



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



Vol. LXXIX No. 62A - 10 a.m., Thursday, May 29, 2025

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 29, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

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

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

House Business

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Honourable Speaker, could you please canvass the House to see if there is leave to 'expediate' consideration of a number of bills as follows:

(1) At the beginning of orders of the day, government business, today, the following bills will be called for second reading or resuming debate on second reading, with no debate and the question put immediately after the motion is moved, if applicable: bills 209, 210, 218, 300, 221, 222, 233 and 47.

Once the questions on those bill motions have been resolved—bills 208, 209, 210, 218, 234, 300, 221, 222, 226, 233 and Bill 47—will be referred to a standing committee tonight, Thursday, May 29 at 6 p.m. or one hour after the House rises.

Once reported back to the House, these bills will not be eligible for report stage consideration but will be eligible for concurrence and third reading during

orders of the day, government business on Monday, June 2, despite not being listed on the Order Paper.

(3) At the beginning of orders of the day, government business, on Monday, June 2, the following bills will be called for concurrence and third reading, with no debate and the question put immediately after the motion is moved: bills 208, 209, 210, 218, 234, 300, 221, 222, 233, 226.

(4) Once the questions on the—those bill motions have been resolved, the House will then consider concurrence and third reading of all specified bills, as well as Bill 47, with the bills to be considered in order—in an order decided by the Opposition House Leader. Debate provisions in rule 2(16) shall apply.

(5) In the event of a discrepancy between the provisions of this leave request and rules, orders and forms of proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the provisions of this leave request are to apply.

(6) The provisions of this leave request can only be amended by unanimous consent of the House.

Is there leave?

The Speaker: Is there leave for the House to 'expediate' consideration of bills as described by the Official Opposition House Leader?

Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no.

Leave has been denied.

* * *

Mr. Johnson: Could you please call for second reading debate Bill 236, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Stalking-Related Measures).

The Speaker: It has been announced that we will now proceed to second reading debate of Bill 236, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Stalking-Related Measures).

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**Bill 236—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act
(Stalking-Related Measures)**

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): I move, seconded by the member from Agassiz, that Bill 236, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Stalking-Related Measures), now be read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Perchotte: It gives me great pleasure to rise to Bill 236 and discuss not only the bill, give a bit of background on how it came to be, but more importantly, what it aims to do.

I've been elected for nearly 20 months now, and this bill was front of mind prior to being elected. This actual conception of the bill started in 2017. It started when I actually witnessed first-hand the devastation that stalking has. And this bill, even though it's called Bill 236, to me, is really Michelle's law.

I had a dear friend—her name was Michelle—and she was the victim of intimate partner violence. Her common-law husband had aggressively assaulted her and he was subsequently arrested.

After his arrest, she was tormented. She lived in fear. She had received a restraining order—a protection order keeping him lawfully to be at a distance to keep her safe. But this perpetrator chose to continually harass and stalk and to try to go out of his way to intimidate and coerce.

And I watched first-hand how this person who had just a brilliant outlook on life, this incredible exuberance in everything that she did, quickly diminished, to go from an assault victim to be assaulted daily in—where she is.

And she referred to that—to the stalking as, he's out hunting. He is out hunting for her. She was involved in sales, and he knew her schedule. And what he would do is he would go out of his way to arrive at the places that she would—her clients that she would meet, and he would walk in and make a scene and scream and yell and call—create havoc for her, call her down—just most terrible names you could imagine—and would follow her around and threaten her.

She had cameras placed in her vehicle. She even wore a body camera to try to capture stuff. And every time that she had an incident or a near encounter of assault, she would call the police and the police would come out to do their job. They would arrest the person,

bring him in and he would subsequently be released back in—and then he would get in his vehicle and go hunting again. And it happened over and over and over.

* (10:10)

And I couldn't understand how this could happen, but the system is broken. The system allows for perpetrators of crime to go back out. I'm not here to cast aspersions on anybody, on any side of the House, I'm looking for solutions to move forward.

And this happened back in 2017. It got to the point where Michelle, she had to sell her house. She didn't tell anybody. She moved into a condo. She had to change her schedule and where she went and how she went.

We even went so far as to trade vehicles with her. We parked her vehicle in my shop and we gave her another vehicle that we weren't using at the time for her to drive around. And that bought her about three months of not being stalked.

Stalking, by definition, is the unwanted and/or repeated surveillance or contact by an individual or group toward another person. But stalking is much more than that. It's a cowardly action of somebody trying to exert dominance, somebody who doesn't have the mental capacity to understand that they—no longer wanted in somebody's life. And they go out of their way to intimidate either by their physical presence or by through intimidation of showing up, calling them names and even progressing on to other aspects.

When I found out that there was no mechanism in place to actually stop somebody from following you—unless you actually go and make a provision to the courts and say, I've been a victim of stalking and I want to have this person's licence revoked; that is one avenue to go, but that often leads to retaliation.

And people are often afraid to make any accusations against their stalker because they just want the stalking to stop. They just want to go on with their lives and they don't want to create any more drama. They don't want to give the person another reason to escalate this.

And when I started taking a look at what we can do as people elected, I looked all over Canada and I talked to a lot of different people, a lot of different stakeholders. I talked to victims, I talked to police departments, I talked to centres that help people in crisis, and I found out there really wasn't much.

And I thought to myself, people can't stalk if they can't get there. If we have a mechanism that could stop people from driving—because a lot of the stalkers don't care about a restraining order. They're there to exert their dominance. They want to get there and punish the person for rejecting them. These sweet, innocent victims that just want to go on with their lives are being perpetrated every day.

So I said, what could we do? I took a look at it and I thought, well, let's take away their licence. Driving is a privilege that we have here in Manitoba, and if people use their—that licence to perpetrate a crime to get into a vehicle and perpetrate a crime, we need to take that away. And then I thought, well, if they don't care about the restraining order, the protective orders, why would they care if they had their licence revoked or not? People drive right now who are prohibited from driving, and it happens way too often.

And I thought, what are the tools that they are using to stalk? Well, there's many different types of stalking, but if somebody is physically stalking, typically they're following that person around, driving to their residence, driving to their work, driving to the place where their friends are. So if we can catch them in the act and actually impound their vehicle—something very similar to what happens if you've been impaired and you get your vehicle impounded—and if we have the opportunity to do that, we may save some lives. We may stop people from actually going out and stalking people.

But what happens if the person does it again? Well, let's impound their vehicle, again, but this time for a longer duration. Let them know there's real consequences for this and we do not accept this behaviour on anyone in society.

The people that live in Manitoba need to be protected. They need our assistance to make sure they can go and live their best lives. And what we're seeing is that is not happening right now.

We have—the percentages of intimate partner violence are increasing year after year. The incidence of stalking—and this is stuff that's only reported—is increasing at about 5 per cent year after year after year. And then we have other incidents of assault and domestic violence increasing almost 35 per cent year after year.

So if we can go out there to stop people from getting to our loved ones, to our neighbours, to our friends, to our families, to people in our communities

that matter to us. If we could stop them from dominating and bringing physical harm—because it starts with stalking and then it slowly progresses from verbal assault to physical assault. And 31 per cent of women who have been stalked by an intimate partner were also sexually assaulted.

That is totally unacceptable. Nobody should ever be assaulted anywhere in the world. We have an opportunity here to come together in this House and tell the perpetrators of stalking that it is not right and we will not stand for it. We will stand united in this House and vote together to stop stalking where it stands.

And if we can do that, together as representatives of our communities, we can let people know that every life matters. Every person, every dream, every aspiration that they want to become matters and we have a way here forward to protect that.

So on those few words, I want to say thank you to everybody for listening.

Questions

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

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: However, before we get to the question period, there are some guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce.

We have seated in the public gallery, from EDGE ESL, 23 guests under the direction of Jane Huck, and they are guests of the honourable member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses).

And we all welcome you here today.

* * *

The Speaker: The floor is now open for questions.

MLA Shannon Corbett (Transcona): My question for the member opposite to start is: Who did the member consult while creating this bill?

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): That is a fantastic question.

As I mentioned, this began back in 2017, so Nova House in Selkirk is a centre for domestic violence.

I talked to the former director who was there, I talked to former RCMP officers, I talked to current police officers and most importantly, I talked to the victims. And it's the victims that tell me how important it is that we take away the tools that stalkers have to change their lives.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I also want to say thank you to the member from Selkirk for introducing this important legislation, Bill 236. And I also want to say thank you for sharing a personal story and giving some background to why this was introduced here today.

I do want to ask the member from Selkirk: Why do you feel that an automatic suspension–driver's licence suspension is the right choice in a matter like this?

Mr. Perchotte: Thank you very much for the question.

As I mentioned earlier in my preamble, that driving is a privilege. And if you can stop–take away the tools that somebody has that goes out and commit a crime, whether–if you could take a gun away from somebody who's going to shoot somebody, you would certainly go out of your way to do that.

So if you could take the licence away from somebody or the vehicle away from somebody who's going to commit a crime, let's get on board and do that.

* (10:20)

MLA Corbett: I'd like to ask the member opposite: If someone is being stalked by someone in a vehicle, what courses of action can they take to protect themselves?

The Speaker: The honourable member for Transcona (MLA Corbett)—or, the honourable member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte).

Mr. Perchotte: Well, the No. 1 thing is to get to safety, so—if you want to get on the phone, call 911, make sure that the police department is aware of the situation. Get yourself to a well-lit area to make sure that people are around, and you can identify that you are in distress and something is going on.

But, most importantly, keep your doors locked. Keep yourself protected inside until you're safe to do so.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I want to thank my friend and colleague, the MLA for Selkirk, for this very important bill, and I'm hoping that all

sides of the House are going to pass this unanimously, this morning.

