts, that is

something that is a priority for us. I would almost say that's a high priority for us because it is something that's imperative, and it affects and it has kind of ripple effects to other industries as well, too. And, in particular, maybe the—I'd reference the beef producers and what the impact of the elk population means for them.

So to the member's question, if I could be very, kind of, specific to answer that question, it is something that is being looked at in real time, and it is something that we are in conversation with, with the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Wowchuk: I thank the minister for that because I know that, you know, there's a lot of things here that can be taken off the queue that could really, really threaten our agricultural industry by taking action sooner than later, and I think—I keep looking right now at what they did in Saskatchewan this year in March by having an elk hunt.

And we can avoid that type, because that's a very negative public image that happens when you have a late season elk hunt on that because of the elk being, you know, heavy in calf already and near the birth of the next generation—so to avoid that.

And I also would like to encourage the minister to have those conversations, because I know there was fencing monies that were available, that were ready to go up, and there was a few in the Swan Valley and a number in the Assiniboine and southern Manitoba to help these farmers who were losing a huge amount of their winter food supply for their—for the cattle industry and the other agricultural industry that they were carrying out, that—you know, they—of course, when you get elk and they defecate and urinate on bales, they—it's pretty well a wasted bale. I mean, the cattle do not want to eat it anymore, and sometimes they don't get the compensation that they need, and then they resort to other tactics that nobody wins. The only one that loses is our wildlife population.

So I thank the minister that that's a real high priority right now to deal with elk numbers.

Now, I want to just do a little bit of a switch here because it's—weekend's coming, and we know that, you know, the water bombers are out there and bird dogs and everybody. All our people are out there fighting fires; you know, the staff are working around the clock, et cetera.

So I want to—first of all, got to give credit where credit is due, and I want to thank the minister for updating the fleets in the water bombers, and whoever brought that up the channel and convinced govern-

ment that the fleet has to be replaced, I really look upon the individual as a rock star and possibly the next premier of the province because he created—this was something—a really outdated fleet of water bombers that we've seen in that.

I wouldn't mind if the minister could kind of, you know, fill us in on the price of each of the water bombers and just for purposes of our knowledge, and how long did—the delayed delivery time on them. Was it within a year or two years that these water bombers would be able to be delivered? What kind of wait time? And is there three water bombers? And the price? Where are they coming from?

Just to kind of get educated because this is a great thing for the province, and I commend the minister on that effort.

So like I said, want to give credit where credit is due.

Mr. Bushie: I assume when he's talking rock star, he's once again not looking to his right. When it comes time to be able to do that, again, a priority and I think you're seeing that now and it was a important priority for us as government to get in the queue for sure, knowing full well that these bombers are not a simple thing, that you just go and buy them off the lot. They're a very precise piece of machinery, exact piece of machinery that has the capabilities.

And again, maybe to the member's earlier point, when you talk about technology that's evolved over a period of time, the bombers that we have now are decades old but they are still serving a purpose today.

And I do want to take this opportunity to shout out those people that are operating our bombers and the pilots, the technicians, the mechanics, everybody that's involved in that process because you truly are lifesavers at this point in time and as government, we want to be able to send—and I think it's fair to say that the member as well, too, would show his appreciation to the work that you're doing and also to Ontario that's provided us with that opportunity to assist, too, on the border fire, if you will. I know the Ontario water bomber was there for a period of time, as well, too.

It's something that's utmost importance and it's a unique—uniqueness to Canada, for sure, as to what this can—the capabilities as what this can do, what this can bring. But at the same time, I mean, you can't keep going day in, day out, year after year, with the cost of—the associated cost with an outdated fleet.

Like I said, they're still performing. They're still very high performance to this day. But at the same time, care and maintenance of some of those does take its toll. So in some cases there was a cost of doing nothing and I will say, we are no longer going to have that conversation, the cost of doing nothing.

So we initially placed a deposit of \$80 million on the water bomber. Of course, that's something that's public knowledge. We had the opportunity to visit the hangar and visit the fleet that's there now, where we did our announcement and our engagement and the conversation and the confirmation that we were going forward with this process to update the fleet.

So we do have an—our understanding is potentially that there—the first one would be in 2031 with the following two to be in 2032. Course, we're all hoping some of that can be a little bit faster and I can't really get into the specifics about the total price at this time because some of that is still in a negotiation and we don't want to kind of pre-empt the conversation to be able to do that.

We're looking for the best deal for Manitobans, but also the most efficient water bombing fleet anywhere. And I think the—as we talk about going through the enhancement of the fleet and what that is when they come online over the next few years is increased capacity, increased technology that those—these new bombers would have.

* (16:40)

Of course, I believe, if I'm not totally mistaken, they're almost 40 years old, if I believe that number to be accurate; I don't have the exact figure, but decades, decades old is what the fleet is now. So the upgrade is more than needed, and I think it was important to get us in the queue as quickly as possible. I don't know if previous government had the opportunity to get us in that queue at any point in time, but I know that never happened.

So for us to be able to do this in a good way, knowing full well, again, as some of my comments earlier, including some of my member statements that I've done over the last couple days, this is an extreme fire season and a very early fire season. And for somebody who, in my younger years, had the opportunity to be an EFF in eastern Manitoba, knowing the impacts that those bombers could have, including being evacuated in my own community two different times, in '89 and '99, and seeing first-hand those water bombers in action and seeing the impact it had. And most likely, these are probably the same bombers that

were actually in play then, and that was—I'm not going to age myself, but that also was decades ago.

So enhancing the fleet, building up the fleet, was a priority for us to be able to do, and we did that in a good way, and to answer the member's question, \$80 million was the deposit we put down, but the exact price going forward is still under negotiation, and we don't want to kind of bring that forth to kind of hinder and hamper some of those conversations.

Mr. Wowchuk: I thank the minister for that information, and that's kind of—that's exciting news.

