



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*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CORBETT, Shannon	Transcona	NDP
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike, Hon.	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
ROBBINS, Colleen	Spruce Woods	PC
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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may 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.

O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all—oh, sorry. Turn the page.

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

Please be seated.

Introduction of New Member

The Speaker: Before we begin, I've got a few things to bring up.

First, I'm pleased to inform the House that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly has received from the Chief Electoral Officer a letter declaring the election of Colleen Robbins as the member of this Assembly representing the constituency of Spruce Woods. I hereby table a notice of the return of the member elected.

On behalf of—no.

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I have the honour to present you Colleen Robbins, the new member for the constituency of Spruce Woods, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims the right to take their seat.

The Speaker: On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and I wish you well in your parliamentary career.

Order, please.

Speaker's Statement

The Speaker: Before we begin, I have a statement on decorum for the House.

First, I'd like to welcome all honourable members back to this Chamber, and before we begin, I need to address a matter that has been bothering me over the summer break, and in fact has been on my mind since you chose me to be your Speaker almost two years ago.

You've heard me speak from this Chair before about my concerns over decorum. I can also share that Manitoba Speakers have been sharing their concerns about decorum for the last 150 years.

This is not a new problem, but it is a problem that I believe has gotten considerably worse in the last 10 years, and worse still over the last two.

In recent years we've also seen general and persistent deterioration of decorum in public discourse about politics and society across the country and around the world.

As your Speaker, as an MLA and as a citizen, I find these trends deeply troubling, and I believe we all have a responsibility in this moment.

I feel that it is essential for this Assembly to start a trend in the opposite direction, towards civility and respect, and away from division and hate.

I want you all to understand that this statement is—about decorum is the most serious that I have ever offered from this Chair.

We cannot continue to carry on the way we have.

We must do better, and we will.

The example we set in this room echoes across our province, and if we truly want political discourse to improve, we must improve what we do in here.

Our spring session did not end well. Members were displaying the worst decorum I've seen in this Chamber.

I've always said that heckling itself is not the problem, it—if it is done with some respect and restraint.

However, hollering angry insults and name calling across the Chamber definitely is a problem.

Members can make their points in debate. You do not need to shout over someone who has the floor to make your point.

During my time as an MLA, I've heard many angry comments and loud heckling from both sides of this House. In the latter part of the spring sittings this year, though, it was clear to me that one side of the House was showing worse decorum than the other.

To be clear, though—and I want to be perfectly clear on this—this message is directed to every member in this Chamber.

I am particularly concerned about angry, loud heckling that takes the form of personal attacks or insults, and I believe that such behaviour is not worthy of this place.

There is no other workplace in this province where such behaviour among colleagues would be acceptable, and it should not be acceptable here. While we do have the parliamentary privilege of freedom of speech in this place, with that privilege comes the responsibility to act accordingly and respectfully towards one another.

I need you all to be aware of this: that if this behaviour does not improve, as your Speaker, I will be duty bound to act.

My role includes the responsibility to preserve order and decorum and enforce the rules.

* (13:40)

I have been somewhat patient with members about decorum in the past, but my patience has run out.

Please be aware that if I, as your Speaker, call you to order for excessive or loud heckling and you ignore me, I will consider and acknowledge such behaviour as disregarding the authority of the Chair.

If I call you to order again and you continue to ignore me, that will put you on a path to being named and removed from this Chamber. I will not hesitate to proceed down that path with any member of this House if I believe your behaviour warrants that response.

I'm asking you all to carefully consider whether or not hollering at someone across the Chamber is more important than participating in debate or in question period.

The choice in this is yours.

Please be aware of your behaviour and consider yourselves warned and do not be shocked and aghast if I need to remove a member from this Chamber.

I sincerely hope that you will prove me wrong, and that we will conduct ourselves more respectfully in debate without angry comments being hollered across the Chamber.

Thank you for your attention to this very serious matter.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

The Speaker: Introduction of bills?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs Sixth Report

MLA Carla Compton (Chairperson): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

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

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs presents the following as its Sixth Report.

Meetings

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

- *March 27, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. (2nd Session – 43rd Legislature)*
- *September 16, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. (2nd Session – 43rd Legislature)*

Matters under Consideration

- *The hiring process for a Seniors' Advocate*

Committee Membership

Committee Membership for the March 27, 2025 meeting:

- *Ms. BYRAM*
- *MLA COMPTON*
- *MLA CROSS*
- *Mr. JOHNSON*
- *MLA LOISELLE*
- *MLA PANKRATZ*

Your Committee elected MLA CROSS as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected MLA PANKRATZ as the Vice-Chairperson.

Committee Membership for the September 16, 2025, meeting:

- *MLA BEREZA*
- *Ms. BYRAM*
- *MLA COMPTON*
- *MLA CROSS*
- *MLA LOISELLE*
- *MLA PANKRATZ (Vice-Chairperson)*

Your Committee elected MLA COMPTON as the Chairperson.

Motions

Your Committee agreed to the following motion at the March 27, 2025, meeting:

- *THAT a sub-committee of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs be struck to manage the process of hiring a Manitoba Seniors' Advocate, under the terms and conditions as follows:*
 - (a) the sub-committee consist of four Government Members, two Official Opposition Members and one Independent Liberal Member;*
 - (b) the sub-committee have the authority to call its own meetings, the ability to meet in camera, and be able to undertake duties it deems necessary in order to fulfil its responsibilities in the hiring process;*
 - (c) the sub-committee may only report back to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs with a recommendation that has been agreed to by all members; and*
 - (d) the Clerks as well as the Legislative Assembly Administration staff be authorized to attend all meetings of the sub-committee.*

Your Committee agreed to the following motions at the September 16, 2025, meeting:

- *THAT the report and recommendations of the Sub-Committee be received.*
- *THAT the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs recommends to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba that Leigh Anne Caron be appointed as the Seniors' Advocate.*

REPORT FROM THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Your Sub-Committee presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings

Your Sub-Committee met on the following occasions:

- *March 27, 2025, at 6:03 p.m.*
- *April 23, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.*
- *June 13, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.*
- *July 11, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.*

The March 27, 2025, meeting was held in camera in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

The April 23, 2025, meeting was held in camera in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

The June 13, 2025, meeting was held in camera in Room 254 of the Legislative Building.

