



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

Tuesday, May 27, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

The Speaker: Introduction of bills?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Public Accounts Sixth Report

Mr. Josh Guenter (Chairperson): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

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

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on May 26, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Chamber of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Auditor General's Report – Addictions Treatment Services in Manitoba dated July 2023*

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*

Officials Speaking on Record

- *Tyson Shtykalo, Auditor General of Manitoba*
- *Charlene Paquin, Deputy Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness*

- *Chris Christodoulou, Interim President and Chief Executive Officer, Shared Health*
- *Jitender Sareen, Shared Health Provincial Specialty Lead, Mental Health and Addictions*

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following report as presented:

- *Auditor General's Report – Addictions Treatment Services in Manitoba dated July 2023*

Mr. Guenter: Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: Tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Wildfire Update

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): The Manitoba Wildfire Service advises the majority of the province has a high fire danger, with the northwest corner having an extreme fire danger. Forest fuels remain dry in the northeast—in the southeast corner and northwest. Currently in Manitoba we have 17 active wildfires burning; eight fires are out of control; two are being held and seven are under control and not spreading.

The Wildfire Service is reminding all Manitobans human activity has contributed significantly to Manitoba's current wildfire situation and to adhere to the fire and travel restrictions for your area.

Most recently, Lynn Lake and Marcel Colomb First Nation are moving forward with evacuation for hundreds of people going to Thompson. The community of Bissett is now on an evacuation notice, and Wanipigow cottage association has been notified to be ready to evacuate as required.

The community of Sherridon has declared a state of local emergency and issued a mandatory evacuation as a result of the wildfires. Wabowden has also declared a state of local emergency and is now on evacuation notice. Pimicikamak Cree Nation and Cross Lake has begun evacuation of priority individuals.

Manitoba EMO is working with partners at the Canadian Red Cross, Manitoba Emergency Social Services, Shared Health, Municipal and Northern Relations, the cities of Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson and Indigenous Services Canada, ISC, to assess and co-ordinate accommodation needs for evacuation planning. Reception centres have been set up in Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson and Dauphin.

We thank our partners and everyone on the ground doing their part.

The size and scope of this response is truly enormous, and I am sure every member of this Legislature is grateful for the massive, co-ordinated efforts of every-day Manitobans coming together. From firefighters to hydro workers, to social and health-care workers, from local representatives, mayors and reeves, local leadership and volunteers: We thank you, we commend you, we have your backs and we'll get through this together.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Today, I rise with a heavy heart and deep concern for the families, communities and emergency personnel facing what has proven to be one of the most challenging fire seasons on record.

Across Manitoba, wildfires continue to burn with frightening force. The land is dry, the winds are strong, and for many, the fear is real because it's no longer just about smoke in the air; it's about evacuations, lost homes and lives forever changed.

The fire danger remains high across the province, with extreme risk in the northwest. Forest fuels remain dangerously dry in both the southwest and northwest—or southeast and northwest. The Manitoba Wildfire Service reminds us human activity has contributed significantly to the current wildfire situation. Adhering to fire and travel restrictions is not optional; it's essential.

To our first responders, we know that we are profoundly grateful. You are standing in the path of fire to protect lives and homes. Your courage and determination are saving lives. Thank you. We will walk beside you every step of the way.

As the days ahead continue to be a test for us, I believe in the strength of this province.

When we rally together, and when we are—hold each other up, we endure not only with fire trucks, helicopters, with compassion, resilience and unity.

Let us—let this be a time not only of challenge but of collective strength. Let us meet with calm, courage and care for one another. Stay safe. Stay informed. Continue to care for each other with all the strength and heart that makes Manitoba home.

Thank you.

Environment Officers Recognition Day

Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): Today, I rise not just for a formal recognition but to truly celebrate the incredible work and dedication of our environment officers across the province of Manitoba and to recognize June 1 as environment officers day here in our province.

These are the unsung heroes of environmental stewardship. Day in and day out, in all corners of our province, from the North to the south, from urban centres to remote communities, environment officers are out in the field, standing on the front lines to protect the natural beauty, health and integrity of this land we call home.

They are our guardians of clean air, safe drinking water, healthy wildlife populations and sustainable land use. Their work is deeply technical, often difficult and sometimes dangerous, but always essential. They are scientists, investigators, educators and peace officers, all rolled into one.

You might not see them on the front page of the newspaper or trending on social media. But they are out there doing that good work: responding to environmental emergencies; investigating spills or contamination; ensuring companies are following environmental laws, educating landowners, businesses and citizens on best practices; and standing up for the values we all hold dear: clean water, healthy ecosystems and a future for our children and grandchildren.

Their presence and professionalism make a real difference, especially when things go wrong. When a river is at risk, when illegal dumping occurs or when wildlife habitats are threatened, these are the people who show up. And they don't do it for applause; they do it because they care deeply about this province and what we leave behind for the next generation.

As Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I want to say this clearly: Thank you. Thank you for your courage, your expertise and your unwavering commitment. The challenges are great, but so is the impact of your work. From preventing environmental damage to promoting sustainable practices, from

enforcing regulations to fostering partnerships, you are helping shape a healthier, safer and more sustainable Manitoba.

This kind of work doesn't always get the recognition it deserves. But today, we honour you. Today, we raise our voices to say we see you, we value you and we are proud of the work you do. You are making Manitoba better, one inspection, one conversation, one intervention at a time.

Let me also say this: Protecting our environment is not a solo effort. It's a team effort. It's a Manitoba effort. And you, our environment officers, are a vital part of that team. The partnerships you build with municipalities, with Indigenous communities, with industry and with everyday citizens, those partnerships are how real progress happens.

So today, on behalf of the Province of Manitoba and all Manitobans, we celebrate your service. We thank you for your leadership. And we commit to standing with you as we work together toward a more sustainable future, one that honours the beauty, the health and the biodiversity of this incredible province we are so lucky to call home.

Keep up the great work. You're making a difference and bettering our great province.

I'd ask all members to rise and recognize the environment officers that are able to be on hand today and ask that their names be added to Hansard.

Thank you, merci, miigwech.

Richard Balog, Amanda Fewings, Justin Kong, Katie Martin.

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Honourable Speaker, today I rise to recognize Environment Officers Recognition Day, observed each year on June 1. This day was formally recognized by legislation passed by our previous Progressive Conservative government in 2021 to honour the important and often underappreciated work of these dedicated professionals.

Environmental officers are the quiet guardians of our province's health and natural beauty. Their work touches many parts of our daily lives, from inspecting water systems and public facilities to ensuring that industries comply with environmental regulations. They diligently monitor and address potential hazards to protect both the environment and public health. Their commitment and attention to detail help prevent harm and promote safety in every community across Manitoba.

* (13:40)

Their role is vital in maintaining the high quality of life we enjoy here. Because of their hard work, Manitoban remains a place where families can live, work and raise their children surrounded by clean air, safe water and beautiful landscapes. The work environmental officers do often goes unseen, but its impact is felt every day by all Manitobans.

On behalf of our PC caucus, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all environmental officers across the province. Your dedication, professionalism and care make a real difference in people's lives. We are grateful for your service and proud of the role you play in keeping Manitoba safe, healthy and vibrant.

Thank you for everything you do.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

John Taylor Collegiate's Piper Parents

Hon. Nellie Kennedy (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism): Today, I am pleased to rise to recognize the John Taylor Piper parents, a booster group doing exceptional work to support the newly founded football program at John Taylor Collegiate.

Through markets, bottle drives, barbeques and 50-50 sales, the parent council raises money for their varsity and junior varsity teams. Small but mighty, the council meets several times a year to co-ordinate their 'fundraising'—fundraising efforts. This fundraising goes a long way in acquiring costly but essential football equipment, such as helmets, bleachers and scoreboards. This support is critical to a young football program that started just five seasons ago.

Underlying all of the council's work is the conviction that high school football is more than just a game. Just as players develop their athletic abilities, they also develop their leadership capacities through their participation. They become part of a team, gain newfound confidence and benefit from the mentorship of their coaches and senior teammates.

The Piper parents also intentionally include players in their activities, as they want their kids to be leaders both on and off the field. Athletes help out with fundraising events, taking part in markets, raffle sales and coffee service. This builds camaraderie and further encourages the formation of conscientious, community-minded citizens.

The JT Piper parents recognize the extraordinary formation that happens through collegiate football, and their activities ensure students can continue to grow through sports. Assiniboia is so lucky to have such a supportive and committed group of parents

coming alongside our youth. Their dedication not only strengthens the football program but also enriches the broader school community.

I commend the Piper parents for their vision, hard work and unwavering belief in the power of sport to shape young lives.

I ask all my colleagues to rise and help me congratulate the John Taylor Piper parents who are here today: Visa Hutter, Brenda Brown-Zeziol, Robyn Powell and Sammi Goulet, who are here with us. Please congratulate these wonderful people.

Leone Sigurdson

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Today, I rise with great pride and respect to honour a remarkable woman from my Swan River constituency, Leone Sigurdson.

Leone's lifelong dedication to her community has been nothing short of extraordinary. As a long-serving member of the Royal Canadian Legion, she has volunteered countless hours, serving as membership chair: reminding members about dues, delivering cards and visiting Second World War veterans who could no longer attend Legion events. Her compassion also extended to gathering and displaying photographs of veterans at local Legion and compiling a booklet of the Hong Kong veterans of the Swan Valley.

Her commitment to the service extended well beyond the Legion. Leone served as an archivist for the Swan Valley Historical Museum and worked as a community historian for the Star and Times. Leone has played a vital role in preserving local history, guiding families in search to learn more about their ancestry.

She has led fundraising efforts for the museum and made extensive contributions to the Find a Grave website, where she documented more than 28,000 memorials and photographs.

Leone has also preserved the history of the Fairdale Cemetery through a comprehensive book documenting these—those buried there.

Her deep sense of faith and community service was evident in her church involvement, where she held leadership roles and helped the minister with weekly bulletins.

Leone volunteered with over 34 organizations throughout her life, a true testament to her tireless spirit, deep compassion and unwavering commitment

to the people of the Swan Valley. At 81, Leone's legacy continues to inspire all of us. Her lifetime of volunteerism reflects the very best of community service: selfless, humble and enduring.

If I could ask all honourable members to please join me in thanking Leone Sigurdson, who is here with us in the gallery, along with her son Matthew and grandson Tommy, for a life devoted to others, for the heart of service and for lasting impact she has made on the Swan Valley.

Thank you.

The Leftovers Foundation

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I'm honoured to rise today to recognize the incredible work of The Leftovers Foundation. Their—is to—their mission is to ensure that no edible food goes to waste but instead finds its way to hands of families in need. Through their tireless efforts, food that might otherwise be discarded is transformed into nourishment for so many.

Since opening their Winnipeg location in 2020, The Leftovers Foundation has impacted our city by helping agency partners provide 1.7 million meals to those facing food insecurity. Each year, they rescue approximately half a million pounds of food from landfills, ensuring that it is not wasted but instead to feed our neighbours.

The Leftovers Foundation packs and distributes large donations, delivers food packages directly to people's front doors and encourages the sharing of fresh produce from home gardens.

Their commitment to minimizing food waste while maximizing community support is an inspiring model to all of us. By standing in solidarity with other organizations, such as during the Coldest Night 2025, they help to weave a stronger communal fabric across our neighbourhoods.

I was profoundly moved by—to stand side by side with such dedicated, community-minded citizens, witnessing first-hand the power of collective good-will.

Today, I'd like to recognize folks from The Leftovers Foundation who have joined us in the gallery today: Julia Kraemer, Alyssa Wolfe and Carina Blumgrund.

I want to uplift your work and all that—and all of the many volunteers that work alongside you. It's been

a privilege to watch this organization glow-grow and flourish, and we are so blessed to have you in Point Douglas. Your achievements remind us that community progress happens with every plate, every donation and when everyone pitches in.

I ask that the House join me in saying *miigwech* to The Leftovers Foundation.

We recognize you for the dedication and love you provide each and every day. We see you, we value and we uplift you for your heart way-work.

Miigwech.

Harold Gilleshammer and Glen Findlay

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Honourable Speaker, today I rise to recognize two outstanding Manitobans from the Riding Mountain constituency who were recently awarded King Charles III's Coronation Medals.

Harold Gilleshammer of Minnedosa began his career as a teacher after earning a bachelor of arts in history, political science and English from the University of Manitoba and a bachelor of education from Brandon University.

Harold was elected as a Progressive Conservative member of the Manitoba Legislature from 1988 to 2003 and served as a minister in four different portfolios in the Filmon government. He also served as the deputy leader of the PC Party after the 1999 election.

During his time in office, Harold managed to secure a new hospital for Minnedosa, redevelop the lake, secure a new bridge on Main Street and widen the street to five lanes.

In 2007, Harold was appointed as a Canadian citizenship judge and was re-appointed for another term in 2013. Harold and his wife continue to reside in the community of Minnedosa.