One of the things that I've noticed is basically the fire season now is becoming longer. It's starting earlier. It's taking off later into the season. I know last fall we had a fire up at—south of Benito that had to get action. The attack crews were already off for that particular year, and I know that—think Lawrence Huculak in The Pas had got a crew together to come up to Swan to come to help because these are the guys that know how to action fires. You can get the farmers out there with the bulldozers, or whatever the case may be, and things aren't going to happen.

What is the intentions of government here to possibly, you know, to be able to stay in with these changing climatic changes, to get crews on sooner and have them stay on later in the fall? Has there been consideration that is going into that because that's a real necessity. We saw already, I mean, the—probably some of the guys came on work and within two days they were fighting a massive forest fire, you know, that was the extreme range. So just wondering, is there any intentions of possibly, you know, trying to adjust to the fire season with staffing?

Mr. Bushie: I appreciate the question from the member and also the preamble to realizing that things over the last couple years, this year included, have been unique.

But at the same time, is this now the new normal, I guess, is the conversation to be had when it comes time to how hot and dry the start of our summer, the end of our spring has been. And of course, we had the conversation last year, up in the Flin Flon area, as to what that is and just talking with people, boots on the ground. Again, this is—when we talk about events that are potentially one in 100 years now happening every couple of years. So that's a significant part of the conversation.

And as the member—and I'm sure the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) is well aware of this as well, too, is normal—and I will almost use the word

air—the air quotes when I say normal—has been April 1 to be able to kind of bring the initial IA officers on and going into mid-September, potentially late September with some extensions that may be required, depending on how the season goes towards the end of the year, or the end of the work year for them.

So the engagement and the potential to have that season start early, I think, is a conversation we're willing to have and, I think, we're open to have and, I think, in a responsible way. We would be irresponsible to not have that conversation and not see what that looks like.

Some of the challenges that I can foresee with that, potentially, is some of these folks are students, or they have other occupations, because this is seasonal employment, like I said, running from April to until, you know, mid-to-late September. So they do have other obligations or other employment, are students in some cases. So that conversation would have to encompass that kind of dynamic to it as well, too.

But knowing full well that maybe this is the new normal, I think that's an open conversation to be had, and we would be irresponsible to not have that conversation to say that, you know, is there a requirement then that, for argument's sake, there's a week earlier or two weeks earlier or a month earlier, or what have you, or later in September.

I think it's kind of—right now, it's a year-by-year conversation to see what that looks like and what the quote, unquote, new normal, potentially is. I mean, is this a conversation we're having year in, year out about an early fire season? And maybe, at some point in time, we stop calling it early; it's just kind of now going to be the start.

And I think this is impacting Manitobans across all different dynamics, and I think there's a big conversation to be had as to what we need to do in our part when we—time to climate change and those conversations, because here we are having a tinder-dry forestry conversation, wildfire conversation, in the northeast part of Manitoba, and we're potentially having flood warnings in southwestern Manitoba.

So there—it's a real dynamic to come into play, and I also see some forecasts of potentially calling for the temperature to go down to zero this weekend in various parts of the province. So I think there's a—it's an ongoing conversation; it's a very fluid conversation as to how we can support.

So to specifically answer the member's question, I think, as a responsible government, we need to have

the conversation: Is there a need to start the season early? Is there a need to carry the season later?

Obviously, there's no endless pot of dollars to be able to address that, but we need to address that in a responsible way as well, too, where we don't look at things as a one-off; we look at long-term sustainability and the viability of the department, of government, but also the employment side of that as well, too.

And I will say this too: the—as much as I gave props and credit to the water bombers, I'll also take this opportunity to take to those people that are in those hard hats, in those steel-toed boots, you know, dragging that line through the bush. Got that hose on your back, you know; got that pump on your back and walking through that burn when it's 35° for us here and we're complaining about the heat up here and you're walking across a burn and it's 45° to 50° for you.

So I want you to know that we support you, and we know the great work that you're doing.

And again, this comes from somebody who's been there as well, too. I haven't been an IA officer, but I have been an EFF, so I know what that's like, to be able to do that, and I know what that's like to be able to do that in extreme conditions.

And to be very clear, these are extreme conditions, and I appreciate your support. I appreciate the work that you do. And it's the dedication and, you know, you hear conversation about somebody running to an emergency while others may be running away, and you are clearly running to that emergency, because you're doing that for the better of Manitoba. It's not only to save your homes and your communities, but to save all of us as Manitobans, and I really appreciate the work that you do.

* (16:50)

Mr. Wowchuk: Yes, I thank the minister for that. And I totally echo your remarks there on those EFF fighter—firefighters, and having to take that hose, in steel-toed boots too, because when you get 35°, 36° and you're in those coveralls and you have to wear those for visibility purposes and work-safety purposes, it definitely becomes pretty hot.

I'd like to—like, one of the things that was really important is filling the CO vacancies, and could the minister share with us on what part the COs are playing in the fire program right now? And also, could he share with us, you know, what part they play—or what input they have with crime in rural Manitoba?

Those are areas that, you know, our COs were able to able to help RCMP officers with fall night lighting surveillance, and now in the spring, possibly with the fires. So what part are our COs playing right now within the fire program?

Thank you.

Mr. Bushie: Just to share a couple of numbers for the member.

So the vacancy rate for the CO service—well, first off, the complement in 2023, the complement that was allowable was 101. That complement is now 102. The vacancy rate that we inherited was 11.9 per cent. It was at 12.9 per cent in November 2023; and April 2024, it was 6.93 per cent vacancy rate. And as of now, it is now at 2.94 per cent vacancy rate, so that's basically three out of 102 officers.

So for us, that was a priority to be able to staff up the Conservation Officer Service. And it was something, of course—and I think I do need to use the word—decimated under the former government. And that's something they never really wanted to build up, and here we are today calling on these incredible conservation officers to be all hands on deck and to basically come now, extreme fire season, and just go home, grab a little bit, maybe something to eat, maybe a few hours of sleep and get back out there.