The July 11, 2025, meeting was held in camera in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *The hiring process for a Seniors' Advocate*

Sub-Committee Membership

Sub-Committee Membership for the March 27, 2025, meeting:

- *Ms. BYRAM*
- *MLA COMPTON*
- *MLA CROSS*
- *Mr. JOHNSON*
- *MLA LOISELLE*
- *MLA LAMOUREUX*
- *MLA PANKRATZ*

Your Sub-Committee elected MLA LOISELLE as the Chairperson.

Your Sub-Committee elected MLA COMPTON as the Vice-Chairperson.

Sub-Committee Membership for the April 23, 2025, meeting:

- *Ms. BYRAM*
- *MLA COMPTON (Vice-Chairperson)*
- *MLA CROSS*
- *Mr. JOHNSON*
- *MLA LOISELLE (Chairperson)*
- *MLA LAMOUREUX*
- *MLA PANKRATZ*

Sub-Committee Membership for the June 13, 2025, meeting:

- Ms. BYRAM
- MLA COMPTON (Vice-Chairperson)
- MLA CROSS
- Mr. JOHNSON
- MLA LOISELLE (Chairperson)
- MLA LAMOUREUX
- MLA PANKRATZ

Sub-Committee Membership for the July 11, 2025, meeting:

- MLA BEREZA
- Ms. BYRAM
- MLA COMPTON (Vice-Chairperson)
- MLA CROSS
- MLA LOISELLE (Chairperson)
- MLA LAMOUREUX
- MLA PANKRATZ

Staff present for all Sub-Committee meetings

- Carrie Perumal, Director of Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services (except July 11, 2025)
- Deanna Wilson, Executive Director of Legislative Assembly Administration Branch
- Katerina Tefft, Clerk Assistant/Clerk of Committees (except July 11, 2025)
- Tim Abbott, Deputy Clerk (July 11, 2025)

Agreements by the Sub-Committee

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on March 27, 2025:

- The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will draft all paperwork involved in the hiring process of a Seniors' Advocate, including the Advertising Plan, Selection Criteria, Paper Screening Criteria, and Advertisement, for the Sub-Committee's consideration and review.
- To advertise the position both locally and nationally, and that the successful candidate should have a solid understanding of Manitoba and services offered to seniors in Manitoba
- To adopt the following Terms of Reference:

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Terms of Reference for Hiring of Independent Officers of the Assembly

March 27, 2025

Purpose:

On March 27, 2025, the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs passed a motion to strike a Sub-Committee to manage the process of hiring a new Seniors' Advocate. The Sub-Committee, consisting of four Government Members, two Official Opposition Members and one Independent Liberal Member, has the authority to call its own meetings, the ability to meet in camera, and be able to undertake duties it deems necessary in order to fulfil its responsibilities in the hiring process. The Sub-Committee must report back to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs with a recommendation that has been agreed to by all Members.

The Sub-Committee will be assisted in their duties by the staff from the Committees Branch and the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services who are authorized to attend all meetings of the Sub-Committee.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. *The Sub-Committee assigns the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services to deal with all the logistics and paperwork involved with the hiring process of the Seniors' Advocate.*
2. *The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will:*
 - (a) *devise a hiring process which includes an advertising plan, a paper screening process, an interview process and a selection process;*
 - (b) *draft an advertisement, paper screening criteria and selection criteria;*
 - (c) *print the advertisement as set out in the advertising plan;*
 - (d) *conduct the paper screening of applications received;*
 - (e) *report to the Sub-Committee all qualified candidates for review and selection to interview;*
 - (f) *conduct interviews on candidates selected by the Sub-Committee;*
 - (g) *report to the Sub-Committee, the interview rating results on the candidates selected by the Sub-Committee; and*

- (h) conduct reference checks on candidate(s) and report to the Sub-Committee any issues or concerns identified.
3. The Sub-Committee Members will individually have the ability to view the list of qualified candidates along with their background paperwork confidentially at the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services Office prior to the Sub-Committee's review.
 4. The Sub-Committee will review the list of qualified candidates and select which applicant(s) will be interviewed by the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services.
 5. Each Member of the Sub-Committee shall be entitled to observe the interviews while having participation in the scoring process, with a minimum of one designated Member per recognized party in attendance at each interview.
 6. The Sub-Committee will review the interview rating results and, pending successful reference checks, determine the candidate to be recommended for the position of Seniors' Advocate.
 7. The Sub-Committee must provide a report to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs that includes a recommendation for the Seniors' Advocate.

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on April 23, 2025:

- The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will post the Advertisement for a minimum of 10 days per publication, with a June 8, 2025, deadline for applications. Following the closure of the advertisement, Human Resource Services will conduct the paper screening of applications received and provide to the Sub-Committee a list of all qualified candidates for review in advance of its next meeting.
- The Sub-Committee will then meet to review the list of qualified candidates and determine which applicant(s) will be interviewed.
- The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will draft interview questions for the Sub-Committee's consideration and review.

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on June 13, 2025:

- To interview six of the seven candidates selected for review by Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services.
- Note: One of those six candidates declined to be interviewed.
- To replace Mr. JOHNSON as a Member of the Sub-Committee for the interviews and any further meetings going forward due to scheduling conflicts.
- Note: MLA BEREZA was selected as the replacement Member by the PC caucus.

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreement during the meeting on July 11, 2025:

- Pending successful reference checks, the Sub-Committee agreed to recommend to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs that Leigh Anne Caron be appointed as the Seniors' Advocate.
- In the event that the chosen candidate declines the offer or the reference checks are unsuccessful, the Sub-Committee agreed to meet again to discuss further options.

Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services Activities:

As agreed to by the Sub-Committee on March 27, 2025, Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services was tasked with all the logistics and paperwork involved with the hiring process of the Seniors' Advocate.

On June 13, 2025, the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services reported to the Sub-Committee a list of seven qualified candidates for review and selection to be interviewed.

The Sub-Committee considered applications for the position of Seniors' Advocate as follows:

- 111 applications were received for the position.
- Four individuals were interviewed for the position on July 3, 2025.
- One individual was interviewed for the position on July 4, 2025.

On July 11, 2025, Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services reported to the Sub-Committee the interview rating results of the five candidates interviewed.

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

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): I am pleased to table the Province of Manitoba Annual Report and Public Accounts for the year ended March 31, 2025.

The Speaker: And I have several reports to table.

First, I have a document to table for the House in accordance with section 49(2), The Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act. I am tabling a report by the Ethics Commissioner regarding the honourable First Minister, dated August 27, 2005.