The second recipient, Glen Findlay, of Shoal Lake, was elected as a Progressive Conservative to the Manitoba Legislative Assembly in 1986. Glen served in three different Cabinet portfolios in the Filmon government until his retirement in 1999.

A graduate of the University of Manitoba and the University of Illinois, Glen has served on numerous boards and committees of provincial, regional and national organizations. Glen has also been involved in his local community, working to build a new arena complex, attract a high-throughput elevator and

served as president of the Shoal Lake Agricultural Society.

* (13:50)

An inductee into the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2015, Glen and his wife, Katherine, have raised four children, have nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. They still live on the seven-generation family farm, where Glen continues to play an integral role in the 7,000-acre grain and 200-head cow-calf operation with son Gary and grandson Carey.

Honourable Speaker, I ask the members of this House to join with me in congratulating Harold Gilleshammer and Glen Findlay.

Thank you.

Northeast Pioneers Greenway

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): Today, I rise to speak about one of my favourite spaces in the Rossmere community, the Northeast Pioneers Greenway.

Winnipeg's Northeast Pioneers Greenway is more than just a trail: it's a thread that stitches our neighbourhoods together with history, health and hope for a more sustainable future. As we gear up for Bike to Work Day on June 10, I want to take a moment to honour this incredible trail and the legacy behind it.

The greenway recently extended and stretches over six and a half kilometres, following the old Marconi rail line. The vision started as a reclamation of industrial land for community good and brought together all levels of government, including Gary Doer's NDP and generous donors like John Buhler, who had purchased the land in 2006.

Each came to the table to champion the greenway's creation, standing beside the tireless advocacy of local residents. Together, they paved the way for a space that promotes walking, cycling, running, dog walking, stroller pushing and moments of quiet reflection.

The Northeast Pioneers Greenway is not just a route on a map, Honourable Speaker; it's a grassroots success story of community revitalization, and it brings together neighbouring communities and makes climate-friendly choices easier and more accessible. It's where neighbours meet, where kids learn to bike, where families find time to breathe and where we show that climate action does not have to be complicated. Sometimes, it just means choosing to pedal instead of drive.

I encourage everyone to stop by our pit stop on June the 10th on the greenway, across from the Gateway Road Superstore. Join the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) and I in celebrating this remarkable piece of Rossmere and everything it represents: community, sustainability and a healthier future for all.

I want to thank the Bike Week Winnipeg for their work in organizing Bike to Work Day and helping to promote cycling across our beautiful province.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Honourable Speaker, on House business.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Just if I could get you to hold off on that for one minute, I have some guests here that are going to be leaving right away.

We have, seated in the public gallery, from Rock Lake School, 20 students under the direction of Tim Remple, and this group is located in the constituency of honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Piwniuk).

And we welcome you here today.

And also, we have, seated in the public gallery, from IMF School, 33 students under the direction of Byron Dueck, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson).

And we welcome you here today.

* * *

Mr. Narth: On House business.

The Speaker: Honourable member for La Vérendrye, on House business.

Mr. Narth: Honourable Speaker, pursuant to section 44, subsection (3) of the conflict of interest act, I rise today to table copies of a complaint I have made to the Ethics Commissioner.

The letter outlines concerns about the Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz) using insider information available to him as a minister of the Crown, to sell personal shares in a corporation before a report that reflects negatively on that corporation was made public.

Included are supporting documents showing the timelines, including the minister selling shares days before said negative report was made public. These documents also detailed the complaint.

Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: And now, prior to moving on to oral questions, there's some more guests in the gallery.

We have, seated in the public gallery, from a homeschool group, 30 students under the direction of Kaitlyn Einerson.

And we welcome you all here today.

* * *

The Speaker: And now, yet another sad announcement. Our page, Luca Morin, is leaving us to—this is her last day.

Luca will be graduating from École Kelvin High School this June. She is set to go to university next year and is hoping for the best. She plans to study either health sciences or microbiology, eventually aspiring to get her master's in it.

As her high school years begin to finish, she is saddened to leave the Legislative Page Program but is nevertheless grateful for her time. During her time here, she gained a deep understanding and appreciation of how our legislative system works here in Manitoba.

She would like to express a massive thank-you to everyone at the Legislature who supported her throughout the year. She is extraordinarily grateful to everyone who went out of their way to guide her and mentor her. Their kindness, patience and pleasantness have made her experience much more memorable and wonderful and she will carry the lessons she has learned and the experiences she's had for—with her for the rest of her life. She is confident that she will be able to move forward strongly in her future and she thanks you for everything.

And we thank you for everything you've done for the members and the Assembly.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Minister of Innovation and New Technology Timeline for Sale of TELUS Shares

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I rise to ask a serious question on behalf of Manitobans, so it'd be nice if the Premier (Mr. Kinew) would stand up and answer the questions. This question is simply about facts, so a simple yes or no will suffice.

Public disclosures and Hansard remarks show that the Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz) was aware that TELUS was the source

of the outage as early as April 9. As of April 9, this minister owned shares in TELUS. During this time, this same minister refused to mention TELUS's name in the House. Then, on May 13, this minister sold his shares. What happened magically on May 14? This minister started blaming TELUS.

So the question is very simple: Will the Premier (Mr. Kinew) simply stand up and admit if these facts are correct or wrong?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): I find it interesting that the Leader of the Opposition is trying to predetermine how anybody on this side of the House should answer any question that he puts on the record.

What I will say is that Manitobans are still asking some really important questions about a report we have from the Ethics Commissioner in regards to the behaviour of members on that side of the House.

To the right of the Leader of the Opposition is someone who is named 47 times—47 times—in the report provided by the Ethics Commissioner, and yet that person still remains House leader of the PC caucus.

Does the Leader of the Opposition, who stands up and asks questions—apparently about accountability—does he believe in it when it accounts—when it pertains, rather, to his own members, yes or no?

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

Mr. Khan: Manitobans, you can see it right there. I asked the Premier a simple question about facts regarding dates and this government—this Premier refuses to get up and answer them.

Well, the facts don't lie. And the truth is is that minister on this side—of this NDP government owned stocks in TELUS—TELUS, the very same company that put out a damning report in regards to the death of a Manitoban when 911 services failed.

So the answer—the question is very simple for this Premier: Will this Premier stand up and tell Manitobans if the Minister of Innovation under his Cabinet owned stocks in TELUS when this tragedy happened?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, we respect the role of the Ethics Commissioner. We respect it, full stop. The Ethics Commissioner is going to look into what's been brought forward, as he looks into other issues.

In fact, the Ethics Commissioner very recently brought forward a 102-page report outlining concerns

about the members on that side of the House, including the member to the right of the Leader of the Opposition.

The Leader of the Opposition won't even hold his own House leader accountable, and yet he stands up in this House and puts words on the record about other members. The Leader of the Opposition should start by cleaning up the mess in his own house before he wants to bring allegations against other folks.

Will he do that today with his House leader, yes or no?

* (14:00)

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

Mr. Khan: Two questions, zero answers by this NDP government.

They want to talk about accountability? Let's have it. They want to bring up 102-page report by the commissioner? Great. Let's discuss it today. Let's table it today. Let's vote on it today so Manitobans can move forward.

What this Deputy Premier doesn't want to do is they—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

The government bench needs to come to order.

Mr. Khan: What this NDP government and this Premier don't want to do is they don't want to discuss the facts.

The facts are that their minister on their side owned shares in TELUS. Then this minister sold the shares in TELUS after a damning report came out where a Manitoban had to die.

Will this Premier stand up and do the right thing and admit to Manitobans that his own government, his minister, has a conflict of interest and should be removed from Cabinet today?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I hate to be the bearer of some obviously bad news. The Leader of the Opposition has members in his caucus right now who were fined in a historic breaking of the law by the previous PC administration. They're still in his caucus.

The Leader of the Opposition has the MLA for Red River North who owes Manitobans a \$10,000 fine because he broke the law. To his right is somebody—the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson)—who

47 times is mentioned in the report for wanting to violate the Canadian Constitution.

Honourable Speaker, I said it before, I'll say it again. The Leader of the Opposition needs to start by cleaning up the mess in his own house.

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

Mr. Khan: Three questions, zero answers by this NDP government.

They want to talk about accountability? We've said, great; bring it forward.

The member from—that is accused in this report—has agreed with the report. He says he will pay the fine in the report. We are ready to vote on the report today.

Who won't vote on it? The NDP. They don't want accountability. They want to hide everything, just like they want to hide their own minister—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan: —for insider trading, for owning stocks in TELUS, getting confidential information, insider information, and then selling his stocks in TELUS.

So will the Premier (Mr. Kinew) stand up today and tell Manitobans that his minister was wrong and he will remove his minister from Cabinet today?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, in October of 2023, Manitobans knew that that member was wrong and that every single member in the PC caucus was wrong. So what did they do? They removed them from government. That's what Manitobans decided to do, and it was the right decision.

And yet, there are members of the PC caucus who we still don't know what their role was in Heather Stefanson working so hard to violate our Canadian and beloved Constitution.

The member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook)—we don't know where she stands on this mess. We don't know where she stands on the report. She's been awfully quiet about this situation, concerning so. She's quick to stand up and talk about Wally; where does she stand when it comes to Heather Stefanson breaking the law and members that are currently in her caucus shamefully, shamefully disregarding the vote of Manitobans?

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

Mr. Khan: Manitobans, there you have it. Four questions on insider trading by this government, four questions on a Manitoban dying when TELUS couldn't provide the services and zero answers by this NDP government.

They talk about the commissioner's report. Bring it forward. We are ready to vote on it today. They don't want to do it. They are playing political games. But you know—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Khan: —what isn't games?

When, sadly, someone in Manitoba has to die because this Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz) did not do their job. They used confidential, damning information to sell their stocks in TELUS before it went public.

Will the Deputy Premier stand up today, or anybody on that side of the House—maybe the minister wants to stand up—and admit what he did was wrong and he's going to resign his seat in Cabinet today?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I want to be clear. The Ethics Commissioner has a very important role to play—the commissioner that was appointed under the former PC administration, I might add.

The commissioner will take a look at what's been 'brought' forward and we'll await those findings. But we all know in this House that a report has been brought forward—a full, comprehensive report by the Ethics Commissioner.

It's very clear the Leader of the Opposition is trying to avoid his responsibility to hold his own caucus members accountable and it is shameful. It is disgraceful.

What was his role with Heather Stefanson? She is his mentor, we all know that. What was his role in her breaking the law? She's been fined \$18,000. What was his role, and does he believe that members of his own caucus should be held accountable?

Manitobans want answers. We're going to keep asking.

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

Mr. Khan: So, sadly, on my last question of the day, I would point out that's five questions for the NDP, zero answers. Let's see if they can do it on this one.

Honourable Speaker, you cannot debate the facts: the Minister of Innovation and New Technology owned shocks—stocks in TELUS. The very same time, a damning report was released by TELUS. What happened the next day? This minister sold his shares.

The minister that is responsible for telecommunications in this province. The minister that's responsible for overseeing 911 when, sadly, a Manitoban died. He didn't rise to help Manitobans. The first thing he did was sell his own stocks to protect his personal interest.

Will the Deputy Premier or Premier (Mr. Kinew)—anyone on that side of the House—stand up and do the right thing and call for his resignation today?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition's been in his role for only about three weeks and members of his own party are already calling for his resignation. Maybe he should oblige them and have somebody sitting in that seat who can do a better job.

Honourable Speaker, listen: the Leader of the Opposition needs to start by taking care of accountability in his own caucus. His House leader was named in the Ethics Commissioner's report over—nearly 50 times, and he still has his job. The member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton) still sits in that caucus and he owes Manitobans a \$10,000 fine.

Now, maybe the reason why the Leader of the Opposition won't hold people accountable is because he knows he can't even hold himself accountable. Heather Stefanson is his friend, his mentor and he supported her and she broke the law.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Minister of Innovation and New Technology Timeline for Sale of TELUS Shares

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): Manitobans deserve an answer from the Minister of Innovation and New Technology himself.

The facts have been laid out in the tabled documents. The minister was asked repeatedly about 911 failures and he only issued the damning TELUS report after he sold his shares in TELUS.

Why did the minister suppress the report until he had sold his shares?

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology): Honourable Speaker, I'm happy to answer this question.

Upon taking office as minister, I immediately booked an appointment with the Ethics Commissioner. He advised me that I was not required to dispose of the assets in question. However, we're required to hold ourselves to a higher standard, and I took steps to dispose of those assets and have updated my file accordingly.

I offer this as a lesson to members opposite, in addition to the 100 pages of reading they should've done by now.

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

Mr. Guenter: Not—frankly, absolutely not good enough. On April 9—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Guenter: —the Minister of Innovation and New Technology sent a letter—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning (MLA Schmidt) will come to order.