And it truly is all hands on deck and that is a top-down leadership from our Conservation Officer Service, as well, too.

So there they are, and similar to my shout-out to the people that are operating in the water bombers, the people on the wildlife service—Wildfire Service that are on the front lines walking through the burn, the COs, as well, too. It's a real team approach. And the CO service really gets kind of embedded into the community, as well, too. And I do want to acknowledge the fact and show support for the fact that they have those engagements. Sometimes it's not always credit where credit is due when it comes time to the conservation officers, but they are the front lines to a lot of the conversations on—whether it be wildlife or whether it be wildfire.

And right now, that's clearly what they are. And it's all hands on deck in a situation such as this. And I think when we talk about all hands on deck, that includes ourselves, as well, too. So as government and as legislators and as politicians, all hands on deck for us means not only just shout-outs and saying this is a great job, we support you, and—those are just words. We need to put action to those words, as well, too.

So for us in our department, it was about putting in action and showing support. So that over 12 per cent vacancy rate, you know, we eliminated that to be less than three. And there is—gets to be a point in time where we want that to be zero.

And we are well on the path to be able to do that, and we're well in range to do that. The recruitment and retention of COs, officer services is a priority for us, and we want to ensure that Manitoba's a great place to work, that Conservation Officer Service is a great place to work. And we are going to bring forth that message, and that message is consistent throughout.

And I do want to say a big thank-you to the conservation officers for all the work that they do.

The Chairperson: Order, please.

The hour being 5 p.m., committee rise.

CHAMBER

HOUSING, ADDICTIONS AND HOMELESSNESS

* (15:20)

The Chairperson (Tyler Blashko): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness.

At this time we invite ministerial and opposition staff to enter the Chamber.

Could the minister please introduce her staff in attendance.

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): Yes, so we have—pardon me—Vicki Toews, who's joining us here on my left. Vicki is the executive director of the Mental Health Promotion and Harm Reduction branch. And Vicki has over 25 years experience in the civil service working in a variety of roles in the department. And throughout her career, she's worked closely with many community organizations and across departments. She oversees the branch that provides leadership and oversight to the Mental Health Promotion and Harm Reduction work of the department, and I am so very privileged and honoured that she is a part of our team, and she does amazing work and I just love Vicki, and I love all of our team.

And then we have Carolina who—I love all of our staff and our members of our team—Carolina is my director of ministerial affairs, keeps me on my toes

and takes care of me, and I just—I'm so thankful to have her as a part of our staff.

And then Carolyn Ryan, who has been with the department for over 20 years, has extensive experience and is so respected in the housing field. We were just at Manitoba Housing Day yesterday, and everyone just speaks highly of the work that she's done in this sector for many years.

Thank you.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister.

Would the critic like to introduce the staff in attendance?

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): I would like to introduce Mark Stewart. He is our—my assistant here today to help me out with any questions or any help that I need, so thank you. He's issues management.

The Chairperson: As per subrule 77(15), questioning for this department will proceed in a global manner.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mrs. Hiebert: I appreciate the time today to ask questions on behalf of the—on my opposition critic role of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness and mental health. And I look forward to working together with the minister to find out how things are going in the province and any information that maybe would be helpful for me, as well, to assist in any way in my critic role to help the minister as well.

I just want to start off with questions about—I think we talked about addictions already and in that portfolio side. I would like to move over to the housing—some housing questions. If we—you know, if we truly want to end homelessness, we must invest in housing-first strategies. We must prioritize wrap-around supports, mental health services, addiction treatment and employment programs to ensure people can not only find shelter but remain housed. So that's always a priority, I think, for everybody here in the room, so—or in the Chamber.

And I think it's very important for all of us, that we must listen to the Indigenous communities, to other communities, people whose members are affected by homelessness, and implement many different wrap-around services depending on what they need specifically, whether it's cultural or it's, you know, location or whatever it is that we need to do to help to end the homelessness situation that we have in our

province because I believe everybody deserves a place to live and a home—a roof over their head.

So I'm honoured to be here to speak about that and to—just to find out more information in regards to that.

My question would be: How many, currently, people are experiencing homelessness in our province of Manitoba?

* (15:30)

Ms. Smith: So I want to thank the member for that question. And I know the member knows that it's super important that we take a balanced approach and not just housing folks but making sure that they get the supports that they need and that housing is a key component of that.

And we're coming from, you know, a previous government that, for seven and a half years, sold off housing and allowed people to set up tents and live in bus shelters and allowed the government's crown jewel, which is Manitoba Housing, to go unmaintained, to be boarded up, and Manitobans left paying market rents, which were unaffordable. Manitobans had to take funds from a budget that they didn't think they'd have to budget for because of the decisions of the previous government to not invest in maintaining Manitoba Housing.

Our government's taken a different approach. We're investing more funds to fix up Manitoba Housing to ensure that we are taking the boards off Manitoba Housing units, but not only that, but making sure and ensuring that folks get the supports that they need, whether that's mental health and addictions or access to, as the members opposite spoke about, access to EIA or some training programs. That is a part of Your Way Home strategy.

So I don't know if the member opposite has had a chance to read our Your Way Home strategy, but it's a pretty comprehensive strategy that I'm pretty, you know, proud of, that our department and our civil servants have worked really hard on. And I can't say enough about our civil servants and the amount of work that they do and the heart that they put into the work that they do.

They have been doing some tremendous amount of heavy lifting, because we are coming from a deficit because of the previous government's decisions and the choices that they made in terms of divesting in housing and selling off and choosing not to build any housing. They sold off more—the previous government sold off more housing than they built in the time that

they were in government. And that's shameful because it is a responsibility of the government to provide social and affordable housing and supports to Manitobans.

We see the consequences of that. We see people living in encampments; we see people unsupported, and our government is taking a different approach. I'm not sure if members opposite heard our announcement last week, but 33 people have been housed thus far from encampments, and that number is higher today on account of the 67 units that went online or are going online.