Next, I have, in accordance with section 49(2), The Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act, I'm tabling a report by the Ethics Commissioner regarding the honourable member for River Heights (MLA Moroz), dated July 16, 2025.

I'm pleased to table the Annual Report of the Legislative Assembly Management Commission for the year ending March 31, 2025. Copies of the report will be sent by email directly to members.

And, finally, I'm pleased to table the report of members' expenses for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

No further tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Call to Denounce Political Violence

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology): Honourable Speaker, I rise today on a matter critically important to all members of this House. Indeed, to all Manitobans.

As the session begins, we find ourselves returning to the Chamber during a deeply troubling time; a time when the rules of political civility, of open and free public discourse—the very rules that have governed us for decades—are being swept aside by anger, fear and isolation, and the resulting political polarization that is often fueled by politicians looking for opportunity has resulted in an escalating tide of violence.

Much of that violence takes place where society does not see it, but that doesn't make it less harmful.

It takes many forms: toxic social media posts that ignite algorithms; threatening emails, texts and phone messages and persistent harassment; attempted arsons, angry graffiti on walls, smashed windows and burned offices; and shockingly abusive comments about appearance, gender, religion and ethnicity—all designed to extract a personal toll.

Sadly, all have become part of the everyday public service experience for too many of our colleagues in this Chamber, in chambers across the country and beyond.

I want to acknowledge the targeting of the office of the MLA for St. Johns on Orange Shirt Day and the targeting of the MLA for Point Douglas, the first two Indigenous women ever to serve in the Manitoba Cabinet. This is unacceptable, and as a government, we unequivocally reject violence against Indigenous women and all forms of political violence.

Increasingly, Honourable Speaker, that violence takes place in broad daylight, and tragically, lives are being taken out of rage and division. And it's being witnessed in real time by millions—then streamed and rewatched by millions more. The recent pages of history are lined with the names of its victims—far too many to recount on an individual basis. But nor should we. We pause and recognize the tragedy that each loss represents.

Honourable Speaker, this violence is becoming normalized, and in the process, we're losing our ability to talk to one another, to seek common ground, to compromise, to build our communities together along—alongside those whose opinions we do not always share—the very reason this institution exists. And, as a result, many of our citizens are slowly losing faith in public processes.

As we begin the new session, I want to encourage members of this Chamber to stand together against all forms of political violence, and against the rage farming and division that create it.

What brings Manitobans together is a shared set of values, and a deep understanding that ultimately we all want the same things: to lead meaningful lives, to raise our families in peace, to build a better world—to build one Manitoba.

As has been said many times before by others, Honourable Speaker: the arc of the moral universe is long, and it bends towards justice. But it does not bend on its own—it can't—bends because we pull it in that direction.

My call today is to every member of this Chamber, to every Manitoba who—Manitoban who is listening, to commit themselves to this task. Pull your neighbour closer. Unite, rather than divide. The alternative must become unthinkable. I ask now for a moment of silence for all members to stand together against all political violence and its many victims.

* (13:50)

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

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): Honourable Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in affirming that democracy is sustained through free speech, respectful debate and the peaceful exchange of ideas, not through violence or intimidation.

Recent tragedies across North America, including the assassination of public figures and elected officials, serve as grim reminders of the dangers of allowing political grievances to cross the line into violence.

We have also seen disturbing incidents closer to home, including repeated acts of arson against constituency offices of elected members of this Legislature. These acts are unfortunately not new to Manitoba. MLA constituency offices and homes have been attacked in the past simply because someone disagreed.

These attacks are not simply property crimes; they are attacks on our democratic institutions, on the ability of elected officials to serve the public and on the safety of their staff and constituents.

In a democracy, our disagreements must never escalate to violence. We may defer—passionately on ideas, but we must always defend one another's right to be heard.

Words and ideas, absent clear incitement to harm, are not violence. They remain the only legitimate means by which a free people can resolve differences. That is the essence of democracy: the contest of ideas through reason, persuasion and debate.

Honourable Speaker, Manitobans expect more from their leaders. They expect us to rise above partisan divisions and to reaffirm our shared values of respect and dialogue. Above all, they expect us to demonstrate unity, as Manitobans and as Canadians, in condemning violence and protecting democratic freedoms.

And we can do even more. Manitoba can be a beacon to others around the world, showing how political debate can be passionate yet peaceful, principled yet respectful. We can demonstrate that unity and democracy are strengthened not by silencing voices, but by allowing every voice to be heard in safety and respect.

Today I add my voice in calling on all members of this House, and indeed all Manitobans, to reject violence, to condemn those who attempt to justify it and to affirm that the proper way to resolve political and social differences is through dialogue, reason and democratic debate.

That is how we show unity as Manitobans and Canadians. That is how we preserve the values of community, freedom and democracy that we all cherish.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Members' statements. Oh, my mistake. A moment of silence.

A moment of silence was observed.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Yom Kippur

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology): Sundown today marks the beginning of the holiest day on the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur. This sacred day will be observed by many of my friends and neighbours in River Heights, and by the wider Jewish community across our province.

Yom Kippur, or Day of Atonement, concludes the Ten Days of Repentance, which began with Rosh Hashanah.

For those who observe the day in a more traditional manner, Yom Kippur serves as a time of deep reflection on personal shortcomings over the past year, seeking forgiveness and committing oneself to improvement in the year ahead.

Others, Honourable Speaker, may use this time to reflect on their personal journey, assessing both successes and challenges and considering how their lives and the well-being of their communities might be improved if we all committed ourselves to being more compassionate with each passing year.

Honourable Speaker, the act of self-reflection and the courage to seek forgiveness are not only essential for personal growth but they're also fundamental to the strength and cohesion of our communities. These

are values that transcend faith and background, and ones we might all be wise to contemplate.

While deeply self-reflective, Yom Kippur is also one of the most joyous days on the calendar, as it offers a profound sense of hope and renewal for the coming year. After a challenging year for many of our— in our province, hope for a brighter future resonates deeply with us all.

Honourable Speaker, I ask members to join me in extending heartfelt best wishes to the Jewish community in Manitoba for a safe, happy and prosperous new year.

Thank you, shalom and may peace embrace us all in the year ahead.

Criticism of NDP's Management Record

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I want to take this moment and welcome the newest member to this Legislative Assembly, the honourable member for Spruce Woods (Mrs. Robbins). This member is sitting here today in spite of this Premier (Mr. Kinew) breaking the law.