Mr. Guenter: On April 9, the Minister of Innovation and New Technology sent a letter to TELUS. Between April 9 and May 15, the minister received multiple updates that the general public did not have access to.

Why did the minister not recuse himself from this file if he held shares in TELUS? Why did he quickly offload his shares before the damning TELUS report was released?

MLA Moroz: Honourable Speaker, it's clear this question is being posed specifically to distract from their own record.

On this side of the House, I have full confidence in the work of Mr. Schnoor. Can the members opposite say the same thing? In fact, will the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Khan) do the right thing and remove his House leader, who's been implicated 47 times in an ethics report?

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

* (14:10)

Mr. Guenter: Honourable Speaker, the Minister of Innovation and New Technology sold shares after getting inside information. He's trying to distract in his non-answers.

These are serious questions we're asking today, and Manitobans deserve answers. It seems the minister is clearly in it for himself, not Manitobans.

How does the minister explain his actions?

MLA Moroz: Honourable Speaker, I'm happy to, again, speak on this issue. I'm proud of being part of a team that goes above and beyond on the advice of the commissioner.

If members opposite are unsure of what this might look like, again, I refer them to the 100-page document that he recently provided them about their activities.

Minister of Innovation and New Technology Timeline for Sale of TELUS Shares

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Honourable Speaker, the facts speak for themselves. Prior to May 13, the Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz) wouldn't publicly identify that TELUS was responsible for the March 22 to 24 outage. After the 13th, he was comfortably changing his speaking points.

So I ask the minister: What changed on May 13?

Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure): Well, I welcome the opportunity to stand to speak to this question.

What I've heard today is that the opposition has raised a concern with the Ethics Commissioner. I understand that, when they were in government, they appointed the Ethics Commissioner. They changed the laws when they were in government so that creates the framework that the Ethics Commissioner operates under.

And they would do to respect the process of the Ethics Commissioner, both in relation to their own complaint and in relation to the findings of the Ethics Commissioner about the sheer volume of laws broken by their caucus.

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

Mr. Narth: Honourable Speaker, unfortunately, the Minister of Innovation and New Technology, as well as the Minister of Infrastructure, weren't able to tell us what changed on May 13. But we know what changed. He sold his shares in TELUS.

He's acknowledged that he saw an interim copy of a report that the general public didn't have access to until May 16.

Does the minister think it was ethical to sell shares when he was in possession of knowledge other Manitobans were not?

MLA Naylor: Honourable Speaker, there is an incredible level of arrogance coming from some members opposite in relation to their ideas about right and wrong, about truth, about justice.

This is a caucus—this is a group that, when they were in government, acted so shamefully in regards to not only their election campaign with their attack on trans children, their attack on the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, but that, at the highest level, the unethical law-breaching decisions that were made by the woman who was the premier at the time and the leader of their party, as well as—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Narth: Honourable Speaker, insider training—insider trading are of the greatest disrespect to Manitobans when you're a minister of the Crown.

Honourable Speaker, the facts are clear. The minister had shares in TELUS; that's a fact. He received a copy of a report that was critical of TELUS and their handling of rural 911 services. That was clear. He then sold the shares in TELUS.

Does the minister disagree with these facts?

MLA Naylor: Honourable Speaker, there is some confusion in the room between facts and allegations. Allegations have been made. The Ethics Commissioner will investigate those allegations and we will await the report, as we do with respect on the government side of the House.

But the facts in this room, the only true facts in relation to any Ethics Commissioner report of late, is the 100-page document damning the members opposite, making it very clear that there was conspiracies, seccies, lots of misinformation or lacking information on the record during the process of investigation. And there has been no respect shown from the current Leader of the Opposition for—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Minister of Innovation and New Technology Timeline for Sale of TELUS Shares

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Honourable Speaker, these are damning documents. They're public record.

Someone on these government benches—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order, please.

The honourable member for Assiniboia (MLA Kennedy) also needs to come to order.

Ms. Byram: Someone on these government benches needs to answer if they stand by a minister acting on inside information for financial benefit.

Does any member opposite have the courage to put Manitobans before party?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): Heather Stefanson owes \$18,000. Cliff Cullen owes money towards the Ethics Commissioner's report. The member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton) who sits in his office there, participating online, here, owes \$10,000.

It is mind-boggling that the members opposite would get up just mere days after a damning, damning report that concretely said they broke the law, their members broke the law, they violated the Constitution and the member opposite wants to get up here and talk about standing up for what's right.

This side of the government will always be on the side of right and truth and it's time that members opposite—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Ms. Byram: If we want to talk about House leaders and integrity, the NDP's House leader is currently facing two lawsuits because of her actions and inactions.

But no member of the NDP seems interested in being honest with Manitobans about what has occurred.

I simply ask any member opposite: What are they hiding?

MLA Fontaine: In January 2022, I'll remind members opposite and Manitobans, Heather Stefanson was found to be in violation of the ethics when she seemingly forgot to mention the \$30 million that she made from selling real estate.

Now, I don't know about anybody else or regular Manitobans like the rest of us on this side, I would never forget that I just got \$30 million selling real estate. That is the legacy of members opposite. It's incredibly tragic that the first female premier, a faithful foot soldier of patriarchy, has been fined.

Not only was she an absolute—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Ms. Byram: I would like to ask the minister: Can he address this right now, stand in the House today and apologize and be transparent with Manitobans—will he do that today?

MLA Fontaine: One of the quotes that's in this 100-page ethics report, of which I am one hundred per cent positive none of the members opposite have actually fully read, is that, and I quote here, that the former PC Cabinet minister, Rochelle Squires wrote in an article saying that the member for Red River North told her that Sio Silica, and I quote, was a project of significant importance to the defeated premier, but because of a conflict, she herself couldn't offer that directive.

And what's the 'response' from the former premier? She says I have no conflicts and that's a fact. Clearly, facts for members opposite, both previous and ones still sitting in the Chamber, are something that they're not—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Minister of Innovation and New Technology Timeline for Sale of TELUS Shares

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): The Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz) discovered that TELUS was the problem with 911 service in Manitoba. The first thing this minister does is use his insider information and sells his TELUS shares.

* (14:20)

What is his defence of this lapse of integrity?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Honourable Speaker, the member opposite's questions today are just simply off-base.

But here is what Manitobans really care about. They care about hearing about a report brought by the Ethics Commissioner that clearly showed the improprieties, the misdeeds that were taken on by the former failed government during their caretaker convention period, where three former ministers were fined by the Commissioner.

On top of that, that's a sitting MLA who's currently sitting, and other members who were named in the report. They all ought to take more accountability for their own failed actions to disregard Manitobans' election choice and try to push forward a project improperly.

Now that's what Manitobans care about. We're still waiting for more accountability on their side of the House. Where—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Springfield-Ritchot, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Schuler: Honourable Speaker, 16 questions and still no answer. Let's try again.

With the breakdown of TELUS and 911, a man died from lack of urgent medical care. The Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz) takes this opportunity to sell his TELUS shares rather than find a fix for the problem.

He only fixed his stock portfolio—why?

Mr. Moses: Honourable Speaker, let's be clear with Manitobans about what has happened. Let's take a look—the former failed government was terrible over their seven and a half years. That we know for sure. They ran a cold and callous campaign, attacking the victims of a serial killer and trans Manitobans. That was shameful.

Then, during the caretaker convention, they broke the law. Not just one member opposite, but three were fined by the Commissioner. And now, after reflecting on all that, the member from Red River note says in the paper, and I quote—thinking about his time during the caretaker convention, he says, and I quote, I stand by that today.

So after all those failings, have they learned anything? Apparently not, Honourable Speaker. They need to show more accountability on that—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Springfield-Ritchot, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Schuler: I wish to table the facts of the TELUS sock—stock sale for the Minister of Innovation and technologies for his photo album of shame. The minister engaged in insider trading. He used his position to get insider information and then sold his TELUS shares. He traded on that information. That is wrong.

Why the lapse in integrity by the Minister of Innovation and New Technology?

Mr. Moses: Let's be very clear, Honourable Speaker, that the questions members opposite are asking today are very much off-base.

But let's talk about what Manitobans really care about. Let's talk about what Manitobans are asking for from members opposite, is that they want them to be clear and accountable on their own actions, on their failings, quite frankly. Their failings during the last government—seven and a half years of failing. Their failings during the election campaign, where they ran horrible ads. Their failings during the caretaker convention, where they clearly broke the law. And their failings now as opposition, where they haven't learned any lessons.

We're not going to take lessons from them. We're going to do right by Manitobans, work on their behalf, grow our economy, fix health care and make sure that we have a brighter future in Manitoba.

Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program Allocation of Certificates for Skilled Workers

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): The provincial nominee program has been instrumental in attracting skilled workers to our province. With the limited certificates available, there are some very tough decisions needing to be made with how the government is going to prioritize those who receive certificates.

Can the minister explain the process the department is taking to determine how to allocate certificates between skilled workers already in Manitoba compared to those out of our province?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I thank the member opposite for the question.

I do have some bad news for the House. Back in January, the federal government halved our provincial nominations. It was a terrible decision by the federal government, and we are trying to deal with this really bad aftermath of this.

At this point, we are continuing to lobby the federal government and advocate on behalf of Manitobans, on behalf of Manitoba communities, on behalf of Manitoba employers, on behalf of international students and all of Manitoba that we need more provincial nomination spots.

And I did just finish having a meeting with the federal immigration minister on Friday, and I'm looking forward to future meetings with—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

MLA Lamoureux: Honourable Speaker, the minister knows that the numbers were halved because this government neglected over 2,000 applicants. Skilled workers in Manitoba continue to encounter significant hurdles.

Despite their commitment to our province studying, working, buying homes, having children, and their families, Honourable Speaker, this government—what are they going to do? Are they going to allocate any additional certificates that the Province may receive specifically towards skilled workers here in Manitoba?

MLA Marcelino: Honourable Speaker, I'd like to put some facts on the record. It was the previous government that failed to nominate 2,178 of the federal allocation that was given to Manitoba in October 2023.

On this side of the House, we were able to turn things around and nominate a record of 9,570 families in Manitoba. That is our record here in Manitoba.

It's the previous government's record that the member's alluding to right now, and it's also the record of the MP for Winnipeg North, who doesn't seem to advocate for Manitobans in their time of need right now that we need more allocations, and here are some of his statements regarding how Manitoba should just accept this halving of the nominations.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

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

MLA Lamoureux: Just a little bit of background: When I first got elected in 2016, the former previous NDP government had completely destroyed the Provincial Nominee Program. There were people waiting over five years just to hear if they were going to be accepted into the Provincial Nominee Program.

Then it took a couple of years; it took a sit-in outside of Minister Wishart's office, but we brought those wait times down to no one was waiting for more than three months.

But now, Honourable Speaker, the NDP are back at it again, and wouldn't you know it? PNP applicants are now waiting again over two years—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Lamoureux: —just to hear if they're going to be accepted into the Provincial Nominee Program.

When will this government get rid of their backlog and do their job?

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Marcelino: And thank you to the member opposite for that twisted question.

I can stand here all day long. I can go to forums all day long and talk about the Provincial Nominee Program and what we're trying to do as a government to turn things around after those dark days—seven and a half years of failure from the previous government.

I can do that any day of the week, and I'm happy to table some documents about how we're trying to get the MP for Winnipeg North to understand that here in Manitoba, we need more provincial nominee spots, not less. We asked for over 12,000 nomination spots and we only received 4,750. We are going to be starting a letter-writing campaign. I just got off the phone with—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Fair Trade in Canada Act Timeline for Passage

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): Honourable Speaker, last week our government introduced Bill 47, the fair trade in Canada act. This important legislation will allow us to effectively respond to the threat of Trump's tariffs by breaking down interprovincial trade barriers.

We know that the members opposite did absolutely nothing to bolster free trade within Canada for seven and a half years. They chose to thank Trump for his tariffs, rather than working towards protecting Manitobans.

* (14:30)

Can the Minister of Families please explain to the House the importance of Bill 47 and why it needs to pass as soon as possible?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): Great question.

Bill 47 is Manitoba's response to Trump's tariffs. So, instead of thanking Trump like the member opposite, we know that the best way to Trump-proof our economy is through unity. That's what Bill 47 is all about: unity between provinces, between political parties, between government and business.

The Manitoba Chambers of Commerce applauded this important legislative milestone. They called it, and I quote, a clear win. Even a mere couple of hours ago, King Charles himself advocated for government to remove—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Fontaine: —trade barriers.

So, while members opposite continue to show up and not do their job, I would encourage them to—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

**Release of Drug Dealers and Violent Offenders
Request for Government to Address**

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Manitobans know the NDP are floundering when it comes to community safety. The Minister of Justice and Premier (Mr. Kinew) promised, and they made a vow, to be tough on drug dealers, but the records show this just isn't true.