And we're going to continue to invest in housing because we're investing in Manitobans. We're investing in our safety and security of our community. We've seen a reduction in the crime rate in our province. And we know that what we're doing is working because we're taking a cross-departmental approach. We're working with the Justice, we're working with Health, we're working with Families, we're working with Education, and we're getting people connected with the service and resources that they so desperately deserved and needed for so long.

The service delivery organizations like Main Street Project, North End Women's Centre, west central women's centre, Siloam Mission, IKWE—there's so many organizations that were banging on the previous government's door asking for supports because there were so many folks that were falling through the cracks. And the members opposite, in their opening remarks, talked about people falling through the cracks.

Well, these are the very people that we are now lifting up and helping because of the previous government's callous, cold, you know, decisions that they made in not helping these organizations to support these very folks.

So, we're going to continue supporting these folks. We're going to continue investing in our homeless strategy, and we're going to continue to invest in non-profit housing in our province and our own housing.

* (15:40)

Mrs. Hiebert: I was just wondering if the minister knows how many—or, what the number of total homeless would be in our province of Manitoba. I'm not sure—she didn't answer my question, so I'm not sure if she knows that answer. I hope she does because this is obviously something that we're, you know, trying to provide homes for people who are in desperate need of homes.

So the question would be: If the—what is the goal, I guess, to—like, how long will it take to house the 700 people that they identified that are living in camps at the last known announcement that they made? And at the rate of 33 people, and we've been—it's been four months; that would put us at seven years to house the 700 people.

So I'm just wondering if the minister could just explain to me how they're planning to use the new strategy, Your Way Home, just to—how that's going to work? And what is the end goal for—to house the 700 people? And then also, beyond that, the people that are not counted in that 700, like, how are the—what's the goal for housing that many people, timewise?

Thank you.

Ms. Smith: I thought it was really important to really outline and put it on the record why we are where we're at, in terms of the numbers. And the members opposite, you know, knew the number was 700—approximately 700. So the member put that on the record. It is around 700. And that number does fluctuate with changes in weather, people's circumstances.

And we would be a lot further ahead had the previous government not sold off housing, had they not supported the purchase of Lions Manor, had they not invested in our crown jewel, Manitoba Housing. We are playing catch-up. We have been investing since we took government. This is a priority for us. We've made—we've created a whole department because we believe investing in Manitobans is—if we're doing better—if they're doing better, we're all doing better.

Knocking on doors, listening to Manitobans, Manitobans were tired of seeing people unhoused, unsupported. They were tired of the previous government not paying attention and supporting folks, whether it was through their addictions, whether it was through crime and safety in their community, whether it was stabilized housing.

And we know housing is the social determinant of how well people do. And yet, you know, experts were telling members opposite that housing needs to be invested in. Wrap-around supports also need to be invested in. But members opposite chose for seven and a half years to ignore the experts who were knocking on their very door telling them that.

So we're continuing to support those folks. Last count, endless home—End Homelessness Winnipeg did for their street census was in 2022. That number was around 1,200. They just did a street census a few months ago, and their numbers are supposed to be out

around the end of the month, so we're going to be watching for that.

We also work closely with End Homelessness Winnipeg. They're one of our partners in the strategy, along with so many other amazing service providers. And we can't do this work alone; we know that. We're collaborating, whether it's with municipalities, with reeves, with cities, with the federal government and, you know, with different organizations.

Our door is open. We're listening; we're learning; we're supporting where we can. And, of course, we're going to continue that.

We've housed 1,935 people since we formed government. That is a huge number, and that's something to be celebrated. And over 700 of those folks are in our own Manitoba Housing. And that's, you know, because of the work of our department. That's because of the work of social enterprises that we're working with, whether that's BUILD or Purpose, and these are programs that work with folks that are on EIA or that are coming out of incarceration.

They're giving them skills so that they can go out into the workforce. They're also helping them get reunified with their children. These are folks that are transforming lives and I want to, you know, uplift and honour the work that they're doing because they're doing amazing work with our community.

But they're also helping to support these folks that are coming out of encampments into homes, but also families that need housing, that have needed housing for a very long time. And we're talking about units that have been, you know, boarded up for a very long time, that the previous failed cold, callous PC government failed to invest in.

And right now, we have, you know, an Opposition Leader who's holding up Bill 12. Bill 12 would protect our social and affordable housing.

We just met with the Non-Profit Housing Association, who supports Bill 12, who wants this bill to pass because they want to protect the crown jewel. They also want to protect all of the social and affordable housing so that we're not in a situation where people can't afford rents and there's not affordable rents.

These are taxpayers' dollars. These are funds that taxpayers put in. So I would ask the member through the Chair, whose home do they want to sell next?

Mrs. Hiebert: My 'nec' question is in regard to the Manitoba Housing units that there are.

I agree that they are very important to many people, including single moms or people who are coming from dangerous situations or whether—wherever they're coming from and they need a place to live. I think that's such an important thing.

And I can speak personally that I was in a time when I was a young mom with two babies and I needed a place to stay for six months, and I found a beautiful house to stay in and it was a Manitoba Housing unit. And it was exactly what I needed for that time in my life. And it was wonderful.

So I want to just ask the minister, how many units currently do we have in Manitoba that are functioning fully to house people in our province?

Ms. Smith: So, while these folks are looking for that answer, I'm just going to just speak a little bit about chronic homelessness and what we define as chronic homelessness, and a bit about the strategy.

So, chronic homelessness in Manitoba is defined as when a person has been without stable housing for six months or more in the past year, or over 545 nights in the past three years. Chronic homelessness often affects individuals who face complex challenges, including mental health issues, addictions or other systemic barriers that often make it difficult to maintain long-term stability.

We're committed—our government is committed to ending chronic homelessness in eight years, and our goal is to ensure that anyone who becomes homeless—homelessness is rehoused within six weeks.