Now, under the NDP Premier and his failing Minister of Finance (MLA Sala), Manitoba is ranked the worst province in Canada—the worst GDP growth in Canada, under this NDP government.

The Premier has proven everything we've said on this side of the House, and that is the economic horse is dead under the NDP. Unemployment is up to 6 per cent. Youth unemployment is 12.5 per cent. Grocery prices are higher now than they've ever been in this history of this province, under this NDP.

But it gets worse. Wait times for emergencies, surgeries and diagnostic testing are the longest they've ever been, under this failed Health Minister. The Premier promised bail reform in the first 100 days; now over 700 days later, crime is the highest it's ever been in this province, under this failed Justice Minister.

And the minister that represents Families and Manitobans for accessibilities shames and insults an ASL interpreter and the entire Deaf community. She blocks foster families and national Indigenous news reporters from contacting her. And the same minister condones public violence and states that she has no empathy for someone who is murdered in front of his own family for exercising their rights for freedom of speech.

To top it all off, this Premier wants Manitobans to believe that prosperity is ahead of us only in 2040,

while on this side of the House, we disagree. That prosperity can happen and now. It starts by unleashing the potential of Manitoba by extracting critical minerals, exporting oil and energy and bringing billions of dollars into this province. It starts with opportunities for all Manitobans equally, and on this side of the House, we're going to work to make that happen.

New Liberal Leader Willard Reaves

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): As you all know, after the last provincial election, the Manitoba Liberal Party faced some challenges.

I entered these Chambers as the only Manitoba Liberal, and it became a new experience. But because of many of you and the great team around me, I have never felt that I have stood alone.

It was all a bit of a whirlwind, but I am happy—and I was happy—to become the interim leader while prioritizing the constituents of Tyndall Park and starting my family.

I owe a big thank-you to a few individuals including our party president, Terry Hayward, my team and staff at the party headquarters here at the Legislature and through my constituency office.

I am also very grateful for my personal friends and family for their support as I undertook the interim leader role these past two years.

But now, Honourable Speaker, I am proud to share that we have a new Manitoba Liberal Party Leader, Willard Reaves, who has joined us today in the gallery.

* (14:00)

Willard is exceptionally passionate about making our province safer and stronger. He is a man with integrity, resilience and vision. Over the last four decades, he has served Manitoba proudly through the Manitoba Department of Justice, sports and politics.

Now, Honourable Speaker, it is hard not to reference football when speaking about Willard, so allow for me just to say that I know he is going to bring his team spirit to build up the Manitoba Liberal Party and provide Manitobans with more than a two-party system.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker, and congratulations, Willard.

The Speaker: Are there no further member statements?

Acknowledging Spruce Woods Constituents

Mrs. Colleen Robbins (Spruce Woods): It's an honour to rise today for my very first private statement—member's statement—and to thank the people of Spruce Woods for placing their trust in me to represent them in this Legislature.

I am deeply grateful for the confidence and support of my constituents, and I look forward to serving our community with dedication and pride.

Spruce Woods is a diverse and resilient constituency. Spruce Woods' strength lies within its people, so I'd like to take this opportunity today to recognize some outstanding achievements close to home.

Congratulations to Rachelle Boyes on being named Cowgirl of the Year, a well deserved honour and that reflects her hard work and talent.

I'd also like to extend my best wishes to Jenel Boyes, her daughter, as she heads to Las Vegas to compete in the Rope for the Crown. We are cheering you on as a champion from here.

And also Stran Dunham that has now, today, entered the finals at the Canadian Finals Rodeo in Edmonton. All the best, Stran.

But, finally, congratulations to Team Canada's women's rugby team for making history and winning the silver medal on the world stage. I am especially proud to recognize No. 2, Emily Tuttosi, as a Souris hometown girl. What an incredible achievement and an inspiration to young athletes from across this province.

Honourable Speaker, I am proud to celebrate these successes in the Chamber today, and once again I thank the constituents of Spruce Woods for the honour of representing them.

As I begin this new chapter, I do so with humility and deep sense of duty. I will ensure the voices of Spruce Woods are heard in this Chamber, and I will dedicate myself to a stronger future for all Manitobans.

Convalescent Home of Winnipeg

Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry): Honourable Speaker, today is National Seniors Day, and I'm proud to rise and recognize the Convalescent Home of Winnipeg, a non-profit registered charity, which has served Manitobans with compassion and excellence for more than a century.

Established in 1883 as Manitoba's first care home, the convalescent home has always held a simple but profound mission: to provide older adults with dignity, care and comfort they deserve.

In 2026 they'll be celebrating their 120th anniversary of opening their first home on McDermot Avenue. Today the home serves 84 residents, most of their mid-80s, each living with physical and cognitive challenges. Beyond providing health care, their commitment is to create an environment where residents feel valued, respected and truly at home. Every service they provide supports not only the individual resident, but also their entire family, creating a true circle of care.

As the home's current location on Hugo Street was built in 1960s, the staff face numerous challenges while maintaining the aging building. Recently, the home embarked on an exciting initiative called Rooms to Thrive. This \$1.5-million completely donor-supported revitalization project is transforming residents' spaces, refreshing rooms with light, warmth and accessibility. While their walls may be old, their vision is full of energy, comfort and love.

The home's dedication to excellence has not gone unnoticed. Recently, Convalescent Home of Winnipeg was recognized by Eldercare Review magazine as a 2025 Top Senior Home Care provider. This honour belongs to their entire team: the staff, volunteers, families and supporters who together make the home such a special place.

The Convalescent Home of Winnipeg stands as a proud example of tradition meeting innovation, where history, compassion and community come together to create a true home for older adults.

I encourage all members to join me in acknowledging the hard work and dedication of the development co-ordinator Sherry Hemper [*phonetic*] and her team who join us here in the gallery today.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

An Honourable Member: Leave.

The Speaker: Is there leave for the member to finish his statement?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

The Speaker: I've heard a no.

Is there leave for the member to finish his statement? [*Agreed*]

Mr. Wasyliw: Their impact is felt not only by the individuals they support, but also by their families and the broader community.

Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I have some introductions I'd like to make.

First all—first of all, I'd like to draw attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have the six individuals who are serving on the Assembly's internship program for the 2025-2026 year are seated.

In accordance with the established practice since the program originated in 1985, the interns are divided between the recognized parties in the House, with three interns assigned to the government caucus and three to the official opposition.