The amendment, if adopted, would add more tools for the victims and police to use when dealing with the criminal stalking. So thank you for sharing your personal story, but what else had driven you to bring forward this bill today, in 2025?

Mr. Perchotte: I want to thank the member from Lac du Bonnet for the question.

So, in my consultations that I have, when I spoke to police officers and RCMP officers, they are also frustrated that they don't have tools to make sure that people can't go forward and continue the stalking. They said the—once somebody begins the stalking, they have a higher propensity to reoffend. It goes on and on and on. So in taking a look at the request, this was just a natural fit to continue along this path, to make these amendments, to make it easier to give them the tools they needed.

The Speaker: Just before proceeding, a reminder to all members to make sure they address their questions and answers through the Chair.

MLA Corbett: The members opposite spent seven and a half years in government. At any point, they could have introduced this bill to help Manitobans experiencing stalking and harassment. We, on this side of the House, do understand how serious this is.

My question to the member is: Why didn't they introduce this bill during their time in government?

Mr. Perchotte: Honourable Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, I've been here 20 months. I wasn't here seven and a half years ago. I brought this forward as part of my mandate to represent the people in my community, the people of Manitoba.

Instead of being partisan, I think we should come together and take a look at what the bill is trying to do and try to make sure that we protect lives in our province.

Ms. Byram: We know that family violence and intimate partner violence has increased or, you know, has some significant high numbers in the province here of Manitoba.

And I just would like to ask the member: How do you feel that this bill will help in that situation, with the family violence and the intimate partner violence? Will this make a difference?

The Speaker: Order, please.

I'd just reminded the members to make sure they always direct their questions and answers through the Chair, and asking directly—what do you think?—is not directing your question through the Chair. So, please, do better.

Mr. Perchotte: I thank the member from Agassiz for the question.

So, if you take the tools away from people perpetrating crime, the numbers should drop. And they should actually drop quite fast. Once the police officers have these tools in their toolbox, they go out there and there's a little bit of a rollout period to make sure that the law enforcement agencies can get up to speed on what this bill actually covers, but once they get that in their tool belt, we should actually see numbers go down very, very quickly in intimate partner stalking.

MLA Corbett: During the members opposite time in government, they were made aware of the fact that more than half of the protection orders were denied. They failed to introduce changes that would help Manitobans get the protection they needed against their abusers.

Can the member opposite explain when they failed—why they failed to help more Manitobans get protection orders?

Mr. Perchotte: Once again, the partisan comments coming from the other side.

I was hoping, today, we can actually talk about protecting victims of violence. The average length of partner stalking is 2.2 years. That's tormenting people's lives for 2.2 years. Instead of looking in the past—would've, could've, should've—let's come together today and do something to actually protect people so we don't have 2.2 years of lives being destroyed.

Mr. Ewasko: It's interesting that here in Manitoba, especially with the current leadership that we have in the province, that we're the second highest rate of intimate partner violence in Canada. It is unfortunate that some of the messaging coming from the government side can't pivot.

So I'd like to ask the member from Selkirk, this bill would also allow peace officers to seize and impound a vehicle if a person's been using the vehicle to commit criminal harassment: Why is this ability important for a peace officer?

Mr. Perchotte: It's important for all law enforcement, including peace officers, to make sure that they have the ability to protect citizens in the communities

where they live. So if there is any report of stalking, any potential domestic violence, any intimate partner violence, having that available at their readiness is vital.

Stalking increases the risk of intimate partner homicide by 300 per cent. That's a number we never want to hear, Honourable Speaker.

MLA Corbett: Just as the member opposite is talking—and I do understand it he, himself, has been in the Chamber for 20 months—what are the likely impacts of these proposed changes in an urban, rural and northern context?

Mr. Perchotte: I'd like to thank the member for that question.

And in all areas of our province, whether you're northern, rural, urban, have—taking away the ability for someone to track you, to chase you down, to set out your place of employment, to stop at the gym where you go to or even in the grocery store, so take that opportunity away that they can't be there—diminishes the ability of you being assaulted.

Any time you can stop an assault before it happens is a win. So this, itself, all over the province, benefits all the victims of intimate partner stalking.

Ms. Byram: Recently, the Winnipeg Police Service released new crime statistics. Is there anything contained in that report that would reinforce the need for this bill?

Mr. Perchotte: Under the NDP, criminal harassment has increased almost 5 per cent year over year, including that threatening and harassing communication is almost 35 per cent year over year. We know that this is an upward trajectory that is not acceptable. We need to make sure that we find a way to bring this down.

And this bill addresses some serious issues in the community where we could take these weapons away, these vehicles that people use to perpetrate these crimes—take that away from them to keep our people—keep the people throughout the community, keep our loved ones safe.

The Speaker: There—no further questions?

The time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is now open for debate.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I just wanted to start, first of all, by thanking the member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte) for bringing forward this important issue.

This is now the second time just over the last few days that we've heard from the member from Selkirk who's been able to offer very personal stories, and stories that come directly from his constituents. And I think that's an important part of the debate that we can undertake here in the Legislature. I think it's actually a good place to start.

I wanted to acknowledge the victim that he identified in this case, Michelle, who it sounds like went through some very traumatic experiences, and for him to be able to now bring her voice to the Legislature I think is an important beginning point for us to debate these issues.

* (10:30)

This is, of course, an incredibly important issue. It's an incredibly important priority of our government. And members opposite will know that we have undertaken, not just in our strategies and our laying out of our priorities, both, you know, before being elected but, of course, since forming government, we have identified support for victims and specifically victims of intimate partner violence, stalking and domestic violence of all kind. But we've also done that in concrete ways here in this Legislature.

Members opposite, of course, will know that we brought legislation here—you know, it's Bill 2, which now has passed third reading—which indicates just the priority that we put on this issue. Bill 2, of course, enhanced training for our judges as well as our JJP's for victims of coercive control and intimate partner violence and ensured that that training is put into place and that it is comprehensive.

Of course, we made sure that our bill was strengthened from the version that was brought forward by the member for Families—the Minister for Families when she was in opposition, and building on the bill that was brought forward by the member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux).

And that was a moment where, you know, we thought all parties were coming together. I heard the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) say this was a priority, a legislative priority over the—this session, that he would pass that bill. Of course, they delayed that bill instead and then criticized that bill all the way through the process.

But we move forward and we move forward in a way that ultimately centres victims in the work that we're doing. As I said, that's one part of the work that we're doing, legislative work. And we're excited that that will be moving forward, will receive royal assent, and we can continue to build on that success.

But that work is happening in so many different ways with our government. Folks in the Chamber will know that I'm very privileged to sit on the MMIWG committee of Cabinet, a table at which various members of our team are able to come together specifically to talk about supports for victims, supports for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and to talk about important issues like intimate partner violence and stalking.

Again, members opposite will know that we've also developed a public safety strategy. I know I'm not allowed to use props, but members opposite will know that this is a public document and one that they should study up on. Objective 3.3 talks about intimate partner violence and ending gender-based violence. This is, as I said, a priority of our government.

The member for Selkirk also will note that, in fact, I was just in his community not too long ago with Mayor Johannson, with the RCMP, with the various support organizations for women, talking about the return and the expansion of the electronic monitoring program, the ankle bracelet program that was cut specifically by Heather Stefanson when she was Justice minister and, of course, continued on when she was premier.

At that time, that technology was just starting to develop into the areas of protecting victims of stalking, and now, with the return of that program, we were very proud to announce that Selkirk was one of the first communities where we would be able to offer, not only the support for the electronic monitoring program in partnership with law enforcement to ensure that there is an enforcement element, but also to offer that to victims of domestic violence of those who have protection orders.

The technology is so advanced now that if somebody who has a protection order comes within the vicinity of the victim, they can get an alert; they can get support and they can get immediate assistance right away. And that's an important element that we were able to bring back and support and develop.

We've been talking here in the Legislature, Honourable Speaker, a lot about accountability and taking accountability for the actions of a team or the

actions of a caucus, the actions of a former government. I know the member opposite doesn't want to go back.

He says, well, I've only been here 20 months. But we all know that, of course, he ran under the banner of a party who not only ran the kind of campaign that you know will go down in history books as one of the worst political campaigns in the sense of targeting the victims of murder—the victims of a serial killer, and specifically women who were targeted by that serial killer, but he also needs to account for the fact that under the former government's watch—and it's been mentioned already here this morning and I'm sure we're going to hear a lot more as this bill gets debated over the next number of days—that there's, of course, a lot to be held account—to account for.

The members opposite can't simply just hand-wave that away and say, well, no, you know, that wasn't me or it wasn't us in terms of the current team that—that really is who this party has been and who Manitobans came to know as a government, as a callous PC government.

Because we know that, in 2018-19, that there were 765 protection orders, 52 per cent that were dismissed or withdrawn. And that was an increase from the previous year. We know that, under the watch of the members opposite, police-reported intimate partner violence incidents went from 567 people per 100,000 in 2018 to 628 per 100,000 in '23. That means—that's almost—that's a over 20 per cent increase in the number of domestic violence and intimate partner violence incidents.

That's the record that the members opposite have to contend with. That's the record that they have to account for here in the Legislature. And I hope they do that. Because if we start from that point, if we start from the point of taking this issue seriously, of centring victims—as I said in the beginning, the member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte) brought forward this specific situation with a constituent of his. He's advocating on behalf of that constituent, and that's exactly the kind of work that we need to do.

If he's centring the victim and if we continue to centre the victims in this conversation, we can find additional solutions. I invite him to read through the public safety strategy to find ways that we can partner, we can build off of the success that we've already had and start to talk about ways that we can build successful legislation as well as other supports throughout the community.