What progress has been made since the launch of Your Way Home in January of 2025? Like I said, we've housed over 1,900 individuals and nearly 7,000 more have been prevented from falling into homelessness. And immediate actions, including the winter response, which was something—we immediately brought together a table of service providers that were on the front lines to really speak to why people were becoming homeless, what we can do to prevent homelessness and what were some of the barriers that they were facing to getting housed, or how can we prevent and stop, whether it was evictions or helping them to get home or helping to support them in the current housing that they were in.

* (15:50)

And what we learned is that there needed to be some flex funding for some folks because we were hearing that folks were coming from their communities, often got stuck here because medical reasons and didn't have a way back to their community.

So we listened, so we created a flex fund for those folks to be able to have access to funds to get back to their communities so they could have a place to live there.

We also heard that folks were maybe on a relative's couch, or staying with a relative, and because they couldn't contribute, maybe they didn't have access to EIA because they weren't—didn't have IDs, or whatever the reason, we were able to connect them to those services, get them connected and into the system, and, you know, the previous government wasn't supporting folks, and they were leaving a lot of folks behind without the services, whether it was the mental health or addiction services.

We were able to provide flex funding to keep them housed on a couch with their sister. We heard a lot of stories, so whether it was helping them with food, in order for them to stay housed there. There were just so many stories that we heard from folks that needed just a little bit of funds to be able to help them, whether it was with a damage deposit, because they didn't have the funds to get their first place, so we were able to do that.

And we were able to assist more than 300 people, including 129 who secured permanent housing. And Budget 2024 invested \$116 million to build at least 350 units of social and affordable housing. And I'm really pleased to say that we exceeded that.

We're in the process of building even more than that. There's going to be more units coming on line, thanks to so many partners. And we're repairing over 3,000 more, and we've also invested \$5 million towards new incentives to end chronic homelessness.

And in January 2025, our Manitoba government, again, we announced Your Way Home, and it builds on six main components. So the first one is increasing the supply of social housing, with wrap-around supports; the second is creating a housing-first program in Manitoba Housing, so taking 20 per cent of our housing and making that with wrap-around supports; aligning co-ordination between organizations and governments; recruiting, training and retaining front-line staff; addressing gaps, and lead youth and vulnerable people into—addressing the gaps that lead youth and vulnerable people into homelessness; and then, of course, inspiring hope and developing pathways to success.

And I'll answer your question in the next.

Mrs. Hiebert: I did ask a question. I was hoping to get the answer. Just a number. But I do appreciate

information, and that's what we're doing here today, so—but if the minister could answer my question, specifically how many units there are, and how many units are, in total, are vacant also.

Now I'm at that next question. I know of one Inglewood [*phonetic*] Manor in the RM of Armstrong, specifically was—had nine units that were vacant out of 22 units, and these were not vacant because of any maintenance or repairs.

And so my question would just be, what would be the reason for the vacancy, once the—once I get the answer for how many there are in total in the province, I'd love to know the reason for vacancies in that area specifically.

Ms. Smith: So I did say that I would answer the question in this follow-up, but I do want to continue with the rest of what chronic homelessness in our Your Way Home plan includes, and then I—at the end, I will give the answer.

So, we're—our government's using a multi-year implementation plan with annual targets and regular progress reports, so we're making sure that by the halfway mark of our mandate—so 2025—we will have 50 per cent decrease in chronic homelessness in our province.

So we're on track, and even above track. Folks are—want to take housing, they're open to taking housing, they've been waiting for housing for a very long time, and like I said, they've—they're happy that they have a government that they can work with, and the recent investments that we've made, we've invested \$10.1 million in 2025 and \$10.5 million in 2026 to support the implementation of the encampment action plan.

In December 2024, we signed the Unsheltered Homelessness Encampment Initiative bilateral agreement, which really helped and supported more folks from encampment into housing, and we're going to continue to do that great work.

Like I said, we have some amazing staff who are doing some great work, and we're partnering with some really great service delivery organizations who have the experience, the expertise—they've been doing this work on the front lines for a very long time, and know a lot of these folks, have relationships with them, and housing has been the barrier, and we are behind. We are playing catch up.

So we own and manage 12,037 units, both rural and Winnipeg—and in Winnipeg; 4,200 of those are

managed by someone else, so sponsor-managed. And then of those, 15 per cent are undergoing repairs, redevelopment or have no demand. And this is just a snapshot.

And back to your question about Inglewood [*phonetic*] Manor. There's nine vacant units. Five are available for rental. One person was housed there this weekend—or, this week—and there's no one on the wait-list. So there's no demand for housing at Inglewood [*phonetic*] Manor.

So if that member has folks that would like to be housed there, certainly, you know, they can get in touch with Manitoba Housing. We'd certainly be more than happy to get those folks into those units, because we certainly don't want to see people unhoused.

We want—our housing is accessible to people. We have a rent geared to income, which is 30 per cent of your income, and we want to make sure that people are in our housing and are using it. That is the purpose of Manitoba Housing, and certainly our investments are working because we are—we've housed over 1,900 people, and over 700 of those have been in our Manitoba Housing buildings.

We've invested more in tenant service co-ordinators, which has helped build relationships, but also has helped keep people tenanted. Under the former government, they cut and fired tenant-service co-ordinators, and that was detrimental to these units, to these tenants, and keeping people supported and housed.

They cut—the former government, the former PC government—also cut security guards. And I know on this floor members opposite have asked about that, and, you know, this is a consequence of decisions that the former government made. Whether it's cutting and firing tenant-service co-ordinators, or cutting security guards, or cutting 55 police officers in our province.

That is a consequence of the former government not investing in our housing and, certainly, holding up Bill 12 now. The members opposite, through the Chair, you know, can push your leader to pass that bill tomorrow. So I'd encourage her to speak to her leader and get that bill passed.

Mrs. Hiebert: Just a quick question about—we know that a lot of our affordable housing, or the deeply affordable, or rent-geared-to-income housing units have—or, need wrap-around services for, whether it's mental health or anything else that they might need help with.