The interns will be performing a wide variety of writing and research work as well as other important tasks for members of each caucus. The interns commence their assignments on September 8, 2025, and will complete them at the end of June 2026. And just a note of interest, we held the first ever interns' reunion in this place this summer, and it was a huge success, with interns from over the years coming back to join us.

So this year's interns: working with the government caucus, Ahdieh Bimrew, from the University of Winnipeg, Sidney Burzynski from Queen's University, Hayden Gilmour from the University of Manitoba. And working with the official opposition caucus, Fredrich McCracken from the University of Winnipeg, Ngozi Okose from the University of Manitoba and Emma Winram from the University of Manitoba.

The new academic director for our internship program is Professor Brandon Trask from the University of Manitoba. The day-to-day administration of the intern program is carried out by Andrea Norlock, the Clerk's Office administrative assistant, assigned to the internship program. The program operates under the direction of our Clerk, Rick Yarish. The caucus representatives on the intern administration committee are the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) and the member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth).

I'd like to take this opportunity on behalf of all honourable members to congratulate the interns on their appointment to the program.

And I hope that you will have interesting, productive and a successful year with the Assembly. Welcome.

And I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today Nathan Cullen, who is the former Member of Parliament and former member of the British Columbia legislature, who is the guest of the Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz).

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

I would further like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today Carol Hogson [*phonetic*], Jodi Logan, Maralee Dodds, Nancy Brennan, Donna Devins, who are the guests of the honourable member for Spruce Woods (Mrs. Robbins).

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

And I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today Mickey Wharton and Giovanna Blixt, who are guests of the honourable member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton).

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

* (14:10)

ORAL QUESTIONS

Crime and Public Safety Timeline for Bail Reform

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, Manitobans have been demanding answers from this Premier on the increasing level of crime in this province. This Premier falsely promised you: he said he would reform the bail process in 100 days after being elected. Now, over 700 days later, nothing from this Premier other than higher crime rates in this province.

One night in June, five separate stabbings occurred. I table that for the Premier here today. One week later, in June, a man released on bail by this minister stabbed another man and then was released. I table that. In June again, a man was randomly assaulted with a machete. I table that for this Premier to review.

These are just a few examples of out-of-control repeat violent offenders under this NDP government.

Where is the bail reform this Premier promised in his first 100 days?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Keeping you safe is one of the most important jobs that government has. That's why in the first few months of office, under the leadership of our Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe), we implemented a five-point plan called for by the National Police Federation. It led to the National Police Federation saying that, on bail reform, Manitoba was leading the country, and they encourage other provinces to follow suit.

I will say that the member opposite, though, struck a bad tone in his opening statement. We heard the member for Borderland (Mr. Guenter) appeal to people to not engage in rage farming, and yet the member opposite couldn't resist but taking a cheap shot and trying to inflame division in this House.

Here's the thing about public safety: on this side of the House, we don't need to pick and choose who we keep safe. We're trying to make Manitoba safer for every single person—our MLAs in this Chamber included, Indigenous women included.

Can the members opposite, who campaigned on not searching the landfill, say—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Government Record

Mr. Khan: Here's where the Premier has it wrong: stating facts is not rage baiting. It is the facts of this failed NDP government under this Premier's leadership that crime is out of control in this province, the highest crime rates has ever been under this NDP government.

This pattern continued all summer. In Thompson, a group of young offenders, and I quote, with many machetes, end quote, assaulted a 15-year-old boy. And I table that here for the Premier. In August, a 17-year-old boy was injured when a man with a machete assaulted him; I table that as well for the Premier.

In spring, the member on this side of the House, from Brandon West, stood right here and said: We need to do more in restricting machetes and other weapons. What did this Premier do—and Justice Minister? They laughed in his face. So much for a listening government.

Will the Premier admit today that he and his Justice Minister are complete and utter failures when it comes to protecting lives in Manitoba?

Mr. Kinew: You know, our Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) banned the sale of machetes to kids. Seems like a common sense solution, but it's something that the PCs never did. That member opposite never did that while he was sitting around the Cabinet table.

And I'll go ahead and remind the folks here today that the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) didn't actually stand up on any questions on public safety in this Chamber this spring once the Winnipeg crime stat numbers came out. Do you know why that was? Because crime is down in the latest statistics.

And so the member opposite wants to stand up today and show his outrage. Why doesn't he show his outrage at what is happening with the targeting of two of his colleagues? Go tell the people who are going to gather here this afternoon that you should not be protesting a minister of the Crown's right to serve the people of Manitoba.

And I would say to the goofballs out front: if you have an issue, you have an issue with me. I am the one who decided to keep this minister at the Cabinet table—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Manitoba Crown Attorneys Bail System Recommendations

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): So much for one Manitoba under this false Premier. Manitobans have the right to protest. They have the right to freedom of speech. You heard it here; this Premier is trying to silence you.

Democracy, freedom of speech, debate: these are all healthy things in this province. What is not healthy is when the Premier and the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) showed no empathy for someone who was murdered for expressing those rights.

This Premier wants to talk about a five-point system that this failed NDP Justice Minister put out. It's a failure. Crime rates are higher than ever. The Manitoba Association of Crown Attorneys has called on the provincial government to make changes that would allow Crown attorneys enough time to properly prepare for bail hearings. What does this Minister of

Justice say? Nothing. Absolutely nothing from this Minister of Justice.

So I'll ask the Premier: Will the Premier commit today to implement all of the recommendations brought forward by the Manitoba Crown attorneys to strengthen Manitoba's bail system to keep violent offenders in jail and not out on bail?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): You know, I've got so much respect for people who go to work each and every day to keep our community safe. I've got a ton of respect for everybody working in the Justice system, including our correctional officers.

And I think the member opposite really does a disservice through his heckling, because he doesn't even remember what he did at the Cabinet table. He cut the number of Crowns. He cut the pay for correctional officers. He led to unprecedented overtime. They closed the Dauphin jail. They closed the Agassiz Youth Centre. And then they want to come run around and tell rural people the NDP cause crime—no, you didn't. You are the ones who set people free by closing jails, by closing correctional facilities.

The thing about rural Manitoba, that they saw through them in the Spruce Woods by-election is that they always, on the PC side of the House, underestimate their intelligence.

We're straight up. We talk to you straight up. Mature conversations, real solutions. Two years in, we're making Manitoba safer. We're growing the economy. We're fixing the health care. And you know what the best part is, Honourable Speaker?