There is work that we can do together. This can be an issue that transcends politics. I hope that he'll do that. Because, as I said, I've heard him now a couple of times come in a very genuine way. I actually believe—maybe I don't believe that of all members opposite, but I certainly do believe that of the member for Selkirk, that he is coming to this is a very genuine way. And so I invite him to continue the conversation with us.

There's a lot of work that we are going to continue to do. As I said, it's a main plank and a priority of our public safety strategy. We will continue to centre victims and can centre this issue going forward. There's lots more to come for members opposite and for Manitobans to know. Our department is taking this very seriously and we're going to continue to do everything that we can.

When it comes to how we talk about this going forward, as I said, we can do it on the floor of the Legislature; we can also do it, you know, behind the scenes, so to speak, or in a way that is less confrontational. So I do invite the member opposite, if he wants to continue the conversation, let's do that.

In terms of the debate here today, I think it's incumbent on the members opposite to take a full account of the failures that they had under their watch. I've said it many times, Honourable Speaker, cuts have consequences. And the cuts that they made, specifically when it is—comes to supporting victims—have had real consequences. It's time for us to repair that damage; we should try to do that together.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I'm really pleased to be able to rise today and speak to this bill today. If you will allow, I just want to take a very brief moment on behalf of members or constituents of Waverley to just send our thoughts and all the strength in the world to all the folks dealing with the wildfires up north, both the residents, volunteers, community members, family, the first responders, everybody working to try to come together as a province to support this. And, certainly, in my role as special envoy for military affairs, I've had the chance to speak with a few commanders quickly about the work they're doing and thank them very much for the incredible service they provide to our country every single day. So, thank you.

* (10:40)

And so, to Bill 236, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act relating to stalking measures, I do want to thank the member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte) for bringing this forward and sharing that personal story about the friend of his. And as the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) said, this is obviously coming from a very real and genuine place to try to bring forward more protections when it comes to stalking in our community.

And one thing that I would just say is, you know, when we look at issues like stalking, like crimes in our neighbourhoods, in our province, we know that we need to take a wraparound support, a harm reduction support when it comes to all of this to make sure that we are providing things like—and, potentially, this could be one of those things, as we discuss it more, right, in terms of making sure that folks who are perpetrating some of these crimes don't have access to a vehicle as easily to carry those out.

We also know mental health services, for example, are incredibly important for both the victims, and I will say, also, survivors because it is—I think it's important when we centre the victim and the survivor in this conversation to also speak about the incredible strength and resilience that it takes to work through something like this, as the survivor of a crime.

So I did want to mention that as well. But, you know, as we talk about this issue specifically, I do just want to say that we've been working very, very hard. The Minister of Justice, minister of housing and addictions and mental health, Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine)—across the board—Minister of Health—this touches on so many different areas of society.

And so we can't think of this as sort of a black-and-white issue and, like, one thing is going to solve this problem entirely. I was incredibly heartened when we talk about this issue specifically—of some of the investments being made through Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag and the work that our Minister of Families is doing. Because we do know, unfortunately, that intimate partner violence in Manitoba, it is a racialized issue and it affects disproportionate numbers of Indigenous women here in our province.

And so the work that is being done by the Minister of Families to make sure that there are supports in place, to make sure that there's education and ways to lift up folks in the community is directly going to benefit the victims of some of these crimes, survivors of these crimes and also work towards eliminating some of this in the future.

We also know that supports for mental health and addictions and wraparound supports are going to make a big difference when it comes to this work. And so I thank the minister of housing, homelessness, addictions and mental health for that work when it comes to, you know, even things like supervised consumption sites, social housing, employment opportunities that are coming together for folks. These all directly contribute to these sort of issues.

So, again, this may be—when we speak about the removal of a vehicle from a perpetrator, with Bill 236—this may be a really important step and I think that it's important for us to have a fulsome conversation about that, here today, just to see how this would look as it's actually carried out.

I did actually—I was just speaking with the class of new graduates, police graduates who were here in the building today; was fortunate enough to speak to Chief Bowers just a few moments ago and chat a little bit about the work that they're doing, the incredibly important work that they do every single day. And I will say, specifically, when it comes to things like stalking, we need more officers out there to carry out this work, right?

And so, unfortunately, the record of members opposite—and again, I will say, you know, I know this bill is being brought forward in a genuine, good way, but they cut funding to police here in the province, which is unbelievable in a time when we really needed them the most.

That funding was frozen against inflation for a number of years, and I know having worked on the front line, how much damage that did. And so I'm so proud to be a part of a team with a Minister of Justice who has reinstated and actually increased that funding, to make sure that if we do pass bills like this that those folks working on the front line are actually available to do the work and carry out this legislation.

Because, yes, we can put forward all the bills in the world we want here, right? But if we're not focused on making sure that Manitobans, that folks like police officers, firefighters, social workers are actually there to carry out these acts and these bills, then what are we doing, right?

And so I just want to thank again the Minister of Justice for that good work in making sure that we are staffing up our front lines to make sure that folks are supported.

One of the things that I wanted to take a moment to say, and I'd be remiss if I didn't mention this, the

underpinning of everything that we're doing in here right now, all of this work on private members' bills, private members' resolutions, the bills we're hopefully going to pass today—Bill 47, which I hope will pass very quickly, particularly since, you know, we heard a point of order yesterday which specifically said the members opposite and their leader want to move important legislation through quickly here.

The underpinning of all of this work that we do here in this building is on those basic democratic principles. And deeply unfortunately, we saw for—an Ethics Commissioner's report come out which showed that members opposite undermined that work. And so when I'm speaking about Bill 236, and allowing police officers to do this good work of taking vehicles away from stalkers, we don't have a system if we don't have our democracy that allows us to do that work.

So that is why it is relevant to the member from Lac du Bonnet who was asking why our democratic principles are important in—when we're talking about issues here in the Chamber. It seems absolutely absurd to me. It is absolutely relevant when we talk about these things, and I would rather actually focus on this bill a little bit more, but now I'm feeling a little bit more frustrated that members opposite still don't seem to understand how important this Ethics Commissioner's report is. It is deeply, deeply troubling—

The Speaker: Order, please.

I would ask the member to keep his comments relevant to the bill we're here discussing this morning.

MLA Pankratz: Honourable Speaker, I always appreciate your guidance on these issues. And the relevant point was just that, again, our democratic principles are so important to us being allowed and elected to come here to talk about bills like Bill 236.

So as we talk about this, I will just quickly leave with a personal anecdote. So, as a firefighter working on the front lines, we deal with all sorts of different calls. We deal with different work; you—every single shift is very different. And, unfortunately, one of the calls that I went on, more often than I would like to say, did involve survivors of intimate partner violence. And so we would show up; we would provide care to that person—we would, you know, the physical care at first, to make sure that they were physically okay, but then part of that work—and at times, this wasn't necessarily so acute that they needed to be transported to a hospital right away, so part of that work would be sitting and speaking with the survivors of an attack like this.

And it made such a massive impact on me. I know personally hearing the stories of these folks who are dealing with this issue and who felt as though there wasn't necessarily a way out.

And so, when we have the opportunity to sit together, to speak and stand here in the Chamber on issues regarding intimate partner violence, I do just want to say, just speaking from, you know, many, many personal interactions, how important it is that we now have a government in place that is providing all of these different types of supports, these wrap-around supports for these survivors.

You know, that may ultimately include something like being able to take away vehicles by police. It also includes supports with mental health, with addictions, with providing more supports for police to make sure that we have more resources available. And ultimately, I just want to say that I am so pleased that we get to stand up and speak on such substantive issues here so regularly and make some good work move forward for the community.

And we'll continue to do that work. We'll listen to Manitobans and we will do our best to represent your values every single day.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): It gives me great pleasure to stand up and put a few words on the record and congratulate the MLA for Selkirk for bringing forward Bill 236, Honourable Speaker.

It's unfortunate, though, today, that it almost sounds like—that the government, the couple members any-ways—one is the Justice Minister, Attorney General (Mr. Wiebe), and the other one is the member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz)—stands up and it almost sounds like they're not going to be supporting this bill.

* (10:50)

So I'm standing to basically strongly encourage the government side to pass Bill 236 because it is another tool in the toolbox for police officers and peace officers to be able to use to try to curve, try to diminish, try to discourage—it'd be nice if we could absolutely get rid of intimate partner violence, and it would also be an interesting time today if we could see that Bill 236 comes to a vote today then see where exactly the Premier (Mr. Kinew), the leader of the Kinew government, stands on this topic.

Honourable Speaker, we know that driving is a privilege; it is not a right. We also know that the Winnipeg Police Service statistics show that it's—there

was a 35 per cent increase in threatening and harassing communication. And we also know that abuse can be verbal, it can be emotional, psychological, sexual, physical or even financial.

We know that intimate partner violence occurs within all age ranges—no matter what the member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz) stands up and puts on the record—or ethnic backgrounds and economic status.

IPV affects everyone in the family. Children exposed to intimate partner violence are more likely to develop behavioural problems and may grow up to think that violence in an intimate relationship is acceptable.

I commend my friend and colleague, the MLA for Selkirk, for bringing forward Bill 236.

I strongly encourage this to be a non-partisan issue. I strongly encourage the government to stand up today and to vote in favour of this. Pass it on to committee, let's hear what other people within this great province of ours in Manitoba has to say, and I'd also like to see, again, where the Premier (Mr. Kinew) stands on this topic.

So I strongly encourage everyone. I thank you, Honourable Speaker, for the time to be able to put a few words on the record on this very important tool that would be added to the toolbox of our people that go out day in and day out to keep our public and Manitobans safe.

So thanks again to the MLA for Selkirk and to you, Honourable Speaker, for your time.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Just before the honourable member for Kirkfield Park speaks, I do have some more folks in the public gallery.