Why is the minister continuing to release armed drug dealers and violent criminals back through his revolving door of shame?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The fact is, Honourable Speaker, under the members opposite, for years crime was skyrocketing; seven and a half years of crime going up year over year while funding stayed flat or went down year after year. And, of course, the member opposite doesn't want to take any accountability for that.

So I wonder—or I guess it's no wonder—that the member opposite is now not taking accountability for members of his own caucus who have been found guilty by the Ethics Commissioner; who have, in the report issued by the Ethics Commissioner, been shown to have misled the House, misled this Legislature, misled the Ethics Commissioner.

Will he take accountability with his leader and the rest of his caucus?

Mr. Balcaen: Well, let's talk accountability, Honourable Speaker. Eighteen questions were asked of this government about a allegation that's been put forth. Zero answers.

No answers, Manitoba, on that last question either. And facts matter. So I table a media release from the WPS where a traffic stop happened on May 21. WPS found \$20,000-worth of cocaine and Percocet, a loaded 9-millimetre handgun and a large amount of cash. Two violent and armed drug dealers were released back into the community.

When will this minister take responsibility and make sure that drug dealers are held accountable?

Mr. Wiebe: One of the first bills brought forward by this government was The Unexplained Wealth Act.

Despite the efforts of the members opposite, we passed that bill in the House.

We now have a bill literally in front of this Legislature right now going after drug dealers in community with The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act. Member opposite doesn't want to debate that. He doesn't want to support that bill.

What I want to know is when the Ethics Commissioner said, a direct quote from his report: Overall, I find that the inability of the opposition House leader to recall what happened after the election, when interviewed, puts his credibility at issue.

Does he have an issue with the House leader in his caucus? Does he have an issue with the member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton), and will he put that on the record today?

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

Mr. Balcaen: Two questions about crime, zero answers. Your safety is at risk here, and this minister continues to release violent armed offenders back into the community. As a matter of fact, it happened again, May 26, and I'll table a Winnipeg Police Service report.

What happened in this real-world example, is that an individual armed with a 45-calibre handgun was caught with drugs as well as trafficking paraphernalia, and what's common theme here is that this individual was once again released into the community to reoffend.

When will this minister stand up to his word and get tough on crime and tough on the drug dealers that are causing havoc in our communities?

Mr. Wiebe: A general investigation section in Swan River. We're teaming up with the City of Thompson to crack down on drug dealers.

As I said, legislation, literally in front of this Legislature, right now. The member opposite still hasn't said if he's going to support that important legislation.

And what he—of course, he hasn't said anything about is the Ethics Commissioner's report, which said, very specifically, that the member for Red River North was guilty. As a former law enforcement officer, you would think that that would matter to him, but, apparently, it doesn't.

It doesn't matter to him that the member for Red River North and the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson) were mentioned a—268 times in the

Ethics Commissioner's report. And, seemingly, the member opposite doesn't seem to care.

We care. Manitobans care.

The Speaker: The member's time had expired.

**Minister of Labour
OQ Response**

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): The Minister of Labour and Immigration (MLA Marcelino) treated the member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux) shamefully in her last answer.

We know that the NDP House leader has claimed in the past that a man deserved all the credit for the member for Tyndall Park's accomplishments in this Chamber and refused to apologize. Now, the Minister of Labour, instead of answering the questions posed to her, basically tells the member for Tyndall Park to go and talk to her father.

The NDP House leader loves to talk—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cook: —about foot soldiers of the patriarchy.

What does she say—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

The NDP bench needs to come to order again.

Mrs. Cook: The NDP House leader loves to talk about foot soldiers of the patriarchy.

What does she say to members of her own caucus who exhibit such shameful behaviour and utter hypocrisy?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Honourable Speaker, we know that the member for Roblin likes to stand up and act as though she's on the right side of history.

And yet, we know, time and time and time again, she's not. She sits beside a leader who was the face of an anti-trans campaign. She ran under a banner that targeted the families of murder victims of a serial killer.

That member for Roblin sits in a caucus of people who actively, according to the Ethics Commissioner report, broke the law. And now she condemns our Minister of Immigration for raising a fair question

about what an elected Member of Parliament isn't doing to advocate for immigration in his own province.

The member for Roblin should stand up and apologize for touting herself to be feminist when, in reality, her actions show—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The time for question period has also expired.

PETITIONS

Provincial Road 332

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The stretch of gravel road at Provincial Road 332, off from the Trans-Canada Highway, generates excessive dust, negatively impacting the health and safety of local families and businesses in the area.

(2) The present solution of applying dust control once per year is ineffective, lasting only until the first rainfall.

(3) Dust pollution poses respiratory health risks and can continue the development of chronic health issues.

(4) Dust from the road can impair visibility for drivers, leading to collisions with other vehicles, animals and ditches.

(5) The gravel surface reduces tire traction, compromising stable vehicle control and increasing the risk of rollovers.

(6) The current conditions of the road and the presence of unfixed potholes damages vehicles and results in expensive repair costs for residents and visitors.

* (14:40)

(7) This road is a critical access point for international clientele visiting local businesses, making its upkeep essential for maintaining the municipality's reputation.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to consider extending the newly paved section on Provincial Road 332, ending at Bohn Road, to Road 56 north of Starbuck.

(2) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to recognize the crucial need to improve road conditions to enhance safety and accessibility for all who reside and travel along Provincial Road 332 and in Starbuck.

This petition has been signed by Natalie Broten, Mary-Jo Thiessen and Robyn Misonne.

Thank you.

Teaching Certification

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teacher certification.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to

the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early/middle-years requirements which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas.

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

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

Provincial Trunk Highway 45

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

Upgrading Provincial Trunk Highway 45 will accelerate economic development as it will enhance connectivity, facilitate efficient transportation and promote economic growth in the region.

(2) Economic development will be further enhanced as improved road infrastructure attracts business, encourages investment and creates job opportunities.

(3) Roads meeting the Roads and Transportation Association of Canada, RTAC, standards improve both safety and efficiency as they can handle heavier loads, reducing the number of trips required for goods transportation.

(4) Safer roads further benefit both commuters and commercial vehicles, minimizing accidents and damage.

(5) Upgrading the RTAC standards ensures resilience to challenges caused by climate change such as thawing and flooding, which negatively impact road conditions; and

(6) Efficient transportation networks contribute to Manitoba's economic competitiveness as upgraded roads support interprovincial and international goods movement, benefiting both trade and commerce.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to take the necessary steps to upgrade

Provincial Trunk Highway 45 from Russell to Provincial Trunk Highway 10 to meet RTAC standards.

This petition has been signed by Kelvin Mazur, Pat Macklesaac [*phonetic*], Amanda Zimmer and many, many other Manitobans.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

from more remote communities to access MRI imaging services.

* (14:50)

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This is signed by Kelly McDermid, Jo-Ann McRae [*phonetic*] and Ken Rutter and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

Provincial Road 352

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

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

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

(2) The route is gravel for most of its length, with no—or, with two paved sections: one from PTH 5 to Birnie; and the other from PTH 16 to Arden.

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

(4) The promotion of PR 352 weight restriction to an RTAC classification of 140,000 pounds weight restriction has caused further damage, as the route was only built to accommodate the original 80,000 pounds and has not seen upgrades to accommodate the increase. The 1.5-mile stretch on PR 352 from the community of Birnie is the main access off PTH 5 to the community.

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

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

This petition has been signed by Lisa Adams, Richard Sutin [*phonetic*] and Kalee Mund and many, many more Manitobans.

Phoenix School

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

For several consecutive years, the top capital priority of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division

has been the renovation and expansion of Phoenix School.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this petition is signed by Jessica Gillespie, Jasmin Spence, Chelsea Span and many, many other Manitobans.

Opposition to Releasing Repeat Offenders

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

* (15:00)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

Honourable Speaker, this petition is signed by Kim Dengage, Mavis Brennan, Kerry McGowan and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Death of Jordyn Reimer—Judicial Review Request

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

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

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) Winnipeg Police Service investigated—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 Winnipeg Police Service reported an alarming number of impaired drivers in this holiday Check Stop program. Extending criminal culpability beyond the driver to those who engage in overt actions to facilitate impaired driving will save lives.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition is signed by Brett Jam, Gina Williams, Brett Phillips and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

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 standards and recommended charges be laid against the accomplice. The Crown prosecutors declined to prosecute the accomplice.

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And, Honourable Speaker, this petition was signed by Samantha Win [*phonetic*], Skuk [*phonetic*] Shum, Telly [*phonetic*] Parker and many, many other fine Manitobans.

MLA Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): I wish to present the following petition. The background to this petition—oh, to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

* (15:10)

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

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.

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.

The Winnipeg Police Service, WPS, investigation provided adequate evidence to meet the charging standards and recommend the charges be laid—that charges be laid against the accomplice. The Crown prosecutors declined to prosecute the accomplice.

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

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

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

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

In December 2024, the Winnipeg police 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.

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.

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

Funding Crime Cost Mitigation for Small Business

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

MLA Carla Compton, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

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

The Speaker in the Chair

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

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

We urge the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Helen Guenter, Mary Reimer, Barb Adair, and many, many, many, many, many, many Manitobans.

MLA Carla Compton, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

The Acting Speaker (Carla Compton): Are there any further petitions? Seeing none, grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): Honourable deputy Speaker, could you please canvass the House to not see the clock until all stages of Bill 47, the fair trade in Canada, international–Internal Trade Mutual Recognition Act and Amendments to The Commemoration of Days, Weeks, and Months Act (Buy Manitoba, Buy Canadian Day) have been completed today, including second reading, Committee of the Whole, and third reading and to receive royal assent tomorrow.

The Acting Speaker (Carla Compton): So is there leave for the House to not see the clock until all stages of Bill 47, The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act and Amendments to The Commemoration of Days, Weeks, and Months Act (Buy Manitoba, Buy Canada Day) have been completed today, including second reading, Committee of the Whole and third reading and to receive royal assent tomorrow?

Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Carla Compton): I hear a no. Leave is denied.

MLA Fontaine: Can you please call second reading of Bill 47, The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act and Amendments to Commemoration of Days, Weeks, and Months Act (Buy Manitoba, Buy Canadian Day), followed by third readings of Bill 3, The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment and Planning Amendment Act, followed by Bill 4, The Planning Amendment Act.

The Acting Speaker (Carla Compton): So it has been announced that we will resume debate on the second reading of Bill 47 and concurrence and third reading—oh, followed by concurrence and third reading of Bill 3 and Bill 4.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 47—The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act and Amendments to The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act (Buy Manitoba, Buy Canadian Day)

The Acting Speaker (Carla Compton): So we will resume debate, proceeding with the member from Selkirk, with 14 minutes remaining.

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Again, it gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today and speak on Bill 47 again, which I referred to as Bill 227 lite.

* (15:20)

We had an opportunity yesterday to talk about this bill. We had some nice debate going back and forth, and I think we all agree on—in this Chamber that having a free trade bill—or what the NDP called a fair trade bill—for Manitoba is a wise and prudent thing to do, but we need to be very conscious of the fact that this bill has already been before the House under a different title.

Now, the free trade bill that was brought before from the member from Midland, which was Bill 227, had 90 per cent of the information that's contained in this bill. It had everything that the current government would like to see in the bill. They've watered down some of the things in their rendition of the bill, but essentially the bill was there and they could have been some very simple things brought forward for amendments to address what they felt was missing from the member from Midland's bill.

During the debate that we had, I rather enjoyed it. We talked about the importance of business in our province, the importance of the business owners and the communities that they support having flourishing

companies around and having the ability to be able to do business across Canada.

I spoke at length yesterday that in my private business that my son runs now, we go across Canada and we've made that decision a number of years ago after we found the market was difficult for us to get to, and everything was moving along for us just fine until we had different regulations that popped up and it made it very difficult for us to compete in the US market and different regulations into the US had it difficult.

So I'll just explain that a little bit. In order for us to sell a product into the US, we have to have certain requirements, and originally it used to be a part of the NAFTA agreement, the North American Free Trade Agreement. Then they called it—after a different negotiation, it became CUSMA, the Canadian-US-Mexican agreement, based on what was your product code and what was implemented.

And there's tariffs—have been around for millennia. So these tariffs could be applicable or not applicable, but depends on the products that you are shipping. Fortunately for us at the time, the products that we were shipping were non-tariff related so we could ship our products into the US.

It was a great opportunity for us to not only just ship our product but to be a part of the installation process, and we would go down there and supervise the installation. Our—we could not bring our crews from Canada into the US to actually physically work on the product. We would simply go there and supervise, and we would hire people from the local areas that we would work in and we would train them. We would bring them to be a part of our team and we would supervise the installation of these buildings, and we would leave.

And it worked great. We were very hands-on in relation to what the customer needed, but we helped the local economies move forward. That spurred business throughout the US and these different markets spoke to their member companies or sister companies, so to speak, and they would pass on our names when they needed products that we offered. And we would often be down there.