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

And I would just remind all members to make sure you direct your comments through the Chair, not directly at members across the way.

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

Minister of Families Cabinet Removal Request

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): I want to start off by being incredibly clear here: violence and threats have no place in political discourse or society. Everyone should feel safe at work, in public or at home, no matter how much someone else might disagree with them.

The vandalism and fires at 'costincheny' offices are egregious, and I condemn such acts completely. This must stop. This is not right.

Now, when the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) rationalized the assassination of Charlie Kirk, she crossed a line that I did not expect to see from a member in this Chamber. Regardless of political beliefs, violence is never the answer and never something to be justified or rationalized. But the Minister of Families did just that: she justified and rationalized the murder of someone whom she did not agree with.

The question is simple: Why is the Premier keeping a minister in his Cabinet who has showed such visceral hate, condoned political violence and showed no empathy for someone that was murdered in front of—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Well, I'm keeping the minister in Cabinet because she's a great minister, and because I don't believe in cancel culture, unlike the members opposite.

But here's the thing about the Leader of the Opposition: he wants to throw the stone and hide the hand. He wants to engage in the wedge politics but appear to rise above at the same time.

What was that nonsense of a question we just witnessed here? He says targeting political people is wrong and then he runs and targets a political opponent in this very Chamber. This is what I mean by he underestimates the intelligence of the members of the Conservative base.

Hey, if you're a PC supporter, guess what: there's too much corruption in the PC Party of Manitoba. They're going to block debate this afternoon on fines levied against Heather Stefanson, the first premier to be fined under conflict of interest law—who, by the way, was just appointed to the board of a financial firm out of the Cayman Islands.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

* (14:20)

Mr. Khan: Manitobans, you heard it right here: according to this Premier, I can't even ask a question. A question to hold them accountable is deemed violence by this Premier.

No, a question is democracy; we're having debate. Manitobans have the right to get answers from this failing NDP government.

He said he's falsely listening; well, will he listen today? Manitobans have been loud and clear. They've lost faith in this Minister of Families. She blocked the only Indigenous national news team, she blocked foster families from contacting her, she's separated children from families and put them in hotels, she posted that she has no empathy for a man that had been murdered in front of his family.

So Honourable Speaker, today I table over 450 emails from different Manitobans demanding the minister be removed from her office.

Will the Premier listen to Manitobans, like he falsely says he is, and remove the minister, the failed Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine), from her Cabinet position today?

Mr. Kinew: Well, I'm going to resist commenting on how he struggled to lift the binder and instead focus on the words, okay? When we're talking—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —about the words that the member opposite used here, let's focus on this. Everybody watching here in the House, everybody watching at home: Does he attack me? No, he doesn't. He attacks the Indigenous woman sitting in the front row. That is what we're calling out. That's what my colleague from River Heights brought attention to.

People will come to my constituency office, 300 people, and they will protest, but nobody ever thought to light a match. Why is it that that happens to our colleague from St. Johns? Why is it that that happens to our colleagues from Point Douglas? Seems like gender-based violence. It seems like Indigenous-specific racism.

And what is the member opposite engaging in here? Does he call me to account? No, he has to target the member for St. Johns (MLA Fontaine) because he doesn't have the heart to strike out a new path. He wants to pander to the base; he wants to pander to division; he wants to continue—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Khan: Here is the difference, Honourable Speaker and Manitobans: I don't need to attack the Premier, but I can ask him tough questions. I can hold him to account, and that is what our job is. That's what I'm doing.

And when I do that, what does he say? Violence.

It's not violence. I am asking him a question to be accountable for Manitobans, and what does he throw? Racism in our face. What does he throw? Violence. This is gaslighting by the Premier right here, clear as day. It is our job to hold him accountable.

Clearly the government standards on that side—the member from Fort Garry was kicked out because his law partner was hired by Peter Nygård; he kicked him out.

Will this Premier, today, explain to all the Manitobans, over 450 emails, why he is keeping this failed Minister of Families in Cabinet? Will he respond to each one of them personally, or will he just avoid them like he's avoiding all of the accountability for his failed ministers across the way?

Mr. Kinew: So there you go, the law and order party sticking up for Peter Nygård, the biggest creep in Manitoba history.

You know what was missing from the question—any of the questions he asked today? Health care, the No. 1 issue. Guess why? Honourable Speaker, 3,400 new front-line—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —jobs, 285 new physicians, emergency rooms reopened in western Manitoba.

You know what else was missing? Roads, one of the top topics in the Spruce Woods by-election. We're fixing Highway 2. We're fixing Highway 2 between Souris and Deleau.

Guess what else? We put Churchill on the national agenda. We've got critical minerals and potash moving out of that port now. We cut property taxes; we cut income taxes; we cut the gas tax; we cut the payroll tax. Two years into government, we are delivering on our promises to you.

They're focused on themselves; they're focused on the wedge; they're focused on social media. We're focused on what really counts: you and your family being—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Provincial Finances Deficit Concerns

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Billions of dollars of growing debt is on the backs of Manitobans with never-ending NDP deficits. While the PCs left the NDP with a \$373-million surplus, the NDP have now run back-to-back deficits since being in office. The

NDP has now posted a \$1.1-billion deficit last year, and this year they are projecting \$890-million deficit.

Manitoba's finances are getting worse under this NDP government.

Will this NDP minister admit that he will not balance the books by 2027 and plans to run years of high deficits and high taxes on Manitobans?

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): Honourable Speaker, it seems that the member opposite has forgotten that her government—previous government left Manitobans with a \$2-billion deficit hole that Manitobans needed to climb out from.

What did we do in the following budget, and what did we achieve as certified by the Auditor General? We've reduced that by 42 per cent, almost \$850-million reduction.

We're focused on setting a right fiscal path forward. We're committed to balance, and we're going to do that in a good way, with a fiscal plan. It's very different than what the members opposite left with—Manitobans with, a giant fiscal hole to climb out of.

We're going to keep doing that work of finding a fiscally responsible path forward while we invest in health care, affordability and making Manitoba safer.

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

Mrs. Stone: Credit agencies are against what this minister is saying and are contradicting what this minister is saying today.

Moody's has warned about Manitoba's worsening finances under this NDP government. They are predicting Manitoba's deficit will be far higher than what the NDP projected in last spring's budget. And Moody's said growing deficits will likely continue next year, contradicting this minister's claim that he plans to budget by 2027.