We have seated in the public gallery, from Inkster School, 24 students under the direction of Signe Armstrong, and they are guests of the honourable member for St. Johns (MLA Fontaine).

And we welcome you here this morning.

* * *

Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park): I also want to thank the member from Selkirk for bringing this bill forward and bringing attention to criminal harassment and stalking.

And while abuse can affect anyone, it is much more common for women to experience intimate

partner violence and for men to perpetrate such violence—or perpetuate such violence.

According to police data from 2019, women were 3.5 times more likely to experience intimate partner violence than men and made up 79 per cent of the victims of such violence. This makes intimate partner violence a highly-gendered issue and it is crucial that we see solutions through a gendered lens.

It's also a racialized issue. Indigenous women are more likely to experience intimate partner violence than non-Indigenous women; 61 per cent versus 44 per cent, according to Statistics Canada in 2018.

Now, stalkers can be anyone, whether it's someone you know or someone you don't know. Stalking may involve following you around, obtaining information about you by following your loved ones, speaking with you, your family or acquaintances directly or indirectly to gather information about you, observing you at home, at work or somewhere else and making aggressive and threatening actions or remarks about you.

Stalkers may also use their vehicles to stalk someone. If you're being stalked, the most important thing to remember is that it's not your fault. And if you are in immediate danger, please call 911 and ask for help to protect yourself. You're not alone and your safety is a number one priority.

If you are being stalked, develop a protection plan to ensure your safety in places where your stalker may try to contact you, whether it's at home, your school or your workplace.

Honourable Speaker, with the modern advancement of technology, stalking can also take place online, whether it be through email, text message or on social media, this is also known as cyberstalking. Cyberstalking may include monitoring other people's conversations, sending threats, levelling unfounded charges, identity theft, damaging personal information or devices, requesting sex with minors and other violent acts.

Protect your personal information online and trust your instincts. Obtain a court order of protection that states the stalker cannot continue their stalking behaviour. If they do continue their behaviour, once the court order of protection is place, you kind of—you can call the police. Now, stalking is a criminal offence and our government is working hard to enhance safety and support for women experiencing domestic violence and harassment.

I worked at the Winnipeg Remand Centre about 10 years ago. I worked as a classification officer and part of my duties as a classification officer is to interview offenders when they come into custody to determine where to place them within the correctional facilities. And stalkers were often given a gold star on their file which identified them as being stalkers. Now, that's important for us officers to know that information so we can monitor and make sure that they weren't contacting their non-contact order or the victim.

Some stalkers, I found, were so desperate, they would recruit others to contact their victims through any means necessary. So, folks would have access to phones within inside the correctional facilities. They would phone a friend and ask them to do the harassing for them, on their behalf. And then, of course, they would have charges, more charges laid against them. And I dealt with several folks who had stalking and criminal harassment on their charge sheet.

And so on this side of the House, Honourable Speaker, we make sure that we're always standing up for survivors of domestic violence. Members opposite can't say the same. Stalking is a serious offence and is often a form of intimate partner violence; and we're working to make sure that every Manitoban has the supports and protections that they need.

The members opposite have continually—continuously shown they're willing to leave survivors of intimate partner violence without the supports they need to heal. And when you have a dangerous and life-threatening situation such as domestic violence or stalking, the survivor does not—that does not have the resources they need, it can mean life or death.

That's the legacy of the members opposite: years of cuts, mismanagement and neglect have resulted in repeated failures from the members opposite. And Manitobans were fed up with it. They decided they needed a government that actually listens and that's why Manitobans entrusted us to lead the province to protect Manitobans and their families.

Our government has always been proud to say that we're listening. And we understand how important that is to survivors.

The Domestic Violence Death Review Committee, the DVDRC, which provides recommendations to prevent future tragedies, stopped meeting on their watch. In 2020, the CBC reported that more than half of the requests for protection orders were

dismissed or withdrawn, despite legislative challenges in 2016 meant to make them easier to obtain.

In 2018-2019, 765 protection orders; 52 per cent were dismissed or withdrawn compared to 54 per cent the previous year. In the past decade, the number of applications that were dismissed peaked at 62 per cent in 2015-2016.

During the members opposite time in government, this issue was raised with them, but they failed to introduce any reforms that would help Manitobans. And while they ignored Manitobans who were asking for help, our government is investing in the future of Manitoba.

Under the watch of members opposite, police reported intimate partner violence incidents went from 567 per 100,000 in 2018 to 628 per 100,000 in 2023. This is—

* (11:00)

The Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have three minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 19—Removing Retail Sales Tax on the Construction and Sale of Homes

The Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is resolution No. 19, removing retail sales tax on construction and sale of homes.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Before we move on to that, there's some more guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce because they have to leave shortly.

We have seated in the public gallery, from Inkster School, a third group of 24 students under the direction of Signe Armstrong, and they're guests of the honourable member for St. Johns (MLA Fontaine).

And we also have seated in the public gallery, from Inkster School, a second group of 24 students under the direction of Signe Armstrong, and they're all guests of the honourable member for St. Johns.

We welcome you here this morning.

* * *

The Speaker: We will now debate the resolution 19, removing sales tax on construction and sale of homes.

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): I move, seconded by the member from La Vérendrye,

WHEREAS the Provincial Government has made life less affordable for homeowners and home purchasers with higher school taxes, property taxes, income taxes, and higher education property taxes; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government ended the indexation of the Basic Personal Amount and tax bracket thresholds to inflation, leaving Manitobans with less money at the end of each year after inflation eats away at their wages; and

WHEREAS 38% of Canadians said, in a recent survey on mortgages, that they could only afford housing costs of \$1,000 or less, and 67% reported that they could not handle anything over \$1,749; and

WHEREAS according to the most recent cycle of the Canadian Social Survey (CSS) – Quality of Life, Health, and Housing Costs, nearly half (45%) of Canadians reported being very concerned about housing affordability because of the rising costs of housing or rent; and

WHEREAS Canadian young adults aged 20 to 35 years were more likely to report experiencing housing affordability challenges in the past year than older adults; and

WHEREAS 59% of young adults reported being very concerned about their ability to afford housing, and half (51%) of them had moving plans that were impacted by rising prices; and

WHEREAS more than one-third (38%) of older adults were very concerned about their ability to afford housing and one-quarter had their moving plans impacted; and

WHEREAS nearly half (45%) of Canadians reported being very concerned about their ability to afford housing because of rising housing costs or rising rent; and

WHEREAS about one-third (35%) of Canadians reported that their household had difficulty meeting their financial needs; and

WHEREAS the previous Selinger NDP Provincial Government made life less affordable by raising the PST, after expanding the PST to multiple services and insurance, raising vehicle registrations fees, raising fuel taxes; and refusing to index the personal income tax system to protect Manitobans from inflation; and

WHEREAS the current Provincial Government has only promised to remove the PST for builders of rental housing, which does nothing to help young Manitobans purchasing their first home; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government is still charging the PST on all new home construction in Manitoba, making the building of new homes expensive for first time homebuyers and all those looking to buy their next home.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to remove this retail sales tax on all construction costs for building new homes, regardless of type or style of home, to increase the supply of new homes and reduce the costs of building homes for new homeowners.

The Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Lakeside, seconded by the honourable member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth), that

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to remove the sales tax on all construction costs for building new homes, regardless of the type or style of home, to increase the supply of new homes and reduce the costs of building homes for new homeowners.

Mr. King: I thank all my colleagues for giving me the opportunity to rise today and come together hopefully to support a resolution that will urge our government to help make life more affordable for all Manitobans, and, of course, mostly our new homebuyers.

So I rise to stand up for Manitobans and to strongly urge the government to support this resolution to remove the provincial sales tax from new home construction costs in Manitoba. This is not just a matter of economic policy, Honourable Speaker, it's a matter of fairness, opportunity and helping the next generation of Manitobans achieve one of the most foundational goals in life: owning a home.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Across this province, whether it's in our cities or small towns or our rural communities, the dream of home ownership is slipping out of reach for far too many people. Families are struggling with skyrocketing housing prices, rising interest rates and the compounding impact of taxes and fees that make homes less affordable at every turn.

Removing the PST from new homes is a practical and powerful way to make housing more affordable,

stimulate economic growth and send a message that our Province supports those working hard to build a future here in Manitoba.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, we're in the midst of a housing affordability crisis. The average price of a home in Manitoba has risen sharply in recent years, and while our province remains more affordable than many others, that advantage is eroding. Young families, first-time buyers and new Canadians are finding themselves locked out of the housing market.

Adding PST, an extra 7 per cent, on top of the cost of a brand new home, can mean tens of thousands of dollars in additional costs. For a \$450,000 home, the PST adds nearly 3,100—or \$31,500. For most families, that's money they simply do not have, honourable Deputy Speaker. And in many cases, it's the difference between qualifying for a mortgage or not. It's the difference between moving into their first home or continuing to rent indefinitely.

That's why action is being taken at other levels of government, honourable Deputy Speaker, and Manitoba must not fall behind.

The federal government has already recognized the pressures faced by new and first-time homebuyers, removing the GST from new rental construction and extending supports for first-time buyers. This is a clear sign that governments across Canada are looking for ways to ease the cost of entering the housing market.

The PC Party pledged to go even further by eliminating the land transfer tax for first-time homebuyers. This is a direct, targeted policy that would lower barriers to home ownership and help more young Manitobans get a foothold into the housing market.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, when families are facing these kinds of financial burdens, every dollar matters. It's time for this government to join in and build on these efforts by removing the PST on new home construction. It's a smart, timely and effective way to help families get through the front door of their new home.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, removing the PST from new homes isn't just about helping individual families, it's about stimulating our economy and creating jobs.