But as a little bit of the trade war happened between Donald Trump and China, the costs went up. Our cost to ship the product from the US into Canada, manufacture the product and turn around and ship it back into the US for installation or for the customer to install became cost prohibitive, so we started looking more at a local market.

And during the time that we switched, we had a tremendous number of sales into the US. As well, it was going to be a banner year for our company. We had a record number of sales early in the year. We were sitting around March and we already had the sales for the year—far exceeded the year before, and it actually exceeded our best year by 25 per cent. And we were looking forward to a banner year and spend a lot of money on equipment and technology to make that happen.

And then COVID hit. So COVID literally shut down our business and cancelled all of our sales into the US, which we had already brought the raw materials up and began manufacturing.

So after that happened, we were not able to physically go down there and supervise the installations of the building, and although the companies wanted our buildings, they said, without you putting them up, we're not confident or comfortable moving ahead with the orders, so those orders died.

So, unfortunately, we had a tremendous loss that year in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. To mitigate that from happening again, we made a decision in the company that we would focus on Canada sales.

Now we were a company that can do turnkey. You could ask us to come into your location here and we could supply whatever you need. You need excavation on the area; you need concrete work, you need permits pulled; you need underground utilities. You need the building erected, insulated; you needed services put in: HVAC, offices built—whatever you need, we could have provided because we had working relationships with many, many companies that we developed over 25 years.

But when we went—got called to go into other provinces, we went there all full of gusto saying, okay, yes, we can do that; we're going to base a quote on disability. And then when we receive the order, we found out very quickly that that's not the case. We cannot bring together crews that we had relationships with to cross into other jurisdictions without hiring people that were local.

That caused some serious pricing concerns for us. We didn't have that control and ability to control the cost or the relationships that we had with these suppliers, and it made it difficult to actually get companies to work for you that didn't know you.

And it also had an uncertainty on the level of quality that we were going to get out of these people that we didn't know their work. Just like, if you would

have somebody come and work on your residence, very important that you get a listing of their references that you can go and verify and check. We didn't have that necessarily on quick things.

So for us, it was a little scratching our heads. Why are we not able to do that? A Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian, we were always led to believe, but the actual fact is that everybody was treated differently in the trade barriers in what you do.

I've got friends of mine in many different industries, but in the refractory where they go and relined furnaces in mining and exploration, they are penalized for going into other jurisdictions by the provinces themselves.

So I just thought this would be a great opportunity for us to come together as Canadians and say, you know what? We want all Canadians to do better; we want all Canadians to have an opportunity, and we need to work together to make sure that we're stronger. And if we can open markets in Canada and not be dependent on the US, that money stays right here, that money stays right into the communities that do that work, and I think it would be a great opportunity.

And as the member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth) said yesterday, just even in safeties of vehicles, it is troublesome that vehicles are held to a different standard depending on which jurisdiction they come from. And you would think that a vehicle travelling down the road, especially something that could have 50 tons of weight on there, travelling at all hours of the day, would have the safety standard whether you're in Nova Scotia or whether you're in Victoria. It should have the same rigorous standards to make sure that everybody on the highway would be safe, but that's not the case.

And even if those standards are very similar, we don't recognize them. We don't say that if somebody got a safety certificate in Alberta, we'll recognize that here in Manitoba and you can get your insurance certificate—go ahead and get it done.

Many different things happen very jurisdictionally, and once we can break down some of those barriers, we're going to be able to hopefully attract people to come into this province and to live and work here.

* (15:30)

We maybe have the opportunity to attract different businesses to come into some of the communities that maybe are struggling to retain population in our province and to say instead of having these communities die that have an abundance of land and

resources available, maybe these companies will say there's an opportunity to go in small-town Manitoba and set up, and we've got a dedicated workforce that would love to come and work for us.

There's going to be some opportunities that are going to come for all industries, including the mining sector, the oil and gas, even manufacturing. We've got products that we manufacture here. I know that just in Woodlands, Manitoba, there's a company that makes a zero-turn lawn mower. And the majority of their products that they manufacture are destined for the US, but if we can eliminate a lot of the trade barriers and help these companies reach markets within Canada, they can flourish even more in Canada and have the opportunity to sell products across this great country that we have, because every province needs a way to cut grass, especially on commercial mowers.

And I take a look at just a little company that we have, that my son is running, that I'm so proud of. He goes out and he has an opportunity to do business in Canada. Quick turnaround. You can plan your schedule, your buildings to be installed and ship them directly from here. And let's say, for instance, he wants to go install buildings in Saskatchewan, Alberta, BC, and then on the way back he can hit some more on the way back. Makes it more cost effective for us to do short drives. Instead of traveling 22, 24, 26 hours to a location, we could be there in three or four or five hours just by hitting the outside of our provinces.

We have opportunities to really say that Canada matters to Manitoba, and Manitoba matters to the rest of Canada. When you have opportunities to vote on bills, we need to stop playing partisan politics. And when you take a look at Bill 227 that came before this House, it should've been a no-brainer. We should've said: yes, this is great. And if you have amendments, absolutely bring them forward.

That's what we're supposed to do here as legislators, to say that this is what we want to bring forward to represent the people who voted us here. And Bill 227 brought a lot of that information forward, and then it was on the NDP government's responsibility to say, we would like to make that bill better for the people that we represent by asking for some amendments to come in there. And I don't think that a reasonable amendment would've been scoffed at or refused. I think that it could've been very well debated in this House, and we could bring bills forward very quickly.

And then we have what we seen yesterday—was even before the bill hit the floor, it's like, we've got a

bill; we're going to introduce it; we want you to pass it, and we're going to stay here until the end of the day until it's done.

Well, that's the opposite of a democratic society. A democratic society says, hey, we've got a bill; take a look at it and let's see what we can do from that. We want your opinion on that.

But what we're getting is not opinions of value brought forward; it's opinions on how a party stands for party's sake. We need to govern here for the people in our province, not from the people behind the scenes pulling the strings of the puppets.

Thank you.

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): I thank my colleagues.

But it is interesting that members of the NDP don't stand up and speak on their own legislation and they do this time and time and time again. You know, they want it passed, but then they won't stand up and speak to why it should be passed, and they won't make the case to Manitobans, and they won't make the case to members of this House. And so here we are.

I mean, certainly, my colleagues in the PC caucus are taking the opportunity that we have to debate this legislation, but it's interesting that the NDP refuse to do so. So they have that opportunity; we'll see if they get up to speak to their own legislation, if they can make the case for it.

But I suspect perhaps the reason that they're not speaking to it is because this is really a half-hearted attempt at demonstrating some sort of pro-Canada—some newfound pro-Canada patriotism. And I suspect it's half-hearted, too, because in the last couple of weeks, this House has learned of multiple contracts that this government has signed with companies in—American companies in Donald Trump's America that they're giving to these firms untendered. And these are direct awards to Trump's firms.

And the government is not allowing Manitobans, not allowing Manitoba businesses to make the case for why they should be able to bid on these projects and to demonstrate what their capabilities are and to perhaps come in, provide a better service or a better product or to come in cheaper. And they don't even get that opportunity. These are direct awards, under-untendered contracts to American firms.

And so let me be very clear, Speaker. The problem here is that trade between Canada and the United States, you know, has carried on ever since the inception of this country and I suspect will, going

forward. However, no government outside of this NDP government has signed—has given untendered contracts to American firms in the middle of a trade war. That's the issue.

And so I think that it's incumbent on them to stand with Manitoba businesses and Canadian businesses and to strengthen our own economy and do what we can to try to alleviate the impact of the trade war and the tariffs on our own economy. But they're not doing that. And so we have these contracts that they've gone ahead and tendered.

So perhaps that's why they're so half-hearted about this legislation, perhaps why—that's why they're sitting on their hands and not participating in debate on Bill 47. And so, as I said, I will then take the opportunity to do so and to share a couple of thoughts.

I think it's disappointing that the government denied the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) the opportunity to see Bill 227 pass through all stages of this House and receive royal assent. Instead, they rejected that bill; they essentially voted it down and blocked its passage and introduced their own watered-down legislation which is what we are debating today on the floor of this Chamber.

And so Bill 47 is called The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act, and here we are with a watered-down version. And, again, I think it's unnatural for the NDP, who have for decades been protectionist in their ideology and in their perspective. We saw how that, in their previous dark, you know, failed 17 years, that they absolutely refused to sign on to the New West Trade Partnership with Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. They would not do that.

And that was a great scheme—is a great partnership that strengthens ties within western Canada between the four western provinces. But the NDP refused to do that. And so, again, we saw that refusal, and perhaps that's why there is some half-heartedness on the part of debating this legislation today.

And as far as the New West Trade Partnership goes, I thought it was interesting in today's question period that the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) suggested—actually said—didn't suggest but actually said that the former PC government didn't do anything when it came to strengthening internal trade within Canada and tearing down trade barriers, but she missed the fact, or seems to have conveniently forgotten, that it was, as I said, the previous PC government that signed on to the New West Trade

Partnership. And so it's a pretty glaring omission, but I just wanted to get that on the record.

* (15:40)

The New West Partnership Agreement is an accord between the governments of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba that creates Canada's largest barrier-free interprovincial market, and all Manitobans and all western Canadians benefit from that. Under the NWPTA, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba are the first jurisdictions in Canada to commit to full, mutual recognition, or reconciliation, of their rules affecting trade, investment or—and this is critical, because this is not in Bill 47—but labour mobility.

The NWPTA, the New West Partnership Trade Agreement between the governments of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, that agreement included not only trade and investment, but also labour mobility, which is a huge aspect of interprovincial trade barriers.

And so as to remove barriers to the free movement of goods, services, investment and people within and between these provinces, this agreement builds on the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement between British Columbia and Alberta, and the article goes on to list—it was signed in January 2015 and that British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba have also committed to avoid measures that operate to restrict or impair trade between or through their territories, or investment or labour mobility between them; treat businesses, investors and workers of the other two provinces at least as favourably as they treat their own, or those of another jurisdiction; mutually recognize or otherwise reconcile unnecessary differences in their standards and regulations; and be fully transparent and notify each other of any proposed measure that is covered by the agreement.

The objective is to ensure that new measures do not create new impediments. Having an enforceable dispute-resolution mechanism that is accessible by governments, businesses, workers and investors in order to ensure that each province lives up to its commitments.

So I think the New West Trade Partnership that the previous PC government signed on to with the western provinces within Canada provides a path forward. And we can take that framework and really should be applying it across our country.

You know, I—in 1891, and that's going back a ways. So in 1891—and in 1891, an individual by the

name of Godwin [*phonetic*] Smith published a book called *Canada and the Canadian Question*. And it was a controversial work, because within it he suggested that the lines, the congruent lines in North America, ran north and south, not east and west. And so he argued, controversially, that when it came—comes to geography and culture and economics, that there are more ties, north-south ties, than east-west ties. And the Fathers of Confederation and Canadians at that time obviously begged to differ, as I would and Canadians would today.

However, we have to, as Canadians—and it's taken us far too long to do that—you know, this country's 150–158 years old, I believe, this year. It's not accurate; let me correct that. It's been 158 years since the British North America Act was signed, since Confederation came into being. That's what Canada Day is really about. Canada has been around for much longer than that.

But, you know, we've had all this time to create east-west ties, as unnatural as it may seem, and that's the work to which those early Canadians committed themselves. And yet here we are today in 2025, dealing with the fallout of a tit-for-tat kind of trade war, and we have a beautiful opportunity here to unite our country by creating a level playing field when it comes to our economy and uniting us culturally, while respecting the different cultures that do exist, but uniting this country under one flag and one common culture and also, you know, strengthening our country economically as well.

So I think it would be a shame if we let this opportunity go to waste. And it's—as I said, it's been many, many, many years where we've—you know, Canadians have had the opportunity to do this. And it's just—to me, it just seems to defy reason and common sense that this hasn't happened already. And I think this kind of protectionist attitude is counterproductive.

And I understand that there are differences in provinces. You know, there are differences for a myriad of reasons. And so sometimes, industries and sectors—sometimes rules are created differently out of those differences, and sometimes that may make sense.

But I think, on the whole, when it comes to trade, when it comes to a lot of the regulations, we can look at, for instance—I mean, I can talk about trucking since I was a long-haul truck driver and spent some time doing that. But the differences between the rules—and it's interesting because most truck drivers don't—unless you're a regional truck driver—if you're a long-haul truck driver, you're crossing many jurisdictions, often

in one single day or within the week. And so as you're traveling through different provinces, there are different rules, you know. I mean, one of the most common ones is that some provinces require semi-trucks to be governed at 105 kilometres an hour and others don't.

So that creates real problems when you're driving down the highway and, you know, the weigh scale comes up and the lights are on and the weigh scale's open and you pull in, and you go over the scale and they call you in for an inspection, and so you park the truck, and they come out and do the inspection, and they write you up for a bunch of rules that apply in that province but not in your own home province. And so that can be incredibly frustrating.