* (16:00)

What kind of—can you tell me—the minister tell me what supports the minister's offering to organizations that are already working in communities? Is there specific organizations that they assist with the support—wrap-around supports, and a little bit about that, and what communities might need—what kind of support they might be needing outside of Winnipeg.

Ms. Smith: So I'm going to start with the health authorities, the health regions.

So in the Interlake-east regional health authority, so we fund—and we fund there, and these are funding to health authorities and Shared Health for mental health and recovery services, so physicians, psychiatry services and addiction services. So Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, Southern Health/Santé Sud, Prairie Mountain Health, northern regional health authority, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, Shared Health and then other service delivery organizations.

And then for housing, these folks also offer mental health and addiction services, wrap-around supports. So we have Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, and I just really want to shout-out, like, all of the, you know, the health-care providers on the front lines that are doing this work because they're doing some heavy lifting. They're doing some really heavy lifting.

And I know we've heard in this House that when it comes to mental health and addictions, that they need more supports, and certainly a supervised consumption site is something that they've been advocating for, because they know that folks will be connected to supports there and that lives will be saved there and people will have a safe place to consume there.

MLA Carla Compton, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

So I just want to shout out those folks and just let them know that we see them, we value them and we appreciate their work, and we are listening to them, and we are just so thankful for their work.

So in Brandon—and Brandon is very—like, all of these organizations that I'm going to outline, like, they're all doing amazing work, and they've been really great partners. We have really close partnerships with all of these folks. When it comes to working with Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, they are really—Brandon is really co-ordinated. Like, they have all their services—like, they meet like, probably weekly. And they talk about the folks, the relatives they call them, and how they're supporting

each of them, and how the different resources they have, how they can make sure that they're getting the support that they have.

We also have CMHA Manitoba and Winnipeg, and they operate—they do such amazing work. I just saw Marion Cooper today; I was at a Mood Disorders Association luncheon, and she was there; she was on a panel speaking. And they do tremendous amount of work. Like, their staffing complement and the work that they do—they have a program in Brandon, or Dauphin, that they're operating for us.

And I spoke about this the other day, the transformative work that they are doing with the participants that are in that building. And the mayor has spoke about this; businesses have spoken about this; community organizations have spoken about this, just how successful this model is because it's a collaborative approach, and, you know, they have a great MLA; the minister out there works collaboratively, as well, with them.

And then we also have CMHA Swan Valley, and they were just here as well, because we had Mental Health Week, mental health act week, so we did the proclamation. And there was a whole bunch of folks that are working in the mental health field.

And, you know, just the amount of expertise that was in the Rotunda—and I just can't say enough about these folks and how much heart they have. And they're in this field because they care about people and they want to help people, and they're so thankful that they have a government that's listening to them, that sees them, that is working collaboratively with them and that is helping to support and move Manitoba forward, quite frankly, and in collaboration with them.

The Acting Chairperson (Carla Compton): Thank you, Minister.

* (16:10)

Mrs. Hiebert: Thank you, deputy-deputy Chair—I don't know how to say that, what I should call you, but anyway, thank you.

Yes, great information and I thank the minister for that information. It is really good to hear about these different organizations, specifically in Brandon, I think it's important that we definitely acknowledge all the different organizations and groups in our province that do so much work for us, so—or, for our loved ones that need that help.

Front-line workers, everybody on the ground, it's so important to definitely say thank you, always, as

much as we can. Just to mention about the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, they just had to close their community drop-in because of security concerns, so that's something that possibly the minister might want to just take note of, that's something that might—they might be needing some extra help with that.

But, yes, so thank you for that information. Just wanted to ask—the minister mentioned different organizations in Brandon and all the health authorities—are you—is the minister able to just tell me what other roles the government is playing with organizations such as Siloam Mission—other organizations that are outside of Winnipeg—both in and outside.

What kind of role does the government play with the wrap-around services with organizations that are not connected to, like, any of the health authorities, or specifically in Brandon, because we got that answer. Can you let me know—can she let me know what other organizations and what kind of wrap-around services there—they experience from the help of the government?

Ms. Smith: So I just want to go back to Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation and I just want to lift them up and lift that community up for the work that they did in terms of finding a new location, supporting those folks. And, again, they work collaboratively.

They're not divisive in their approach. They came to us, let us know what was going on. We also worked with them, supported them through the process, because it's about meeting people where they're at, supporting them, and it's not about us and them. It's about we, and centering we around individuals.

And that's a difference between the previous government and this government. For us it's about one Manitoba, and how do we support one another? And when someone's struggling and something's going on and people need support, we know the consequences of what's happening in our province, and it's because of the de-investment of the previous government.

Whether that was the de-investment in policing; whether that was the frozen funding to municipalities; whether that was not investing in housing—that's a social determinant of how well people do. And, of course, making sure that people have the supports and services that they need.

And Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation worked with many different organizations. Like I said, they are pretty organized, and Mayor Fawcett came and we met, we talked with Brandon

Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, and they all worked together to find a different space to support the relatives.

So I just want to uplift them for that and thank them for the work that they do, and just—you know, we will always be on their side and support them in the work that they do, because we believe that we are all partners and we will walk beside.

So other organizations that we support and we fund are: CMHA in Thompson, Community Health and Housing Association, Dauphin Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, ending chronic homelessness, End Homelessness Winnipeg, and N'Dinawemak, so that's homelessness shelter, Main Street Project, MKO, Manitoba Métis Federation.

So in Brandon they have a housing first program where they provide wrap-around services, Mount Carmel Clinic, Portage la Prairie. Mount Carmel Clinic, when I was a little girl, went to—my kids went to daycare there. My brother and sister went to the old Anne Ross daycare when it was on Selkirk Avenue. It used to be an old house. Have lots of memories of Mount Carmel Clinic and the supports that they provided there. That was one of my primary health-care providers growing up. It was a place of safety for a lot of us and it still is a place of safety for a lot of folks. They provide so many different services there.