The residential construction sector is a key driver of economic growth right here in Manitoba. It supports thousands of good-paying jobs for carpenters,

electricians, plumbers, engineers and suppliers. It generates spin-off benefits for local businesses and communities, especially in growing areas where new development brings it—with it schools, infrastructure and commerce.

When we reduce the cost of new homes, we boost demand and that means more building, more jobs and more economic activity. It means more young people entering the skilled trades and more opportunities for small businesses in the construction and real estate sectors.

In fact, studies from across the country show that every new home built supports multiple full-time jobs and generates significant tax revenue over time. So while we may forgo some PST in the short term, the long-term economic benefits of increased housing starts more than make up for it. This is an investment in our province's growth and resilience.

Honourable Speaker, let's also talk about fairness. Currently, PST is only charged on new homes, not on existing homes. This creates a two-tiered tax system that penalizes people who want to buy a brand new home and disincentivizes increasing housing stock. Why should someone who chooses to buy a new home, maybe because they want greater energy efficiency or fewer repair costs or to live in a growing neighbourhood, have to pay a hefty sales tax, while someone buying an older home doesn't? This discrepancy is arbitrary and unfair.

Moreover, new homes are already subject to GST fees, land transfer fees and a host of regulatory and administrative costs. By the time the buyer gets the keys, they've already paid far more than the sticker price. The PST on new homes is a form of double taxation. It disproportionately affects families and individuals trying to build something new, whether it's their first home or a place to raise their kids, and that's not a tax policy we should be proud of.

Let's not forget that tax policy also plays a role in interprovincial competitiveness. We want Manitoba to be a place where people choose to live, invest and raise their families. But if we keep tacking on unnecessary costs to housing, especially taxes that aren't aligned with what other provinces are doing, we risk driving people and development away.

Saskatchewan, for example, does not charge PST on new homes under certain thresholds. Alberta, of course, has no provincial sales tax at all. Even British Columbia doesn't burden buyers in the same way we do.

If we want to attract new residents, retain young professionals, encourage housing starts in both urban and rural areas, we need to keep Manitoba competitive. Cutting the PST on new homes sends a signal that we're open for business, that we're thinking ahead and that we have—we're on the side of families.

* (11:10)

We all agree that we need more housing supply across the board, whether it's affordable housing, rental housing or market homes. The pressure on our housing stock is real and growing.

Removing the PST on new home construction will help incentivize builders to bring new units to market faster. That added supply, in turn, helps moderate prices across the housing spectrum. The more homes are built, fewer families are competing for too few listings. That's basic economics, honourable Deputy Speaker, so if we're serious about solving the housing crisis, we must remove the barriers to building. Eliminating the PST on new homes is one way to clear that path forward.

Our jobs as legislators is to improve the lives of people we serve. We do not—we do that not just through grand speeches but through concrete action—action that addresses the real challenges families are facing today. Housing is one of the big issues of our time. It affects our economy, our communities, our health, our future. It affects whether young people stay in Manitoba or if they leave. It affects whether seniors can downsize affordably. It affects whether families can grow and put down roots.

Eliminating the PST from new home purchases is not a silver bullet but it is the right thing to do. It's a smart, fair and forward-looking policy that will help families, boost our economy and support the housing growth we so urgently need.

And just some of the statistics, honourable Deputy Speaker: 30 per cent of the new homebuyers ages 21 to 31 receive assistance from their parents to be able to afford a home. Now, we do that as parents because that's what we do. Just speaking from experience, I have four sons and we were fortunate with two of them; we had our own rental properties that we were able to hold for them and, you know, give them a bit of a break on going out and getting a mortgage. But not everybody can do that. And you know what? The bank of moms and dads are getting a little slim now, too—in this day with what the NDP is doing, taxing us out of our homes.

And honourable Speaker, I just want to encourage all of my colleagues in the House this morning to pass this resolution. Let's give Manitobans a better chance to own a home. Let's build a province where opportunity is within reach, not priced out by outdated tax policies.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Questions

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

The floor is now open for questions.

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): Honourable Deputy Speaker, all Manitobans deserve the freedom to achieve home ownership. Many who hoped to one day own a home are actually renting right now. And in 2018, the PC government raised the Rent Assist threshold for a second time, forcing recipients to put 30 per cent of their income towards rent, leaving 300 households without support.

If the member opposite—if the members opposite are truly concerned about Manitobans being able to afford a home, why did they raise costs on renters and leave 300 households without critical support?

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): I appreciate the question from my colleague opposite.

I just do want to remind the member opposite that we're here today to work together to make life more affordable for Manitobans and give them that opportunity to make them move into their dream home and have a place to raise their family. This is about working together today, making dreams come true for Manitobans.

We've consulted with Manitobans on what they need to make life more affordable to be able to purchase that new home, come up with that down payment. This is one way of helping with that down payment on a new home—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): I'd like to thank my colleague from Lakeside for bringing forward this important piece of legislation.

My question for the member from Lakeside is: Can he please explain to me the effect of building more homes in Manitoba?

Mr. King: I want to thank my colleague from La Vérendrye for that very important question.

Yes, building more homes doesn't only impact the people buying the home, it creates jobs: our lumber and our steel workers are needed to make the material to build the homes; the clerks that are needed to sell the material; tradespeople who are needed to build the homes, our plumbers, our electricians; agents are needed to sell the homes.

Building homes creates many local jobs. It goes above and beyond in buying local Manitoba goods. So yes, it's another opportunity to support buy local here in Manitoba when we talk about trade barriers and—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MLA Dela Cruz: You can tell when members opposite haven't done any consultation, because typically their first question is, who did you consult with?

Honourable Speaker, the reason I know they did no consultation is because every Manitoban that I talk to in my generation who is looking to own a home one day was failed by their previous government. You should not have to make six figures, the way that I was so privileged to do upon election, in order to move out of your parents' basement. It's because of them—because in 2019, the PC government froze Rent Assist benefits for single adults while other recipients' benefits increased. Our NDP government saw the harm that they caused, honourable Speaker, and that's why we increased Rent Assist.

My question for the member opposite is: Why did the PC government abandon single adults struggling to make their—

The Deputy Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. King: I do believe I answered the member opposite's question. I did say in my first answer that we consulted with Manitobans. Manitobans are the ones that are suffering with their tax increases, with—so I did consult. We have all consulted with Manitobans; I'm sure the members opposite have consulted with Manitobans. So I did answer the question.

And I can tell the member that, you know, on the average cost to Manitoban homes, buyers would save

almost \$46,000 with the GST and PST sales tax eliminated, combined. And to put this into terms that maybe the member would understand, it would be just above a quarter of her salary in savings.

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): We just went through a federal election where both the federal Conservative Party and the federal Liberal Party—both parties committed and promised to remove the GST from home builds and homebuyers.

And so I'd just like to ask my colleague who brought this important resolution forward why the NDP should support this resolution today?

Mr. King: I thank my colleague from Midland for the very important question.

Honourable Speaker, it is clear that Manitobans are struggling to make it under this NDP government. With inflation rising, over 50 per cent of Manitobans are on living—paycheque to paycheque. This year, house prices are set to rise almost 4 per cent across this province, turning the idea of buying a home into a dream—for many is gone.

By removing the retail sales tax, Manitobans would save \$27,000 on the purchase of the average costing of a home. This would allow more Manitobans to be able to afford the purchase of a new home compared to this government's costly tax mandate.

Manitobans need permanent relief that—

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time has expired.

MLA Dela Cruz: They're making it more and more obvious that they haven't done any consultation before bringing forward this resolution. In fact, they're making it very obvious because they're citing a federal campaign that asked us in Manitoba to do a certain thing that we're already doing. Honourable Speaker, there already is no retail sales tax on new home builds in Manitoba.

Honourable Speaker, my question to the member opposite, with that fact on the record, is: What research did they do and which talking points are they reading off of?

Mr. King: Obviously, the member opposite did not hear or read the resolution, and I will read it again: therefore be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to remove the sales tax on all construction costs for building new homes. So there's my answer to the member's question.

And there is other provinces that are doing this, honourable Deputy Speaker, all across Canada: we have Alberta, we have BC, Ontario, New Brunswick are doing much the same programs and, of course, the federal—both the federal Conservatives and Liberals pledged that they would remove the GST on new home builds all across Canada. I hope that answers the member's question.

* (11:20)

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

Mr. Narth: Unlike the socialist side of this House, on this side of the House, each and every one of us gave up opportunities to be here to serve our constituents, and that's why taxes matter.

With Manitoba being one of the only provinces that still have retail sales tax on the building materials for homes, can the member tell us today which other provinces have removed the retail sales tax on construction of new homes?

Mr. King: Thank you to my colleague from La Vérendrye for that question.

And, yes. In fact, BC and Alberta both do not have retail sales tax on the construction of new homes. Considering this Premier (Mr. Kinew) and the NDP government are pushing Manitobans to buy local, so removal of the retail sales tax on new homes would be a huge incentive for that, so we talk—this is part of bill—breaking down some of these trade barriers that we're talking about, honourable Deputy Speaker.

MLA Dela Cruz: Just to correct my misspeak here, the sale of homes in Manitoba—there already is no retail sales tax on it. And the fact that they included this in this resolution makes it blatantly clear that they have no idea what they're talking about, and they're just following the direction of their federal counterpart.

Honourable Speaker, housing is a human right that should be accessible and affordable to all. So I won't have that mansplained to me by people who frankly have never struggled to afford a home.

Does the member opposite not agree that our government's new rental housing construction tax credit will incentivize the construction of new housing?