So I think, when it comes to building this country and fulfilling the dream of those early Canadians, those explorers and builders and, you know, titans of industry, as well as those workers, right, the names who have long been forgotten; they've been lost to history. But their stories matter, too, and I think we can respect them and honour them by picking up that torch that they've left us and realizing what we've been bequeathed in this country.

All the opportunity and all the potential that exists within this country—the second largest tract of land in the world—41 million people—and we have a significant opportunity here to come together, like I said, under a—one flag and unite with one common culture and build one enduring economy that is resilient and can withstand the shocks of a senseless trade war. So I think it's important that we take the advantage, the opportunity to do that.

And Bill 47 is an incredibly watered down version; it doesn't go far enough. And I think it's disappointing that this House had a real opportunity, when it came to Bill 227, to pass that bill. The member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) did an exceptional job of putting that legislation forward. And, you know, unfortunately, the NDP government here is playing games, as they are wont to do, and so we have this watered down version.

They changed the title to fair trade from the free trade moniker of Bill 227. They watered down the bill by not allowing any services to be provided that are currently provided by Crown corporations, which means MBLL, MPI and Manitoba Hydro are being protected in this bill from any form of competition, and this is to the detriment of consumers being able to choose better, more competitive and more affordable products.

This bill also exempts all regulated professions from the reciprocity rules, which seems to make the bill somewhat ineffective and will not bring about true labour mobility within Canada and will not accomplish true free trade for our labour force.

* (15:50)

And, Speaker, just bear with me here. I'd have to find my—a good thing is I have some time, so that's okay.

On the issue of labour mobility, Barry [*phonetic*]-assistant professor Dan Shin, an assistant professor in the University of Manitoba's supply management department at the Asper School of Business said Manitoba could also benefit if manufactured goods from auto parts to minerals to Canada Goose parkas could move across provinces more readily.

Barry Prentice, director of Transport Institute of the Asper School of Business and a professor in supply chain management, said agriculture is one of the areas where change will be most difficult, in part because there's so much entrenched resistance to breaking down barriers that in theory exist to protect farmers.

Assistant professor Shin—this is Dan Shin, assistant professor at the University of Manitoba, said he thinks where Manitoba may have the most to gain—and this is the quote that I was going for—when it comes to labour and mobility. So assistant professor Shin said he thinks where Manitoba may have the most to gain is with people by removing barriers to what's called labour mobility, the ability for people to work the same job anywhere in Canada, which can be made more difficult by differing regulations between provinces and territories.

And this next quote, I think, is really important: While Manitoba generally has low wages compared to other provinces, it also has a low cost of living. And Shin said he thinks increased competition from removing trade barriers could help drive wages up, making the province even more attractive to outside workers.

Isn't that something we'd all like to see, is higher wages? And I was just thinking the other day, you know, 35 bucks an hour I think works out to just over \$70,000 annual income, and honestly, what family can afford the old Canadian dream of two vehicles and a home—

The Acting Speaker (Carla Compton): Excuse me, Member. Could you just clarify on those quotes if they're from a public document or from a private, please?

Mr. Guenter: Yes, Speaker, let me find it.

Yes, it is a public document. It's a CBC article, interprovincial trade barriers effects experts. That's what the link says.

The Acting Speaker (Carla Compton): Okay, thank you.

Mr. Guenter: So, anyway, higher wages. If that's—you know, if that's an outcome of free trade across Canada, who wouldn't want that? Who wouldn't be for that? Certainly would do a lot to ease the affordability crisis.

But as I was saying, \$35 an hour—unless my math is wrong—and the MLA for Portage la Prairie, you know, is \$72,080. So it's \$73,000 a year, so think about that. They'll—like, in today's economy, who can afford kind of that Canadian dream lifestyle of two cars and a home with children and all the rest of it as a family on \$70,000–\$73,000 a year?

And at the same time, who's making \$35 an hour in many of these, you know, working, blue-collar jobs in today's economy? So that brings wages—higher wages, I think, is an area of—that requires great improvement in this province and across this country.

So I think labour mobility is an important aspect, but unfortunately, while it was addressed in the member for Midland's (Mrs. Stone) Bill 227, that has been left out of Bill 47.

Bill 47 also has a huge loophole that the government can exempt entire—that allows the government to exempt entire industries, goods and services from the act through regulations without coming before the Legislative Assembly.

And this is one of the frustrations I have as a legislator, that we pass laws in this House that are some—you know, sometimes one page or one paragraph of a page; they're really small. Then they go off to the regulators, bureaucrats, people behind the scenes—again, well-intended, but they're not elected; they write the regulations. And by the time that thing comes in—has legal force, it can be dozens and dozens of pages.

And, you know, if you're a business person or a Canadian worker, that's the law. It's all the same. You've got to bear up under that burden, that regulatory burden, and it makes it very challenging.

And, unfortunately, they send—while they send us here to try to shape the outcome of laws and regulations—and we do our part, we—as politicians, we think we're passing legislation that is good and well-intended, and it may well be. But I just think there's a

huge concern when those laws are then sent to the regulators and they become something else, and none of us in this House have the opportunity to see what that looks like or perhaps have the opportunity to change that.

And so I think perhaps that's how we've gotten to a point here in this province where we have nearly a million regulations on the books, and our economy is struggling to move forward with these chains wrapped around our feet when it comes to business owners, and so—and businesses. So that's a concern. You know, it would be nice for legislators in this place to have more influence, at least to have the opportunity to have regulations come back. Perhaps there could be a committee that could be struck to—an all-party committee to look at regulations and have the power to amend them or strike them out.

But I think it's important. It's a missed opportunity when this—when legislators in this place don't have the opportunity to weigh in after the law has been passed and the regulations have been written and come into force.

Another difference between Bill 47 and Bill 227 is that it requires the Province to actively designate other jurisdictions as reciprocating instead of making the recognition automatic under the law established by the act itself.

It also tacks onto the bill a new buy Canadian—buy Manitoban, buy Canadian day on June 1, which I think is a—you know, could be strengthened. Rather than making it a one-day—sort of a one-day event, why not extend it for a week?

And as some of my colleagues have noted that June 1 this year falls on a Sunday, and so many businesses in rural Manitoba are closed on Sundays, so for those who may see the advertising or may be reminded through communications or messaging that—or the media, that it is buy Manitoban, buy Canadian day. And they may be inclined to want to go and do something, to make a purchase. You know, for those stores that are closed, they're not able to capitalize on that. And so I think extending it a week is something that would make sense.

But—so you take it all together and I think what we can say is that the fair trade bill falls far short. Instead of taking bold new steps, it really does choose to keep the status quo. It maintains regulatory barriers and hoops; it maintains protected sectors, and it really does nothing to address labour mobility, which is a

huge area, and it does nothing to help Manitoba consumers' choices.

We had an opportunity—we had a great opportunity to pass Bill 227, put forward by the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone), The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act, and the NDP instead chose to defeat that. And I think it's ironic that they voted down that bill; they voted down The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act at the same time that they're, again, giving these untendered contracts and direct awards to non-Manitoban, non-Canadian businesses. So that's deeply unfortunate.

* (16:00)

So I think that the NDP government has demonstrated that, in the final analysis, they're not serious about free trade within Canada. They weren't in their last time in government when they balked at signing the new west trade partnership. They're really doing the same thing again. They're putting their partisan politics and their ties to special interest groups ahead of the economy and I think missing this huge opportunity to unite under one flag and to take this opportunity to strengthen our country and our economy.

And so, with those few comments, Speaker, I look forward to hearing what other colleagues have to say.

Thank you.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I'm happy to rise here today and put some words on the record and put some thoughts into this discussion on tariff threats to Canada including more specifically Bill 47, the—what's this called—the fair trade in Canada, trade mutual recognition act, amendments to The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act that the NDP are now introducing—

An Honourable Member: Stealing.

Ms. Byram: Of course, it's—well, they are stealing this, let's be honest. It was first introduced by my colleague here from Midland; the MLA for Midland introduced it as Bill 227. And we see this being another example of the NDP government hijacking bills that have been introduced previously in the House here.

You know, let's talk about a couple of those that this government have done that to. The—we saw that from the member from Tyndall Park with the stealing of Keira's Law. The NDP took that and made that their own. The member from Brandon West, we saw this also with a bill that a colleague, member from Roblin introduced, with health care in the breast screening

bill that they—that my colleague brought forward. They took that bill and used it, called it their own.

However, what they didn't include is the accountability. There was no accountability put into the bill that they took from us and called their own.

The Acting Speaker (Carla Compton): Order. Order.

I'd just ask that people keep their side conversations down. I'm having a hard time hearing the member speak, please. Thank you.

Ms. Byram: Getting back to, you know, we'll talk a little bit about—well, maybe talk a lot about the uncertainty of tariffs that can amount to severely attack—have a severe attack on the Canadian economy and have a devastating impact here in our province of Manitoba. And, of course, all of this is in relation to what's going on down south of the border and how it's going to impact all of us here.

On this side of the House, we care about the Canadian economy, as I'm sure many of us do. And again, I'm going to keep continuing highlighting the fact that the member from Midland worked hard on Bill 227, and we supported it all here on the—on this side of the House. We supported our colleague in her efforts on that bill.

And the NDP had every opportunity to pass that into legislation but they denied to do so. And, again, now they come forward wanting to make this their own bill. And, of course, it's maybe weeks late, even maybe months late. They had lots of time to make their own introduction and create their own bill.

But, clearly, this wasn't a priority for the NDP. It wasn't a concern for the NDP when this first came out, when they started talking about tariffs down south. The NDP, it's almost like they ignored that this might impact us here in Manitoba. But this is clearly a priority and a concern for many, many Manitobans.

We're already having, you know, a hard time here with affordability in Manitoba. Families are having a hard time—I guess, even putting food on the tables or trying to determine if it's going to be rent they pay or buy groceries some months.

And for some families, as I said, they're struggling under the high cost of living here as this Premier (Mr. Kinew) and this NDP do nothing about affordability crisis. It's become worse for families across the province since this government took over almost a year and a half ago.

Manitoba families know this tariff situation will be difficult. Making matters worse, Manitobans know little about how badly they could be affected because this NDP government—again, that they stalled to share details or analysis of any potential impact of tariffs on consumers and businesses here in Manitoba.

And, again, of course, until the member from Midland introduced Bill 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act, it was only then that the NDP decided that they would act and thought, oh, maybe we should come up with something, but no, let's just take what the member on the PC side of the House, on the opposition—let's see what they did and we'll work with that; we'll just hijack that one.

And so my question to the government would be: Why did they take so long in taking action and doing some of their own work, some of their own stakeholder outreach and determine what's best for Manitoba?

This inaction left Manitobans with the message that Manitoba NDP is closed for business and to investment. Under this Premier, investment—and we've heard this—from outside our province is discouraged, while progress is reversed and it becomes more difficult for businesses, large and small, to survive in this province.

Again, Bill 27–227, member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) introduced, it was a great example. It was a great example of free trade, but the NDP want to take the credit and here we are debating that bill that, of course, could have been passed and sorted through and—weeks ago, if not months ago. And they could have voted for it but they chose not to.

The uncertainty over tariffs comes as our economy—like I've mentioned—in Manitoba's already severely weakened by the NDP Premier's anti-business attitude and this government's increasing and stiffer regulatory barriers that have driven away private investment. Not surprisingly, as a result, Manitoba was given a failing grade in the latest red tape report by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

Tariffs would be bad, honourable Speaker. We've—under this NDP, regulatory costs in Manitoba increased to \$1.57 billion last year, while two in three businesses—business owners surveyed by the CFIB said they would not advise the next generation to run a business in our province due to the current regulatory burdens.

But have we seen anything new come from the government on what they're doing to change that and

to draw business to our province? We've seen nothing, honourable deputy Speaker.

As well, Manitoba ranks second last among provinces in Canada for planned energy, mining and forestry investments. Honourable Speaker, this is, again, a serious situation for retail and, again, like I've mentioned, overall affordability, employment and a range of other economic issues in Manitoba.

The Speaker in the Chair

Interprovincial trade barriers cost Manitobans, cost not only—all Canadians—money and jobs. Let's look at Bill 227. It was modelled after legislation in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia. This would ensure goods and services from reciprocating provinces are treated as if they were locally manufactured or produced, exempting them from any additional fees or testing requirements for use in Manitoba.

* (16:10)

That is eliminating so much, Honourable Speaker.

Bill 227 would also require that skilled professionals who are qualified or certified in reciprocating provinces be recognized to work in Manitoba within 20 days, provided that they are in good standing and carry adequate insurance in their own jurisdiction. This is a huge barrier, and we hear this all the time here in the province of Manitoba, impacting our labour force here. We've got significant—well, there's construction work. This limits some of those companies; we see this in larger centres, urban centres, rural centres, looking for employer—employees. And this limits that pool for employers to pull from.