Who should Manitobans believe: the credit rating agencies or this failed NDP Finance Minister?

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, we were very proud to see Moody's and S&P reaffirm our credit ratings with stable outlooks, showing their independent confidence in our fiscal management.

You know what else, Honourable Speaker? This year, public accounts show this was the first year that Manitoba has had a clean audit opinion since 2017. Let's take a moment to think about what happened in 2016 and the following year. Their entire period in

government, they didn't get one single clean audit opinion. What happened this year? The first one in seven and a half years.

We're proud to be bringing proper fiscal management and accountability to this province after way too long a period under their leadership.

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

Mrs. Stone: A \$373-million surplus left by this PC government has been turned into back-to-back deficits by this NDP government.

The minister failed to say whether he would rise taxes to balance the budget. He's already raised income taxes by removing indexation. He's raised hydro rates by 12 per cent. He has increased education property taxes by \$350 million on the backs of Manitobans since 2023.

Taxes are increasing; spending is increasing; unemployment is up, and our deficit is continuing to increase, year after year on the backs of Manitobans while our economy is failing.

How much more is this NDP minister going to raise taxes on Manitobans and make Manitobans suffer for his failures? *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, the former members left Manitoba with a \$2-billion deficit. They don't have to take our word for it. We hired an independent accounting firm, MNP. I don't know if they don't believe what MNP has to say, but MNP verified that they made reckless and risky decisions that left Manitoba with a \$2-billion deficit.

The reason is the former government did not have a plan, they did not have any intention on being transparent with Manitobans, and they left us with a giant mess to clean up. And what did we do? In one year, we reduced the deficit by \$850 million. That's because we can do the work.

We can do the work of finding a fiscally sustainable path forward while we do what Manitobans sent us here to do, which is to fix the health-care mess they left for everybody in this province.

Violent Crime and Public Safety Request for Plan to Address

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): All summer long, Manitobans have watched this Minister of Justice pat himself on the back while Manitobans are

forced to watch their own back, worried about random violence.

Under this NDP, there are no consequences. Doesn't matter if you're old or young, men or women, rural or urban; we're all suffering under this NDP inaction on crime. The common thread: violent criminal offenders known to police.

* (14:30)

Honourable Speaker, 729 days since that election, a 100-day promise on bail; obviously, this Minister of Justice didn't get the memo.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I note that there wasn't a question there, but I'm happy to talk about keeping Manitobans safe, because it is a focus of this government.

Of course, coming into office, we instituted our five-point bail plan and this was, of course, after years of inaction under the previous government. We knew that it was important to bring along our Crown attorneys to make sure that they had clear direction about the importance of public safety, about trust in the Justice system.

It was important for us to bring along members from community. I note that there are folks from the AMM here. Of course, we worked with communities around Manitoba. And, of course, we worked with law enforcement; we increased the funding in a way that hadn't been done under seven and a half years of freezes under the previous government.

This is what the member opposite misses—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Balcaen: You can pick up a newspaper—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Balcaen: You can pick up a newspaper from—

The Speaker: The honourable member for Brandon West.

Mr. Balcaen: You can pick up a newspaper from any community within Manitoba and guarantee to read an article on a violent criminal that has been walking free.

Just this past Saturday, WPS reported a road rage incident that escalated when words turned to blows, ending with one man getting a weapon out of his

vehicle, charged with assault, possession of multiple weapons, possession of drugs for distribution and much more. The Premier (Mr. Kinew) told this Chamber that he would be tough on drug dealers.

Was this another empty promise that this NDP government brought forward?

Mr. Wiebe: Well, first let's talk about the WPS, because as of today, there are 36 new officers funded by the provincial government, including 24 that are in community, 12 that are focusing on bail.

What was the record of the members opposite? It was a net loss of 55 officers here in the city of Winnipeg. That's shameful, Honourable Speaker. Why is it that the members opposite continue to not take account—be accountable for their actions, for crime going up year over year over year under their watch?

We've started to turn the corner. More work to do, but members opposite need to be accountable for their actions first.

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

I just remind members to make sure you keep your papers and stuff off the mics; it's causing problems for our interpreters and Hansard people, and it could actually cause an injury. So please be more careful.

Mr. Balcaen: What about the couple who was arrested with a quarter million dollars worth of fentanyl? Legal drugs in—or, illegal drugs, lethal to the community, in colourful dinosaur shapes. And I table the WPS release.

Once again, released on an undertaking despite drugs and firearm charges. Clearly, the Minister of Justice isn't going to act. This was West Broadway. Lethal drugs in colourful, kid-friendly shapes.

Will the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure (MLA Naylor), the MLA for Wolseley, at least stand up and agree it's unacceptable and that we need action from this Minister of Justice, or is she staying silent for her constituents as well?

Mr. Wiebe: You know, our philosophy has been to be tough on crime and also tough on the root causes of crime. And, of course, what that means, when we're talking about being tough on crime, it's about going after those drug dealers who bring in those toxic drugs into community.

And one of the first bills that we brought forward here in this Legislature was the unexplained wealth

act, an idea that we campaigned on. Of course, members opposite derided—and then, they managed to delay that bill and ultimately voted against it.

You know, it's clear, Honourable Speaker, we're going to take action to be tough on crime. We're also going to get to the root causes. And I work very closely with the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness (Ms. Smith), my friends here in the caucus in Education, health care and Families. We're going to get to the root causes, but ultimately it's about—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Manitoba's Health-Care System Wait Times and Staff and Patient Safety

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): After two long and damaging years of NDP government, health care in Manitoba is measurably worse by almost every metric. ER wait times are a great example. They are longer today than they were two years ago—that is a fact.

Last night, posted ER wait times at the Grace Hospital were 12 and a half hours. Honourable Speaker, you could get on a plane, fly to Halifax, have dinner on the waterfront, fly home, and you still wouldn't have been seen by a doctor at the Grace Hospital last night.

Can the Minister of Health explain, after two failed years in the job, why are ER wait times now worse under their watch?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Honourable Speaker, I find it interesting that the same person who was advising Heather Stefanson to fire nurses and close emergency rooms is now claiming to be an advocate for health care.

Honourable Speaker, the member opposite was part of firing hundreds of nurses—over 300—from our health-care system, driving doctors out in droves and closing major emergency rooms in our province.