Mr. King: Honourable Speaker, I would agree that that helps—absolutely—only on the rental properties. And, you know, rental properties—I rented houses, my wife and I, for a number of years. And it's getting to

the point where the cost of rent for an apartment or a condo is way beyond what a mortgage payment is.

So here's an opportunity for us to get some owner's equity into Manitobans' hands by building a new home. I'm not saying that removing a PST off a rental unit isn't a great idea, because it is, but let's expand on that. Let's expand on that into new homes—new dream homes for people here in Manitoba—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mrs. Stone: Again, I'd like to thank my colleague for bringing this important resolution forward. Unfortunately for the member opposite, she's sitting on the side of higher taxes. As always seen from this NDP government is them increasing education property taxes both on affordable housing units as well as on stand-alone single-dwelling homes.

So, clearly, this NDP government is actually de-incentivizing the ability for newcomers and new homeowners to actually purchase a house.

So I'd like to ask my colleague: What exactly has the NDP done to incentivize new homeowners?

Mr. King: Well, it's a very simple answer to my colleague from Midland's question. I would have to say the answer would be nothing. But this government's been pushing Manitobans away from buying homes since they got into government.

NDP government reversed their promises to keep the 50 per cent education property tax rebate, and this year, Winnipeg families are going to be paying 25 per cent more on their school taxes. It's simply unacceptable, honourable Deputy Speaker, and pushes homebuyers out of Manitoba.

We call on the government to remove the retail sales tax on new homes to at least give Manitobans some help against the NDP tax mandate.

The Deputy Speaker: And, with that, the time for questions has expired.

Introduction of Guests

The Deputy Speaker: And before we move on to debate, I'd welcome all honourable members to gaze over to the gallery where we have a very important guest, Julia Townend, who is the guest of the honourable member for Lagimodière (Mr. Blashko).

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: And now the floor is open for debate.

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): Now, I'm pleased to put some words on the record with respect to this resolution. It's very clear from the title of this private member's resolution the PCs don't understand the basics.

PMR is calling for the removal of retail sales tax on new homes, but there isn't an RST on the sale of new homes or old homes, so they just don't understand the matter in any depth at all. We understand that from what we heard from the member who brought forward the resolution.

And on top of that, our government already, two budgets ago, brought in a tax credit to help with the construction costs for home builds. So what they're asking for doesn't exist, and then on the other side of the hand, we've already done it.

So is this a resolution that should be brought forward by a government member to thank us for doing a program that we initiated two budgets ago, or are they still just trying to catch up on their reading? We know that they haven't read the 100-page report on ethics. We know that they—still struggling to read this year's budget. Obviously, there's—just working their way through last year's budget, but I'll let them continue to do that. I've got so much more words to say with respect to the resolution.

But I want to just touch on some comments were made from the member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth), honourable Deputy Speaker, because I think they're important to address.

Now, the member—the good member for Radisson (MLA Dela Cruz) made some very wise words during her questions with regard to the perspective that many, many Manitobans have when they are going through their journey to find—whether it's home ownership, a rental unit—a place to live. And many Manitobans have that journey, where they live with their parents when they're young. When they venture out on to their own, they're trying to find their way through the rental units, living with friends, working their way up.

And some eventually get into the position where they want to be—get—enter into home ownership, but it's a struggle for many Manitobans, who come from, you know—pocket of Manitobans who don't have the type of affordability—income that would allow them to easily enter into home ownership.

And it's a challenge for many Manitobans and it's important that we recognize the lived realities of those Manitobans, and not just assume that all Manitobans

should easily be able to jump into home ownership, like the member for La Vérendrye was putting on the record.

And, furthermore, it's important to also assume—to put on the record that all members in the Chamber should be able to represent these types of Manitobans; Manitobans who don't just think that I—that you should be able to come into the Legislative Building as an MLA because you may be giving up other opportunities.

It's important for this House to be represented by all walks of life, by Manitobans from every corner of the province and all walks of life, even those who might struggle with affordability or trying to find their first home. Maybe those who live in trailer parks, those who live in rental units in high-rise apartments, those who live in condos, those who live in detached houses or townhouses. It doesn't matter. They should have a voice here in the Chamber.

So I thank my friend and colleague from Radisson for bringing in that voice into this debate, into the Chamber, even though members opposite—member from La Vérendrye wants to cast aspersions onto Manitobans like that, obviously doesn't think that they're able or capable or qualified, perhaps, to actually come into this Chamber. I think those notions are old-fashioned and out of place for the discussion and debate here. All Manitobans should be welcome in the Chamber; people of all walks of life.

And we are—on this side of this House are building a strong one Manitoba that includes Manitobans from every part of the province, from every area and from every background, to make sure that they have a voice and that they're welcome to not only be here, participate in our democracy, but have a seat at the table. And we're so happy that our team represents that as well.

Now, with—when it comes to the specifics on this resolution, honourable Deputy Speaker, I've already made the case that they don't know what they're talking about; they're off base. They are ill-informed about how the system works. We've clearly said that there aren't—is not a retail sales tax on the sale of new or old homes.

So this resolution is completely, completely off base. Furthermore, when I read the, I think I would say, ill-written resolution, we look at the construction costs and we see clearly that this is an initiative that our government has already taken two budgets ago.

We ran and we're implementing a system that actually provides a credit for construction costs.

* (11:30)

So they asked, and not only can we say we're doing it or we're going to do it, we can actually say we've done it. We've already brought in initiatives to lower taxes on construction costs. So, really, member opposite needs to do his homework before he brings in resolutions like this into this Chamber. He really ought to do a little more work before he brings something like this so that we can have a more meaningful debate today. We can actually do something that would move the needle for Manitobans, because this is an action we've already taken.

You know, our government is serious about affordability. We've taken steps like lowering the—and actually having a gas tax holiday, removing it for an entire year. That's delivering real affordability for Manitobans. That is exactly what Manitobans asked for. Not only does it deliver for them the affordability that Manitobans are looking for and asked for, it delivers on our commitment. That shows that this is a government Manitobans can trust.

On top of that, honourable Speaker, we are—delivered permanent gas tax relief, another affordability measure that members opposite failed to do. They even failed to consider it. They—for seven and a half years, they charged that tax on Manitobans. That's a tax-and-spend, failed PC government over there. It's a failed PC government. And you want to know what the truth is? That—it seems that as soon as we lower the gas tax, they say, oh, geez, oh, this is a terrible idea. We shouldn't have lowered the gas tax. Oh, geez.

Oh, and then they said they'd change their language, said, oh, you've got to do it; you've got to do the gas tax. Then we deliver a permanent 10 per cent gas tax and what do we hear from them? No, thanks. Only complaints. But I think the complaint is hidden behind a—perhaps a bit of jealousy, but also perhaps a bit of lack of foresight on their part. They couldn't see this coming. They couldn't see the benefits of having a permanent cut to the fuel tax. They couldn't see it.

And it shows the lack of vision that members opposite have. They failed for seven and a half years. They failed in their vision for Manitobans, got clearly rejected in the last campaign by putting forward a terrible, terrible campaign that attacks Manitobans, just tried to divide us.

Now, fortunately, the good people of Manitoba rejected that notion, set it aside, cast it away. And what did we—they get and chose instead? Well, they chose our team. They chose our team to build a better Manitoba, to make life more affordable as we did by cutting the gas tax and delivering permanent fuel tax. We did that by doing things that this resolution is actually calling for. We've already done them by putting in a credit to construction costs, to make home construction more affordable. We've already done it. We've already taken that step.

And on top of that, we're also fixing health care that they broke and fixing education that they broke. So we've got so much more in store, honourable Deputy Speaker, to make sure that we improve the lives of Manitobans.

But, as we're talking about this resolution, I want to put a couple more words on the record when it comes to housing. Because they failed so terribly and, in fact, you can often see—and Manitobans might be seeing this right clearly during the debate today, the hypocrisy of members opposite, bringing forward a bill to claim that they have some sort of new higher knowledge and passion for affordability and homes and housing, which is completely off base. They never showed that for seven and a half years.

In case you want to know, Manitobans, in case you want to know, their record is very clear. They cut Manitoba Housing units and closed them down right across the province. Ending and cancelling and cutting and closing and selling off Manitoba Housing units—what did that do? That put more pressure on the private sector for housing. Not only that, but it put more pressure on social services who are trying to help the unhoused population of Manitobans.

That was such a failed policy by the former government, such a failed policy, and it's having the trickle effects that we're still seeing today, where there is more pressure not only on rental units, not only in housing units, but right across our system, as we work to house more Manitobans throughout our system, build up our supply of affordable and deeply affordable housing, increase and encourage more rental units through our tax credit I just spoke about and ensure that Manitobans have a path eventually to home ownership as they're ready.

And so this is a concrete plan, a plan that is comprehensive, a plan that brings Manitobans together, and a plan that honourable Deputy Speaker and Manitobans can clearly see, a plan that members opposite not only don't understand, but they simply

don't have a concept of how or why it would benefit Manitobans. And that why—that's why Manitobans made the right choice by putting this team in charge.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you for the opportunity to put some words on the record regarding this resolution this morning.

It's clear to see that socialist side of the benches are completely out of touch with Manitobans. And it brings me great pride to talk about a resolution like this, asking and calling on our government, the—well, the NDP government now to—may not be all Manitobans' government, but the government in power now—to consider truly making life more affordable.

There are many pieces of legislation that the government is able to bring forward and pass in this Legislature. Unfortunately, many of those pieces of legislation don't have immediate effect on affordability, and we can see that with the long list of bills brought forward to debate in this House over the last couple of months. Very few of them, if any—no, I don't think any, actually—have had any effect or will have any effect on the affordability for Manitobans.

That's concerning. It's concerning as we struggle to keep pace with the rest of Canada on development. It's concerning as we struggle to keep pace with the rest of Canada and the rest of North America on economic growth.