According to federal estimates, eliminating provincial trade barriers could boost the Canadian economy up to \$200 billion and lower post—and lower process by as much as 15 per cent.

And, you know, we heard yesterday and again today from my colleagues, the impact the tariffs have on industries like the steel and the private business, the agriculture community who are hit extra, those—the canola farmers. And we heard from the member from La Vérendrye yesterday about the logging industry and the impact this is having on those that are involved in business in that sector.

I believe, even—I remember reading an article, I think it was just this week, where puzzles—jigsaw puzzles—are being hit by tariffs. And it's things like this that we maybe don't even think about or realize, but it hits everybody in different ways, I guess.

Here's just a few other interprovincial trade barriers that are costing Canadians more money. Buying special cheese or a case of beer from another province isn't necessarily as simple as it sounds, Honourable Speaker. Depending on where you live in Canada, rules, standards or regulations may exist that mean the product could cost you more money or be subject to certain limits.

Car seats are another example. Because regulations and rules vary by jurisdiction, car seats must meet the safety standards of the province or territory they're sold in. Dairy and meat are another thing that's—or, that can be hit by interprovincial trade barriers, making it more expensive for consumers, inflating grocery bills for instance, and transporting food.

Transportation, trucking companies from—you know, transporting food from one jurisdiction to another: it must be both inspected by the federal government and the province or territory where the food business is based.

Senior policy analysts for the 'interprovincial' affairs at Canadian Federation of Independent Business made those comments. Federal inspections are not required if a product remains within its own jurisdiction.

Health and safety rules connected to the groceries we end up buying; health and safety regulations for agriculture and livestock differ among provinces, Honourable Speaker. And I'm just going to read a quote: Farm products are going to have to submit to all kinds of health and safety regulations. Where exactly are the chickens on the farm and how much space do they have between other chickens? And if you're going to put a label on it, the labelling could be different, not just linguistically, but that it's—is deemed to be free range could differ from province to province. So there, again, labelling can be a barrier between food and, again, maybe even transportation between provinces to province.

Alcohol: many alcohol producers and wineries require new approvals and licensing to operate in various jurisdictions, Honourable Speaker. Most provinces have rules preventing non-local wine from being shipped directly to consumers. For example, Ontario looks to bring in BC wine to have it—to order it through Ontario's liquor board, which increases the price by 72 per cent.

It's a different situation here in Manitoba, we—where we can get Canadian wine, craft beer and spirits from any province shipped directly to you. If we were

to allow it in each province, you're welcome into this province, no different than anybody else, but you have to operate within the barriers that we've created here.

Professional licensing requirements—and I've maybe just touched on this briefly, but that's significant, and we see that when we are going through—you know, looking for employees to put on the front lines of many different industries, but let's maybe talk about health care. We can see some of those barriers here where that impacts those professionals, and doctors and lawyers as well may need licenses to work in other provinces. And this creates big hurdles for both workers and clients that might be seeking their services or organizations that are seeking employees.

French language laws are another example. Some companies like good night—GoodLife Fitness club and restaurant chains—Swiss Chalet, for example—don't exist in Quebec, partly because of the added complexity and cost of complying with French language laws.

Legal working age, there's another example. Different labour laws could affect pay, and—as well as the ability for businesses to offer employment to residents. In Quebec, people as young as 14 can work as performers or babysitters, or with a parent's permission there's exceptions for those under that age. In Saskatchewan the minimum age is 16, and again, with exceptions for those aged under 14.

Sales taxes—with differing sales taxes, businesses must program their cash registers and adjust their websites to the amounts, depending on where they are located in the country.

Trucking regulations, and I've touched on that just briefly. But again, varying rules for trucking range, from vehicle sizes and weights to permits, safety standards and licensing, which stall the movement and goods and services across the country.

And, you know, that was taken from a report, and the report also suggests that internal trade barriers add costs, obviously, to the goods and services that are being shipped. And, again, that's creating great, great inefficiencies within business. And even with these tariffs under this NDP government, Honourable Speaker, Manitoba has dropped like a stone to the bottom of Canada's national business rankings. At the same time, unemployment in our province has risen dramatically from 4 per cent to 6.2 per cent in 2024. It's a 50–55 per cent hike in joblessness that amounts to more than 15,000 additional Manitobans out of work.

And this Bill 47 leaves a lot of questions unanswered, Honourable Speaker. I maybe just make reference to MCC. So this is one of the stakeholders here in Manitoba; this is coming from the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce. The Manitoba Chamber of Commerce has joined our provincial counterparts in urging the premiers of each province and territory to work together to imminently improve interprovincial trade.

* (16:20)

In an open letter that was sent Friday, January 31, chamber leaders from each province, including MCC and CEO Chuck Davidson, collectively called for immediate, comprehensive action to dismantle the internal barriers to trade within our country, in order to combat the potential disastrous effects of huge tariffs on Canadian goods imported by the US, and to spur economic growth within Canada.

At a time of geopolitical uncertainty, rising protectionism and looming tariff threats, addressing internal trade barriers is no longer an option; it's a necessity. These barriers cost businesses and consumers billions and billions of dollars annually, driving up expenses and limiting growth, the letter warned. It concluded with recommended actions for the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) consideration in a number of policy, industry and regulatory areas.

And, again, Honourable Speaker, that was a letter that was sent on January 31 of this year, which to me, illustrates a significant amount of time, or a certain amount of time where this NDP government could have taken steps forward, could've initiated bringing forward legislation at that time, but they chose not to. I guess it seems that it wasn't their priority.

However, on this side of the House, we understand business and we understand how important the economy is to us here, not just in Canada, but in Manitoba. And that's why our member from Midland brought forward again Bill 227. So her work started obviously much before the NDP's work started.

And, you know, a question that lies within this bill that was introduced is why, in the—why is the minister giving the government the power to exempt other goods and services through regulation? We are all one country, and it's just concerning that—why have regulated professions been—be included?

And, again, I think I mentioned that we talked about the health-care professionals and lawyers that face some of these barriers when they're trying to relocate for employment, coming to Manitoba.

You know, like I had mentioned, we understand the economy here in Manitoba and the importance it is, and it is a priority for us here, in this side of the House. And instead of leading on economic issues and matters, this Premier (Mr. Kinew) has hiked up the provincial deficit to \$1.3 billion this year while the NDP raises taxes higher on all Manitobans.

The NDP has also halted the phase-out of education property tax, hurting especially cottage owners and 'commercial'—commercial property owners the most. And those questions have been raised here in the House in the last couple of weeks, where we are seeing from taxpayers the issues that they're facing with their tax bills where, you know, they are not getting that rebate back. And these are going to families who may not have that extra cash just sitting on the table right now to incur those costs that they thought weren't going to be there this year.

So this is hurting in many ways, and this government has removed a tax credit on the basic personal amount, bringing—effectively bringing in an income tax increase. Moreover, the government's move to end its fuel tax holiday is hurting Manitobans. We've seen the cost of fuel go up again and again. And, you know, with summer months approaching, this is going to be harder and harder for families to maybe take that family vacation and stay within even Canada. But to travel is going to be more costly, just based on the price of gas that's increased.

While Manitobans are waiting to—you know, the fluctuation of the tariffs, on-/off-again, is concerning, and us people here in Manitoba, residents in Manitoba, are also seeing the effect of rising Manitoba hydro rates. We see those on an increase as well. And that's another, you know, Premier's broken promise that he campaigned on.

And despite what the Premier has said, his government has not proposed a rate freeze in a submission to the Public Utilities Board for approval yet this year. And despite all this, advertisements are still happening.

Honourable Speaker, you know, the fair trade in Canada, this Bill 47, it leaves, like I said, a lot of questions. Why wasn't it introduced much, much earlier than now? And we did have an introduction of Bill 227, and I can't say that enough times because—one more time, I'm going to say it: the—our colleague, the member from Midland, introduced Bill 227, April what was that—April.

Bill 227 was introduced in April of this year, and this NDP government could've looked at that, agreed

with it, passed it at that time, and we wouldn't have had to rush this bill through. They want to rush this through and take it on—hijack the member from Midland's bill and make it their own.

And here's a quote: Like this Premier, the fair trade act is superficial and, instead of taking bold new steps, it chooses to keep the status quo with regulatory hoops and protected sectors. It does little to help our labour mobility, said the MLA. The NDP government had a great example of a free trade through 'reciprocity'—sorry—bill in our Bill 227, which they chose to defeat in the House and resurrect in their own half-measured way. And that was a direct quote from the critic of Finance, the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone). And it's so true.

They chose to defeat in this House and resurrect in their own half-measured way. That's exactly what this NDP has done, and they want things done in a hurry. This is typical. We've seen this with a number of their other legislation pieces that they tried to ram through. We've—this is sort of the norm behaviour, I guess, so to speak.

Honourable Speaker, I will just close with a few extra remarks here. This impacts many, many Manitobans and Canadians here. And we do not want Manitobans to wait for what little improvement this fair trade act might provide in reducing trade barriers between provinces. We support passing this bill and to allow—so that consumers can start recognizing buy Manitoban and buy Canadian. Just struggle with the fact that this NDP government couldn't have done this a lot sooner and passed Bill 227 and supported our legislation that we had.

It's difficult enough for the—for Manitoba economically even without these new tariffs, Honourable Speaker. We need a government here that's prepared to stand up for Manitobans in the face of this threat and implement change before the last minute.

* (16:30)

This legislation was introduced at the very last minute when they had every opportunity to—they had weeks. They had weeks. I believe it was April 17 that legislation was brought to this House with the introduction of Bill 227, and they denied passing that bill.

So today, we are standing here debating this legislation at the very last minute, and I think Manitobans deserve better. I think they need to know that this was presented and this NDP government delayed what was already introduced.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Are there no other speakers?

Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I see that we almost did get to the question. We're going to get to the question.

Fact is, Honourable Speaker, I gave the opportunity over to the government benches, the Kinew government, the NDP, to get up out of their seats and put a few words on the record on Bill 47, which was brought forward to—by the MLA for St. Vital, the minister.

We know that this is something that, as my colleagues have shared on our side of the Chamber on how important of a bill this is, and if it wasn't for their selfishness on the NDP side, this would've been passed a few weeks ago and we would've been well under way on making sure that these things are already implemented.

But I think part of the reason, Honourable Speaker, why the NDP are not putting any more speakers up on Bill 47—and matter of fact, even the minister, who brought forward this bill, you know, I think he left quite a bit of time on the record, so he really didn't have a whole lot of good things to say about his own government's record.

And I think, matter of fact, the minister was embarrassed; embarrassed that it took the opposition—Progressive Conservatives, took—it was upon—it was us that was—that brought forward Bill 227, the MLA for Midland, who brought forward Bill 227, and I think she deserves a round of applause.

And I think what's—what is really shining a light on this debate on Bill 47, The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act and Amendments to The Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act (Buy Manitoba, Buy Canadian Day), brought forward by the MLA for St. Vital, the minister, is a fact that, again, they're embarrassed.

They're embarrassed that the opposition had brought forward this idea. They're embarrassed to even allow any of their, either Cabinet ministers or their MLAs that fly the NDP flag, to even get a chance to get up. I'm not quite sure why. I think we're all elected to talk about legislation and to debate legislation that's brought forward, even legislation that is brought up at the, you know, eleventh hour, Honourable Speaker.

I know that just recently, I mean, the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) went out yesterday

and tried to put a few words on the record to the media, saying that this bill's introduction was affected by the government's busy legislative agenda. Well, it's interesting, Honourable Speaker, that within the last couple days here, the minister decides to bring forward Bill 47, and, again, it's a sad attempt to show that they really do care.

But I think, at the end of the day, Honourable Speaker, because there's nothing new with you know who: you know, the Kinew government, the MLA for Fort Rouge.

We've seen this in other departments throughout the NDP's time in government, that they've taken other ideas. They decided to then talk out or speak out or just totally turn a deaf ear to really good legislation coming forward. We've seen that with the member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux)—had brought forward some legislation, a couple different bills, Honourable Speaker. And then we see, of course, Bill 227 brought forward by our—in a—during private members' time, to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers by the MLA for Midland.

And so the NDP thought, you know what, these are such good ideas that we're just going to speak it out. This is the NDP's mentality. They can't get over their ideology; it's in their orange Kool-Aid, Honourable Speaker. I think this—it's in their DNA to basically take someone else's ideas and then wait a couple weeks and then try to repackage it and sell it to Manitobans as if it's their own idea.

We've seen this on more than one occasion. I have the job now of being the Education and Early Childhood Learning advocate for the province and, holding the previous role as Education and Early Childhood Learning minister in the past when we were still in government, brought forward many great ideas and ways that we can continue to move and strengthen education forward.

And I've seen the now Education, Early Childhood Learning Minister continue with a lot of those ideas. It's just unfortunate that the Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister, along with the Finance Minister and their Premier (Mr. Kinew), much like Bill 47 that we're debating this afternoon, they decided to go sort of off track and they went and raised property taxes on homeowners after promising to not do so.