Prairie Mountain Health, Red Road Lodge—and again, these are people who are on the front lines providing so many different supports. And I can't speak to all of the supports that all of these different organizations provide. Like if you look at Main Street Project, I'll go back to, you know, my comments a couple of days ago. They are doing work that they should not be doing. They are reversing overdoses daily. And they shouldn't be doing that work; that's not their job. They aren't a supervised consumption site, but they've become a supervised consumption site.

Salvation Army, Samaritan House Ministries; 24-7 shelter operations. Siloam Mission, Spence Neighbourhood Association, Thompson homeless shelter, The Pas homeless shelter, West Central Women's Resource Centre.

And I just wanted to read a quote while I have a minute here. I wanted to remind the member because the member kept saying this last—in our last—actually, I'm going to save this for the next answer.

But there's so much work that all of these organizations are doing and I just want to lift them up for all of the work that they're doing because they now

have a government that is supporting them and that is providing the supports that they finally—

The Acting Chairperson (Carla Compton): Thank you, Minister.

Mrs. Hiebert: Thank you for all those. Those are great organizations and they do great work, and I'm glad to hear you talk about them and let me know that they're all organizations that are partnering with the government to, like, to deliver services—wrap-around services for housing and those in need. So that's really great.

I do have a question. And just because this is something that's been brought up to me as the critic for housing and addictions and homelessness and mental health supports that were needed.

I have a question for the minister, specifically just wondering—so she mentioned Salvation Army, and there's been so many that she's mentioned that are amazing organizations that are helping our loved ones and our relatives and our friends and family with homelessness and addiction and mental health.

So just wondering. I got a—I received a letter from an organization called Teen Challenge, who have an— a building that want to help people. They want to have units inside the building so that families can stay united, like together while their loved ones are going through addiction as treatment recovery. And they have a really great program and it's shown a lot of success.

And they have commitment from both federal government and the City of Winnipeg, and they're just waiting for Manitoba to also add to that the third—they need all three levels of government to participate, and so I'm wondering if the minister can—you know, can tell me where that's at and where the government is at and if they're going to be supporting that initiative for housing.

And it's just a great organization that I've found, so just wondering if she can explain when that funding will be—the third level will be added and if and when and why will that will happen.

Thank you.

* (16:20)

Ms. Smith: So I just want to talk a little bit about our investments that we've made thus far.

So as of March 2025, there's been a total of 1,221 units of social and affordable housing investments. And there'll be further supports—\$76 million in capital funding—and we're going to continue with

supporting to take off the boards and maintaining social and affordable housing to ensure that folks are getting into our housing. And that's a long-term goal is to make sure that we are building up deeply affordable housing to ensure that folks are getting into housing with supports.

So we've invested into rent relief. We've got over 2,000 households supported through that program. We opened up the Housing Starts Here portal, and that's a very collaborative approach. So it works with the City, it works with the feds, and it looks at what grants are out there, and it's a one-window approach. And we're super proud of that approach because, again, we're working in collaboration.

Instead of someone looking for support from the Province and having to go to the City and then having to go to the federal government, it's easier for folks to just come to one window and find that support there.

And, again, I just want to lift up our civil servants who are doing that work. Harnet [phonetic] does such an amazing job in supporting folks in navigating the Housing Starts Here portal, and Jamie [phonetic] also—just such a team approach those folks take.

We have a centralized intake process, so we have what's called PDF funds, so project development funds, where people can apply. Before, it used to be—it used to take 36 months for people to develop their projects. They would apply for a loan; they would have to pay back a portion of that loan, and then they would have to raise so many dollars to complete their project development.

But we've increased the amount of dollars that people can apply for. They can now apply up to \$350,000 towards a PDF fund, and that decreases the amount of time that it takes to build; it decreases it by 50 per cent. So it used to be 36 months; now it's down to 18. So again, helping and supporting.

Also with that Housing Starts Here and the intake process, we help and support folks develop their proposals. So if their proposals aren't quite done, we help support them with that.

We're also super proud with the tax credits that are going to be coming out for folks that are bringing—building affordable units, that if—even if they're not affordable, they will still get a tax credit, but if they're affordable, they'll get a higher tax credit. And then the \$78 million that we're investing is pretty significant and then the \$44 million in maintenance; that's a huge investment. And then four more million in sponsor

management to help those folks, something that the previous government wasn't providing.

And I will—so we did receive a proposal from Teen Challenge and have been in active conversations with them to understand their needs, and we're always open to more opportunities.

I've met with them; I've gone to tour their facility. It's actually in my constituency, and I've been there a couple of times now and met with them, and they do some great work. So I want to uplift them for the work that they do because they are, you know, helping and supporting and providing a much-needed resource that people need.

The Acting Chairperson (Carla Compton): Thank you, Minister.

Mrs. Hiebert: Thank you very much for that information. And I appreciate that she, the minister, has been there and seeing that I've also had the opportunity to go see, and I agree with her that they do good work and that they are definitely there to help those in the community that really just need that extra treatment and recovery and support.

The Chairperson in the Chair

So that's great. Thank you for that information.

Looking forward to hearing what kind of things the government will do to help Teen Challenge in the future, hopefully soon, and it'd be great to get that—or that housing—supportive housing and that treatment recovery program going. It would be really great to see that happen soon.

So my next question would be, we know that there's a large—or, we're of the highest percentages for intimate partner violence, in—Manitoba has the highest intimate partner violence percentage across the country of Canada, and it's something that we really—you know, it's been on the top of my heart, but just to make sure that we can do everything we can to help women that are at risk—women with their families.

So my question is, just wondering, transitional housing, specifically for at-risk women. What does the minister have in place right now, both rurally and in the city of Winnipeg? How many spaces of transitional housing—transitional housing spaces are available currently or already being used in Manitoba?

* (16:30)

Ms. Smith: So first of all, I just want to really uplift and honour all of those folks that are on the front lines supporting our women and our—and their families, because it's tough work.