One of the things that a government does have the ability to do is alter or eliminate taxation. The effects are widespread. It's a basic elementary fact of economics, the multiplier effect, and it's well documented, the impact that it has throughout an economy. It can be used in the most small scale of your local community, your neighbourhood and can have vast, widespread effects as a country or a nation.

So eliminating the tax on new home builds is one of those things that would have a tremendous multiplier effect across our province and our country. So in—it's seen in a number of different ways, but first and foremost, the goal is to increase the stock of housing in our country.

Right now, we've got a system where you can buy a used home, a home that's been lived in before, and that house doesn't have the retail sales tax on it. That home, it's already been assumed into the value of it, and now it hits the market.

When a developer is looking at building a new home to add to the stock of options for first-time

homebuyers or new homebuyers or people looking to give up their modest starter home for someone's new first home and upgrade into a new home, the tax structure is punishing.

So I can appreciate the member in question period saying that we don't have retail sales tax on home purchases, which is a flawed but—a flawed statement that has some fact, but the explanation on that is far deeper. The actual sale of the home doesn't have retail sales tax, but the products going into that home to make the home that you sell has retail sales tax.

So the resolution today is calling on the government to eliminate retail sales tax on the construction of new homes. And right now, under the socialist NDP government, we have retail sales tax on the construction of new homes.

* (11:40)

We're unique in Manitoba and not unique in a good way. There are a number—the majority of provinces across our country have eliminated the retail sales tax on construction of new homes, so that's all the construction products that go into a new home.

Provinces that have eliminated that are Ontario, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Quebec, BC and Prince Edward Island and of course Alberta, which doesn't have a provincial retail sales tax. So luckily for that province, don't have to worry about the additional burden of a retail sales tax.

So the effects of this are not just in accessibility of housing for Manitobans, the affordability of housing for Manitobans, but also our competitiveness in building this province. We have tremendous opportunity in Manitoba that I am proud of and I know that everyone else in this House is tremendously proud of, but we need the workforce. We need the workforce to fulfill the demands in the marketplace and the unavailability of housing is one of our largest stumbling blocks.

Eliminating the retail sales tax is an easy way to expand the accessibility to the market. It's something that the government can easily do and reap the rewards immediately. I know that socialist way of thinking is that if you give up a tax revenue, you've lost that money, and how are you going to fund your schools and your hospitals and all the social services? And the fact is, when you eliminate taxes, you expand the capacity of your economy.

The money comes back tenfold and it takes some foresight and some vision in order to make that

happen, and I think that's truly what we're lacking on the other side of the House. Socialists generally look from the inside out instead of from the outside in, and it's unfortunate that that's what we have leading our province right now.

But the socialists in this House can do the right thing and bring forward meaningful legislation to start us on a path of elimination of retail sales tax on new home builds, expanding the stock of homes, the availability to all Manitobans. I think that each Manitoban should have the right to work hard and afford a home in a nice neighbourhood, and that includes the ability to turn all neighbourhoods into a nice neighbourhood.

If you increase affordability we don't need to be speaking about representing people from different communities, different walks of life or different neighbourhoods. If we're able to increase the economic position and strength of our province, we're able to improve all neighbourhoods.

And on this side of the House, I think we just come from a different perspective. I'd—was not demeaning or insulting my comment during question period, but members on this side of the House are proud to have given up opportunities to represent all Manitobans in this House. We definitely didn't come to serve in these roles to be able to afford a home. I think it's our duty to do what is right for all Manitobans, to be able to afford a home and to improve the status of each and every one of their neighbourhoods. And by eliminating taxes like the retail sales tax on new home builds is one step forward in making life more affordable for Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

French spoken

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): Soyons clair : il n'y a pas de taxe de vente sur les maisons au Manitoba. Le député de Lakeside (M. King) ne sait pas de quoi il parle. Ces propos sont loufoques. Et d'ailleurs, je vais dire sa proposition ici. Sa proposition lit : l'élimination de la taxe sur les ventes au détail pour la construction et la vente de nouvelles maisons.

Donc, essentiellement, il n'a pas fait sa recherche. Ces propos sont incompréhensibles. Il ne sait pas de quoi il parle. Il n'y a pas de taxe de vente sur la vente de maisons au Manitoba.

Translation

Let's be clear: there is no sales tax on homes in Manitoba. The member for Lakeside (Mr. King) does not know what he is talking about. His comments are ridiculous. In fact, I will read his proposal here. His proposal reads: the elimination of retail sales tax on the construction and sale of new homes.

So, basically, he has not done his research. His comments are incomprehensible. He does not know what he is talking about. There is no sales tax on home sales in Manitoba.

English

I'll switch over to English just to help them out. So, honourable Speaker, there are no sales taxes on the sale of a new home in Manitoba. In fact, I'll read the resolution or the PMR: removing sales tax on the construction and sale of homes in Manitoba, there is no sales tax on the homes in Manitoba. It's as simple as that.

The MLA from Lakeside did not do his research. If he wants to talk about construction materials, if he wants to talk about electrical wire, if he wants to talk about two-by-fours, if he wants to talk about plumbing materials, construction materials then his—right?—wording on his resolution should have stated that.

So, once again, there is no sales tax on the sale of new homes in Manitoba.

French spoken

Donc, encore une fois, soyons clairs : le titre de cette résolution d'un député privé montre clairement que les Conservateurs ne comprennent pas même les bases du système de taxation au Manitoba.

C'est alarmant. Ils n'ont pas fait leur recherche. On leur donne un F-. On croit que c'était impossible de donner une telle note à quelqu'un de si incompetent. Mais on va quand même leur donner un F-.

Cette résolution propose de supprimer la taxe de vente au détail sur les ventes de maisons neuves, mais il n'y a pas de taxe de vente sur les maisons neuves au Manitoba, ni sur celle d'une maison ancienne d'ailleurs.

The Speaker in the Chair

Il est évident que les PCs n'ont pas fait leurs devoirs et ne prêtent pas attention aux détails.

Encore une fois, c'est alarmant d'avoir des gens qui se pointent en Chambre pour avancer des propos qui sont incorrects. Il est évident, encore une fois, que dans le Budget de 2024, il saurait que notre gouvernement travaille déjà à supprimer la taxe de vente sur les produits utilisés à la construction de logements. C'est dans le budget. Ils n'ont pas lu le budget. Imaginez-vous : un député du Manitoba qui ne fait pas son devoir, qui n'a même pas lu le budget.

Si le député de Lakeside (M. King) aurait lu notre budget, il saurait qu'il n'existe déjà des crédits, d'ailleurs qui vont être rétroactifs, pour aider les constructeurs quand ça vient à les aider avec l'achat de matériaux de construction. Comme ma grand-mère disait : n'ont pas fait leurs devoirs. C'est effrayant.

C'est un outil que nous utilisons d'ailleurs pour construire plus de logements pour le Manitoba comme nous l'avons promis. Et dans le Budget de 2024, nous l'avons estimé que les recettes non perçues pour mettre en œuvre cette stratégie s'élevaient à environ 35 millions de dollars. C'est un investissement important chaque année pour la construction de nouveaux logements.

Donc, tous les Manitobains méritent la liberté d'accéder à la propriété. Les PC ont vendu les logements sociaux pour le gouvernement défaillant, rendant les coûts de logements plus élevés pour les Manitobains. On le sait : il y a un manque de logements au Manitoba. Les PC ont vendu essentiellement des logements sociaux, qui veut dire que la demande pour les maisons a continué à monter au Manitoba.

Mais, ce qui est rendu abordable, c'est effrayant, on le sait : il faut absolument aider les gens à rendre la vie plus abordable. Notre gouvernement construit notre province après sept ans et demi de stagnation, ce qui inclut la construction de logements plus abordables pour les Manitobains.

Nous répondons aux pressions sur le marché immobilier et contribuons à maintenir les loyers à un niveau bas grâce à notre nouveau crédit d'impôt pour la construction de logements locatifs. Nous facilitons également l'accès à la propriété et le paiement des hypothèques pour les Manitobains grâce à notre crédit d'impôt de 500 dollars pour l'accessibilité à la propriété.

* (11:50)

Alors, j'aimerais continuer par dire que le logement abordable est un droit humain. Les membres d'en face d'ailleurs ont vendu des parcs de logements sociaux durant leurs sept ans et demi au gouvernement raté, qui a rendu le logement plus coûteux pour le Manitobain et les Manitobaines, c'est clair. Notre gouvernement répond aux pressions du marché locatif et aide à maintenir les loyers à un niveau abordable, grâce à de nouveaux crédits d'impôt pour la construction de logements locatifs.

Et si le député de Lakeside (M. King) avait fait sa recherche, il saurait que, dans notre budget, le crédit d'impôt pour la construction de logements locatifs prévoit 8 500 dollars – c'est dans le budget – pour la construction de nouveaux logements locatifs à prix de marché, et 13 500 \$ pour les logements classés comme abordables et maintenus comme tel pendant au moins 10 ans. Ce crédit d'impôt incitera la construction de plus de logements locatifs ici au Manitoba.

C'est dans le budget. Voyons donc. Voulez-vous me dire qu'il y a des députés dans cette Chambre qui n'ont pas lu le budget? Et encore une fois, je vais revenir à la résolution. L'élimination de la taxe de vente de détail pour la construction et la vente de nouvel immeuble au Manitoba : il n'y a pas de taxe de vente sur les maisons neuves au Manitoba. C'est clair, c'est clair comme de l'eau de roche. Et je trouve ça très frustrant d'avoir affaire avec des membres qui présentent des propositions qui sont simplement incorrectes et non factuelles.