But on Bill 47, when we talk about that fair trade in Canada, again, President Trump was first elected in the fall, and then he was getting sworn in in the early new—in early new year of 2025. And so we all saw this

coming because the President—or, the President-elect when he was President-elect—talked about bringing forward tariffs.

And, unfortunately, this minister, who was minister at the time as well, decided to sit on his hands and not do anything about it, and basically sat back and waited for his Premier (Mr. Kinev) to give him some form of direction, even though this minister—and I know that the MLA for St. Vital is smart enough to come up with these ideas on his own—but, unfortunately, I think what's happening in the NDP caucus—and we've heard evidence of that from the MLA for Fort Garry—is that there is some bullying going on behind the scenes in the NDP caucus.

So I think that the MLA for St. Vital possibly did have a couple of these ideas to—on how to battle the Trump tariffs and that, but I think that he was talked down to by the Premier and told to just settle down, settle down.

And, then, of course, when—once the MLA for Midland brought forward Bill 227, which was, again, a great idea moving forward on how to encourage free trade across this great country of ours, the Premier can't handle it when a woman has a really good idea. And so he then told his caucus to then speak it out, and then as they spoke it out, they waited a week—or two—and, matter of fact, just the last few days—to then bring forward Bill 47.

* (16:40)

You know, this is—again, Honourable Speaker, we've had this conversation before on the fact that this Premier can't help himself and he likes to pat himself on the back. We know that they changed—the NDP changed the title to fair trade from the free trade moniker of Bill 227. We know that the NDP have even watered the bill down by not allowing any services to be provided that are currently provided by Crown corporations, which means MBLL, MPI and Manitoba Hydro are being protected in this bill from any form of competition. And this is to the detriment of consumers being able to choose better, more competitive and more affordable products.

I know that there's some members—I can see it, Honourable Speaker—there's some members on the NDP bench, some who are Cabinet ministers and some that are not Cabinet ministers yet, that are vibrating and they want to get up and actually put a few words on the record. And I know that they're being—

An Honourable Member: Muzzled.

Mr. Ewasko: —muzzled; they're being whipped to the point of toe the party line. The Premier told them, thou shall not get up and speak to Bill 47; and they're not.

Honourable Speaker, the seat belt light has been on for a few days now. We've put up, I don't know, six or seven speakers because we have a lot of good things to say about Canada, about our great province of ours. I know right now that the minister for mental health and addictions and homelessness wants to get up. Matter of fact, she's the MLA for Point Douglas. She's the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness and also the Minister responsible for Mental Health (Ms. Smith).

Well, we know that the—that minister doesn't want to get up and speak to Bill 47 because she's having enough—a hard enough time dealing with her own portfolio because we know the homelessness crisis that is happening right here in our province.

So when we start talking about free trade, we start talking about people moving in, whether it's labour mobility, you know, or people. It's coming close to summertime here in Manitoba, so we see many people migrating to Manitoba from—potentially from western provinces and some from our eastern provinces; they come to Manitoba. And some of them are choosing to camp out.

And I'm hoping that in—because of this Premier's inaction on so many files with our unemployment rate skyrocketing and all those types of things, maybe the Minister for Housing, Addictions and Homelessness will actually turn to her Premier and maybe actually get a chance to have a conversation with him and direct him to actually make some—make good on some of the promises that he made of over the \$3-billion worth of promises in the last election.

So why is this coming at the eleventh hour, Honourable Speaker? Well, we already talked about the fact that President Trump was elected. He told everybody that he was going to be bringing in 25 per cent tariffs. And this Premier thought that, you know what, this is—this—that the President must be joking. And the Premier thought—I think he thought—that his buddy, Justin Trudeau at the time, and his boss, Jagmeet Singh, were going to fix all this dealings with the President of the United States.

And so our Premier, as we've heard many petitions in this Chamber, not really acting on behalf of Manitoba but actually acting on behalf of himself, thinking about his federal bid for leadership in the

next short time here, because we do see that's the pattern of this Premier.

Again, this bill exempts all regulated professions from the reciprocity rules, which seems to make the bill somewhat ineffective, and will not bring about the true labour mobility within Canada, and it will not accomplish true free trade for our labour force.

Now, I know that the minister who championed this bill—now the member for Dauphin (Mr. Kostyshyn) seems to want to stand up and put a few words on the record, but we'll see if he actually has the courage to actually stand up and put a few words on the record considering agriculture is one of our main economic drivers in this great province of ours. But he would rather just sit on his hands and watch the clock and try to hope that that time goes by so that he can continue with another full paycheque as a minister without actually doing anything in this Chamber, Honourable Speaker.

So again, the member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses) brought forward this bill. Well, it just shows—it shines a bright light—an LED light—a spotlight, Honourable Speaker—on the dysfunction on the NDP government side of the House. Specifically, you know, when we talk about the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) when she said just yesterday to the media that, and I quote: We've had many, many bills that have been in the queue, in the works. We get to things as fast as we can alongside our team. It was as fast as we could. End quote.

Honourable Speaker, for goodness sakes, when we're hearing these words come out of the Government House Leader and then we see the actual action of her front bench or even some of the other ministers—and I know that some of the MLAs who are—who do not have portfolios just yet on the NDP side—I know they're just sitting there; they're just shaking their heads that they're just going to—they're hoping, much like the Minister for Agriculture, the MLA for Dauphin, they're watching that clock and they're saying, you know what, we're really hoping that some of this time passes and the failings of some of the ministers in their departments will continue to be shone on by us as critics or advocates holding the NDP Kinew government to account.

And then they're hoping that their own ministers will start to falter, and they're actually hoping that the long-awaited Cabinet shuffle on the NDP side will happen, and they're all, you know, hoping and dreaming and crossing their fingers and toes that they will

be considered by the Premier to take on one of the portfolios.

Now, we were talking earlier about labour mobility within Canada. And we're also talking about how the fact that this bill has a huge loophole that the government can exempt entire industries, goods and services from the act through regulations without coming before the Legislative Assembly.

Honourable Speaker, I don't know. I don't know why, but I can hardly wait 'til after my time is done to be able to listen to the member for Point Douglas (Ms. Smith)—the minister—because I know that she's really wanting to get up and put a few words on the record. And you know what, it's been some time since I've had the pleasure to sit back and to listen to that minister's wisdom on so many different topics that I didn't even know she was an expert on. But I think in her own department she's got enough issues to be dealing with without getting up and speaking to Bill 47.

Honourable Speaker, it is interesting, though, when you—if you take a look and read into Hansard—take a good read because, I mean, I know that the hundreds of Manitobans that are watching here this afternoon the debate on Bill 47 are intrigued with the fact that the NDP government—the Kinew government—their ministers, their MLAs—won't even stand up and put any words on the record in support of this bill.

So what does that tell you? So, No. 1, they're embarrassed. I've said that before. They're embarrassed that their minister took so long to come up with this bill. But I think even more so, they're even more embarrassed with the fact that their Government House Leader didn't actually bring this forward because, as she made a comment, they were just too busy.

* (16:50)

Matter of fact, I think she said—made a comment—I don't know if it was last week or earlier on the weekend or something, some kind of interview where she was being a—she was being critiqued for her inaction within her own department, that she said that she could chew gum and walk at the same time or bake a cake or walk up and down the—you know, do her TikTok videos or whatever else that she's doing.

But the fact is that this was poor House management. Terrible management. The fact is that, really, if the NDP would've—and, you know what, again, Honourable Speaker, I appreciate getting up and being able to put some words on the record because the constituents of the Lac du Bonnet constituency had

elected me to come forward and put some words on the record on very important topics that are affecting them and especially—*[interjection]* Thank you. Thank you. Especially when we start talking about fair trade in Canada.

And, you know, it's interesting that some of the members here on the NDP bench—again, I think the seat belt light is on. And I've used that terminology before. I know that many of the ministers on that side spend more time travelling and putting in expense claims than actually doing the work that they need to be doing to service Manitobans right here in this great country. So they very 'wuch' know what I mean by when the seat belt light is on.

So also, this bill, it requires the Province to actively designate other jurisdictions as reciprocating instead of making the recognition automatic under the law established by the act itself. It tacks onto the bill a new buy Manitoban and buy Canadian day on June 1. So, what's interesting, Honourable Speaker—and I know I only have a short amount of time left on the clock to put more words on the record in regard to Bill 47, which, of course, we're in support of because we're in support of free trade in Canada. And this topic of buy Manitoba, buy Canadian is absolutely the way it should be. Not—but we know that not absolutely everything, you know, can be manufactured in Canada or in Manitoba.

And that being said, I don't know. The ministers—and, I mean, we—you know, it was a dark day for the NDP today and we know that the Minister for—of Innovation and New Technology, the MLA for River Heights, there's some interesting stuff going on there, Honourable Speaker. But I think we're going to wait and we're going to see what the Ethics Commissioner has to say on that.

But the fact is that days into the tariffs, already when President Trump had stated that he was going to put the 25 per cent—and there was no more joking around—we know that the Premier (Mr. Kinew), the MLA for Fort Rouge, who was waiting for his buddies Trudeau and Singh to bail him out on some of this stuff, and when they weren't coming to the table to help against the US tariffs topic from the President, we know that days after that was announced, this minister that—this pre-mentioned minister of innovation and technology had actually sent out contracts—contracts—to the US Trump economy—their friends.

So I find it hypocritical when anybody on the NDP bench starts to say anything about buy Manitoba and buy Canadian and then they go out and they try to

pat themselves on the back and they wrap themselves in the Canadian flag. Meanwhile, not that long ago, many members on that side of the House, on the NDP Kinew side, were busy tearing down the Canada flag, Honourable Speaker.

It's actually going to be very interesting that, you know, that—matter of fact, today we talk about that King Charles is in Canada. That's great. Brought forward the—read the Throne Speech from the federal government. And we're going to see what the Premier has to say back here in Manitoba, Honourable Speaker.

So back on the buy Manitoba, buy Canadian day on June 1. So, much like this Premier, his minister's fair trade bill is superficial. Instead of taking bold new steps, it chooses to keep the status quo, Honourable Speaker. It maintains regulatory barriers and hoops; it maintains protected sectors; and it does little to help the labour mobility or Manitoba consumers' choices.

The government had a great example of free trade through reciprocity bill in the PC Finance critic who just so happens to be the MLA for Midland: her Bill 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act, that the NDP chose to defeat in the Assembly so that they could bring forward their own watered-down version for purely partisan political posturing and grandstanding by you know who, Honourable Speaker. Yes, the Premier and the Kinew government. Why? Because that's their MO. That's what he wants to do.

He's got no plans; he's got no ideas of his own. He had seven and a half years in opposition; now another year and a half; so he's had a total of nine years to come up with some kind of plans. No plans, nada, zilch. To take a, you know, a quote from a former NDP MLA and Cabinet minister from Dawson Trail, Premier, the MLA for Fort Rouge, the leader of the Kinew government, has nada. I quote: nada, zilch, nothing, end quote from that former NDP MLA for Dawson Trail, minister. He had really not a whole lot of good to say about the star candidate in the Selinger government, and we know how that ended. That ended with the former premier, Greg Selinger, with a knife in his back.

And I think that's why a lot of these members of the NDP so-called team are worried to get up and to cross their boss, the MLA for Fort Rouge, because they know of the retribution and they've seen it happen. And much like bullies in a schoolyard, either you stand up to bullies or you hang out with them so that they don't attack you, and I think that's what I'm seeing on the NDP side: not enough people willing to

stand up to their Premier (Mr. Kinew), because they saw what happens when you stand up to the Premier: you get kicked out like the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv).

So we are in full support of fair trade in Canada, Bill 47, and we look forward to it passing through—what is this, second reading? And again, part of the democracy here in Manitoba, you know, you bring forward a bill and first reading, second reading and then there's potential amendments and that, that come to committee and that.

And so with those few words on the record, Honourable Speaker, I'm going to turn it over to someone else. But I guess there's a few more things that I have to say. I'm hearing from members from the NDP; they want to hear more. So I'm going to put some more things on the record.

I did want to quote, and I know that the member for Agassiz (Ms. Byram) did put it on the record a

little bit of a quote in regards to the MLA for Midland, and I mentioned a little bit of it already. But I would like to fully just quote the MLA for Midland when she brought forward Bill 227.

So, I quote—she says, and I quote: Like this Premier, the fair trade act is superficial, and instead of taking bold new steps, it chooses to keep the status quo with regulatory hoops and protected sectors. It does little to help labour mobility, end quote, said the MLA for Midland. And then she continues. I quote: The NDP government had a great example of free trade through reciprocity bill in our Bill 227, which they choose to defeat—

The Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is next before the House, the honourable member will have one minute remaining.

The time being 5 o'clock, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 27, 2025

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The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings
are also available on the Internet at the following address:

<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>