I was in a domestic abusive relationship. I had two young children and had to leave a relationship with kids. And it's not easy. You have to, you know, take your belongings and leave somewhere where you shouldn't have to leave. It should be the other way around. But, unfortunately, the system is not built that way.

And, thankfully, through Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag, there is supports now for men, and—because these are often the fathers of our children. And when I was in that relationship, I loved my partner; I didn't want my partner—my children not to have a father. But there wasn't a lot of support for men, for them to change their behaviour, to get the supports that they needed to be good partners. And my children's father was a good father; he was a good dad, but he wasn't a good partner to me. And it wasn't all the time, but when the abuse would happen, it wasn't—you know, was not good. And when I chose to leave, it was because my kids started to see the abuse.

So I just want to uplift all of those workers that do that work, because they are supporting not only the women, but the children. And we are also putting supports in to support kids as well, because often our kids—and I was a teacher—well, I'm still a teacher; I'm still an educator—we say a recovering educator. But we know that kids, when they experience or see that, there is a chance that they could become abused or be the abuser. So we have to change that and help, you know, our kids understand that that's not okay.

Because my first relationship was very much like my mom and dad. My dad was abusive towards my mom, and my mom was an alcoholic, and my first partner was an alcoholic and he was abusive. And for me, that was normal, and we need to not normalize that for our kids. And we're doing that work to ensure that our kids get the supports that they need so that they see what—that that's not acceptable behaviour.

* (16:40)

So our department funds 10 shelters. We own 10 shelters across the province for women. We spent \$12 million over the last several years on capital upgrades, WAGE, which is Minister Fontaine—under Minister Fontaine's portfolio, supports operational funding.

The Chairperson: I'll just lightly remind the minister to refer to ministers by their portfolio or their constituency.

Ms. Smith: Okay. The Minister of Families is the Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equity

(MLA Fontaine), which is the ministry that supports operational funding. So that's where they would ask those specific questions. We have—we announced a partnership with Fisher River Cree Nation for the Rubin Block. That will have 13 transitional suites for women. And, again, there's lots of work being done under the Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag to support, empower and uplift women.

There's some projects that are being done right across our province. There's some in Brandon. And Siloam has 40 beds, N'Dinawemak has 30 beds for women, west central women's centre. And then we have some announcements that we haven't made, but I'm looking forward to making those announcements because, again, these are supporting Manitobans, lifting them up and helping them to get the supports that they need.

And, again, I just want to uplift those that are on the front lines doing this work because it's so important that they know that this government sees them.

Mrs. Hiebert: I'd like to ask a few questions about specifically mental health and some of the concerns that I've heard over the last year and a half or so as being the critic for mental health in our province of Manitoba.

One of the questions or one of the things I've heard a lot is a lot of need and supports needed for children and youth specifically. I've heard from different groups, I've heard from teachers in schools that they're—after coming out of COVID and after the different things that have happened, that they're just finding that kids need more support and more mental health support.

And so my question would be—and, you know, there's so many people working in that, and we know that there's a shortage of those that are qualified and giving that mental health support to our youth and our children. What is the wait time for treatment currently for a psychologist for children and youth in the province of Manitoba?

* (16:50)

Ms. Smith: I'll be really quick in my answer because I know the critic wants to close this out. So wait times vary depending on the region. There's 19 positions that were added to the system in psychiatry, and our government added residency trauma seats from—or, increased from 12 to 17. And November 28, the government announced \$2.4 million for virtual crisis and consultation. We also announced \$500,000 for a youth eating disorder program, and beginning in '24-25, we invested \$750,000 to reduce wait times for MATC.

And we're going to continue to make investments: \$1.1 million to expand Huddle to two more sites here in our province.

So I want to thank the critic for all of their questions and the work that they're doing in this area.

Miigwech.

Mrs. Hiebert: I have no further questions. I have lots of questions, but I appreciate the information and the time that I've been able to spend with the minister on this, and we—I know that we both find that this is a very important role and portfolio. So I appreciate any information that she was able to give me, and that's it for me today.

Thank you.

The Chairperson: Seeing no further questions, we'll move on to the resolutions.

Resolution 24.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$44,250,000 for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, Mental Health and Addictions, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 24.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$280,106,000 for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 24.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$88,251,000 for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, Physician Services—Psychiatry, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 24.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$313,681,000 for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, Funding to Health Authorities, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 24.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$820,000 for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, Costs Related to Capital Assets of Other Reporting Entities, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 24.7: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$15,000,000 for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, Loans and Guarantees Programs, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 24.8: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$78,000,000 for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, Other Reporting Entities Capital Investment, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Shall the resolution pass?

We'll try that again. Shall the resolution pass?

Resolution agreed to.

The last item to be considered for the Estimates of this department is item 24.1.(a), the minister's salary, contained in resolution 24.1.

At this point, we request that all ministerial and opposition staff leave the Chamber for the consideration of this last item.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mrs. Hiebert: I move that line item number 24.1(a) be amended so that the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness' salary be reduced to \$1.

Motion presented.

The Chairperson: The motion is in order.

Are there any questions or comments on this motion?

Seeing none, is the committee ready for the question?

Shall the motion pass?

Some Honourable Members: Pass

An Honourable Member: No.

The Chairperson: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

The Chairperson: All those opposed to the motion, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

The motion is accordingly defeated.

* * *

The Chairperson: Resolution 24.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to His Majesty a sum not exceeding \$6,857,000 for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, Finance and Corporate Services, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

Resolution agreed to.

This completes the Estimates of the Department of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness.

Next set of Estimates to be considered by this section is for the Department of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism.

Shall we recess for two minutes? Agreed? *[Agreed]*

The committee recessed at 4:58 p.m.

The committee resumed at 5:00 pm.

The Chairperson: Will the committee come back to order.

The hour being 5 p.m., this House—committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

The Deputy Speaker (Tyler Blashko): The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until Tuesday at 10 a.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 15, 2025

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<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>