Notre budget de vingt-mille vingt-cinq va aider à construire dans cette province après sept ans et demi de stagnation, ce qui inclut la construction de logements plus abordables pour les Manitobains. Nous avons récupéré trois immeubles d'ailleurs, en partenariat avec des leaders communautaires à but non lucratif, comme Siloam Mission et Sunshine House.

Et j'aimerais d'ailleurs continuer par dire, et je le dis encore, je vais le redire encore : il n'y a pas de taxe de vente sur la vente de nouvelles maisons au Manitoba. C'est clair. Notre gouvernement supprime déjà la taxe de vente sur les intrants utilisés pour la construction. Plus de logements au Manitoba, je viens de le citer. Il est temps que les Conservateurs commencent à faire leurs devoirs et qu'ils reconnaissent l'excellent travail de notre gouvernement, qu'il a accompli pour bâtir davantage de logements au Manitoba.

C'est aussi simple que ça. Alors j'aimerais finir par dire que le bilan des Conservateurs en matière de logement est effrayant, simplement effrayant. Tous les Manitobains méritent la liberté d'accéder à la propriété. Et d'ailleurs, le député de La Vérendrye (M. Narth) a partagé le fait qu'en Alberta – en Alberta – ils ont éliminé la taxe de vente sur les matériaux de construction. Savez-vous qu'en Alberta une maison pour une famille est en moyenne 150 000 dollars plus coûteux qu'ici au Manitoba?

Alors, est-ce que notre gouvernement a descendu l'inflation au Manitoba en éliminant la taxe sur l'essence ? Absolument. C'est l'effet que nous avons eu, grâce à notre beau travail jusqu'à date, et nous allons continuer à rendre la vie plus abordable pour les Manitobains ici au Manitoba.

Le précédent gouvernement a vendu plus de logements publics au secteur privé qu'il en a créé durant sept ans et demi. Les Manitobains ont perdu des unités locatives avec la vente de 185, rue Smith. Les pays – lorsque les NDP étaient au pouvoir, nous avons entretenu les logements sociaux pour tous les Manitobains en consacrant 76,4 millions de dollars par an à la récupération des unités dans toute la province.

Alors, je vais revenir à la proposition qui dit, clairement, noir sur blanc, l'élimination de la taxe sur la vente au détail pour la construction et la vente de nouvelles maisons ici au Manitoba. L'Honorable Président, chers Manitobains, chères Manitobaines, j'aimerais que vous sachiez qu'il n'y a pas de taxe de vente sur les nouvelles maisons au Manitoba. C'est aussi simple que ça. Alors cette proposition ne fait aucun sens, est un non-sens.

Et finalement, j'aimerais continuer par dire que, en coupant le budget des réparations et d'entretien, les Conservateurs ont laissé des résidents du logement social 'dans' les ressources nécessaires pour maintenir une bonne qualité de vie. C'est une pratique qui ne peut plus continuer dans notre province.

Alors nous continuerons de tenir cette promesse en empêchant la vente future de logements publics ou le logement ayant bénéficié de fonds publics. Nous allons continuer à faire du beau travail, nous allons continuer à aider les Manitobains et les Manitobaines à rendre la vie plus abordable. Nous allons continuer à nous battre pour vous.

Merci, l'Honorable Président.

Translation

Again, let's be clear: the title of this private member's resolution makes it clear that the Conservatives do not understand even the basics of the taxation system in Manitoba.

This is alarming. They have not done their research. We give them an F-. We think it was impossible to give such an incompetent person such a grade. But we are going to give them an F- anyway.

This resolution proposes eliminating the retail sales tax on new home sales, but there is no sales tax on new homes in Manitoba, or on older homes for that matter.

Clearly, the PCs have not done their homework and are not paying attention to detail.

Once again, it is alarming to have people come into the House and say things that are incorrect. Once again, it is obvious that in the 2024 budget, they would know that our government is already working to eliminate the sales tax on products used in housing construction. It's in the budget. They have not read the budget. Imagine: a member from Manitoba who does not do his homework, who has not even read the budget.

If the member for Lakeside (Mr. King) had read our budget, he would know that there are already credits, which will be retroactive, to help builders when it comes to buying building materials. As my grandmother used to say: They haven't done their homework. It is frightening.

This is a tool that we are using to build more housing for Manitoba, as we promised. In the 2024 Budget, we estimated that the foregone revenue to implement this strategy was about \$35 million. That is a significant investment every year in new housing.

All Manitobans deserve the freedom of home ownership. The PCs sold off the social housing for the failing government, making housing costs higher for Manitobans. We know: there is a housing shortage in Manitoba. The PCs sold off mostly social housing, which meant that demand for houses continued to rise in Manitoba.

But what needs to be affordable is scary, we know. We absolutely have to help people make life more affordable. Our government is building our province

after seven and a half years of stagnation, and that includes building more affordable housing for Manitobans.

We are responding to pressures in the housing market and helping to keep rents down with our new tax credit for the construction of rental housing. We are also making home ownership and mortgage payments easier for Manitobans through our \$500 Home Affordability Tax Credit.

** (11:50)*

I would like to continue by saying that affordable housing is a human right. Members opposite have sold off social housing stock during their seven and a half years of failed government, which has made housing more expensive for Manitobans, that is clear. Our government is responding to rental market pressures and helping to keep rents affordable with new tax credits for rental construction.

If the member for Lakeside (Mr. King) had done his research, he would know that in our budget, the tax credit for the construction of rental housing provides \$8,500 for the construction of new market-rate rental housing, and \$13,500 for housing classified as affordable and maintained as such for at least 10 years. This tax credit will encourage the construction of more rental housing here in Manitoba.

It is in the budget. Come on. Are you telling me that there are members in this House who have not read the budget? And once again I am going to come back to the resolution: the elimination of the retail sales tax on the construction and sale of new real estate in Manitoba. There is no sales tax on new homes in Manitoba. It is as clear as day. I find it very frustrating to deal with members who put forward proposals that are simply incorrect and not factual.

Our 2025 budget will help build in this province after seven and a half years of stagnation, and that includes building more affordable housing for Manitobans. We've picked up three buildings in partnership with non-profit community leaders like Siloam Mission and Sunshine House.

I would like to continue by saying and repeating: there is no sales tax on the sale of new homes in Manitoba. That much is clear. Our government is already eliminating sales tax on construction inputs. I just mentioned more housing in Manitoba. It is time for the

Conservatives to start doing their homework and recognize the great work our government has done to build more housing in Manitoba.

It is as simple as that. I would like to finish by saying that the Conservatives' record on housing is simply appalling. All Manitobans deserve the freedom of home ownership. In fact, the member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth) shared the fact that in Alberta—in Alberta—they eliminated the sales tax on building materials. Did you know that in Alberta a house for a family costs on average \$150,000 more than it does here in Manitoba?

Did our government bring down inflation in Manitoba by eliminating the gas tax? Absolutely. That is the effect we have had, thanks to our good work to date, and we will continue to make life more affordable for Manitobans here in Manitoba.

The previous government sold more public housing to the private sector than it created in seven and a half years. Manitobans lost rental units with the sale of 185 Smith Street. Since the NDP came to power, we have maintained social housing for all Manitobans by spending \$76.4 million a year to recover units across the province.

I want to come back to the proposal that says, clearly, in black and white, the elimination of the retail sales tax on the construction and sale of new homes here in Manitoba. Honourable Speaker, dear Manitobans, I would like you to know that there is no sales tax on new homes in Manitoba. It is as simple as that. So this proposal makes no sense: it's nonsense.

Finally, I would like to continue by saying that, by cutting the budget for repairs and maintenance, the Conservatives have left social housing residents without the resources they need to maintain a good quality of life. This is a practice that cannot continue in our province.

We will continue to keep this promise by preventing the future sale of public housing or housing that has benefited from public funds. We will continue to do good work. We will continue to help Manitobans make life more affordable. We will continue to fight for you.

The Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have one minute remaining

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—
PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 234—The Pride Month Act
(Commemoration Of Days, Weeks
and Months Act Amended)**

The Speaker: The hour being 11:55 a.m., in accordance with rule 24(7), I'm interrupting proceedings to proceed with a deferred division that was requested during last Tuesday's private members' business, on second reading of Bill 234, The Pride Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

Recorded Vote

The Speaker: Accordingly, call in the members.

* (12:00)

So the question before the House this morning is second reading of Bill 234, The Pride Month Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

Division

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

Ayes

Balcaen, Blashko, Brar, Byram, Chen, Compton, Cook, Corbett, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Ewasko, Fontaine, Johnson, Kennedy, Khan, King, Kostyshyn, Lagassé, Lamoureux, Loiselle, Maloway, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Nesbitt, Oxenham, Pankratz, Perchotte, Piwniuk, Sandhu, Schmidt, Schott, Smith, Wasyliv, Wiebe, Wowchuk.

Deputy Clerk (Mr. Tim Abbott): Ayes 37, Nays 0.

The Speaker: The motion is accordingly passed.

* * *

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 29, 2025

CONTENTS

ORDERS OF THE DAY		Resolutions
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS		
Second Readings—Public Bills		
Bill 236—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Stalking-Related Measures)		Res. 19—Removing Retail Sales Tax on the Construction and Sale of Homes
Perchotte	2498	King 2508
Questions		Questions
Corbett	2499	Dela Cruz 2510
Perchotte	2499	King 2510
Byram	2500	Narth 2510
Ewasko	2500	Stone 2511
Debate		Debate
Wiebe	2502	Moses 2513
Pankratz	2503	Narth 2515
Ewasko	2505	Loiselle 2516
Oxenham	2506	
		Debate on Second Readings— Public Bills
		Bill 234—The Pride Month Act (Commemoration Of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended) 2520

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>