In less than two years, we have hired a net-new 3,400 health-care workers who just aligned with our health-care system; we are actively reopening emergency rooms; we've added over 450 beds to health care in this province—but that is nowhere near enough to fix the damage done by that member and members opposite.

We're going to keep that good work going for Manitobans. That's what they deserve from their government.

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

Mrs. Cook: Imagine being the Minister of Health of this great province and thinking that's an acceptable answer about ER wait times.

Every day, their failures in health care compound. HSC is still greylisted—something that hasn't happened since the last time the NDP were in government, by the way. But yesterday, a patient in Thompson's hospital was stabbed.

Can the Minister of Health explain, after two failed years on the job, why is patient and health-care worker safety getting worse under their watch?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I want to be very clear: every health-care worker, every patient deserves to be safe when they're accessing care or delivering care across this province. Unequivocally, we condemn any violence in our hospitals and sites across the province.

Now, it concerns me that for seven and a half years, and including when that member opposite was advising Heather Stefanson, they took no action to address safety and security. Our government has added over 120 institutional safety officers to hospitals across this province. We've implemented metal detector technology to help keep people safer, and we are continuing to make sure we take further steps, including 24-7 police officers—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mrs. Cook: Honourable Speaker, here are the facts. After two long and damaging years of NDP government, Manitobans are facing longer waits for care; patients and staff are less safe in health-care facilities; home care is in chaos.

If the NDP won't keep their promises and won't actually improve things, can they at least stand up today and tell Manitobans they'll at least stop making things worse?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, the member opposite knows she has zero credibility on health care. That is why she resorted to a personal attack in her second question.

My priority and our priority is fixing the damage done by the previous government over seven and a half years. We are going to focus and I am going to focus on continuing to hire record numbers of net-new health-care workers, making health care safer and ensuring that we continue to train record numbers of

students in health care for the front lines in this province. We are training more health-care workers now than we ever have in our province's history.

It's not enough. There is more to do. We're going to keep doing that work because that's what Manitobans deserve.

Duck Mountain and Porcupine Hills Moose Population Numbers

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): The minister has yet to answer Manitobans. Moose populations in the Duck Mountain and the Porcupine Hills were well below the level that the NDP implemented a conservation closure.

Why? Why is this minister ignoring the science?

* (14:40)

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): Before I address the member's question, which I'm happy to do, I'm also a member of the Hollow Water First Nation and this is my first chance to rise.

A month or so ago, there was a tragedy in Hollow Water. And I do want to take this opportunity to thank the paramedics, the RCMP, the First Nations safety officers, people, boots on the ground, our community members—including members opposite—that reached out in that time of need to share their thoughts and prayers. Knowing full well what that meant for my community and what that means for us as society, we are going to do better in our community. We need to do better in society.

And I'm happy to address the member's question in my following response.

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

Mr. Wowchuk: A failed rollout condemning that entire ecosystem, the minister refusing to act in the west and in the east. When communities challenge the rule of law, the minister caved and amended regulations without consultation.

Why did the minister speed through these changes?

Mr. Bushie: The member talks about no consultation. That's their MO over there: no consultation, no engagement. When it comes to the moose population and the moose conservation here in Manitoba, we are going to engage with hunters, we are going to engage with non-Indigenous hunters, Indigenous hunters,

First Nations, wildlife federations across all aspects of Manitoba.

So we're going to invest in the science, we're going to invest in our area of service. We almost tripled what they did because we know they totally ignore this conversation. They, in fact, just wanted to do nothing but create and make this a wedge issue across the province.

And they're still doing it to this day. We're going to engage, we're going to collaborate and we're going to listen to the science that's before us today.

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

Mr. Wowchuk: I will go back in the previous survey, when the NDP, for the last two years, they have been in—or, they have been allowing harvest in the Duck Mountain knowing the population is 1,169, rather than 2,400, which is resulting in a collapsed population for all stakeholders: Métis, Indigenous and also licensed hunters.

Can the minister tell me why he is ignoring the science?

Mr. Bushie: Honourable Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. We here are investing in that science. We are tripling our invest in it—investment in that science to be able to come up with more real-time accurate information. Members opposite, what did they do? They randomly select where they're going to do surveys across the province, and by the time they actually made decisions based on information, it was so far out of date.

It's unbelievable that the member stands up here and wants to be able to talk about things in the past. If he wants to go back, let's go back to the seven and a half years of failed moose management that they had under their term. He doesn't want to talk about that, including the six or seven ministers that they had on his file, because they know full well they have no leg to stand on when it comes down to the moose management in this province, and we're going to engage.

I know the member opposite had a difficult time being able to talk about the rights holders and the stakeholders in his question, but we are engaging all members of Manitobans—all aspects of Manitoba, when it comes to moose management, because that, for us, is the right thing to do.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Manitoba's Health-Care System ER and Surgical Wait Times

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Honourable Speaker, Manitobans continue to wait countless hours in emergency rooms, and even longer for necessary surgeries across all of our communities.

Last month, multiple media sources reported wait times at Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface Hospital, despite the upgrades, are continuing to go up. Some people have been waiting for over 20 hours and are even going home or, perhaps, to Halifax in between their waits.

Does the minister think it is acceptable that people are still having to wait so long for emergency care two years since they formed government?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): I really appreciate that question from the member from Tyndall Park; it is a really important one. And I'm going to answer that and just say no, it's not acceptable; those wait times are not acceptable.

And I think what's important for us to note is how we got here. You know, the challenges we're facing in health care weren't created overnight. We're talking about three major emergency rooms in Winnipeg were closed by the previous government, hundreds of health-care workers were fired, all of the expertise, the folks we had working in those ERs, moved on to other jobs and career paths.

Our government is doing the work of training those health-care providers, reopening emergency rooms, and we have experts working with us to make sure times move in a better direction. Manitobans deserve quality health care at the right time and the right place. That's why we're working so hard to make those improvements despite members—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Lamoureux: Honourable Speaker, on September 15, CBC reported that since the NDP formed government the support needed for health care has not kept up with the demand. We now have more Manitobans than ever before having to wait longer for necessary surgeries, including cataracts and knee surgery. Many individuals are not even being provided surgery dates.

Honourable Speaker, can the minister please share with the House how Manitobans can confidently have timely access to urgent care?

MLA Asagwara: Again, a really important question from the member for Tyndall Park.

We are doing more surgeries now in Manitoba than we ever have before. We have invested in more capacity in this province. We've added an additional 800 surgeries alone at Selkirk. We anticipate to getting to about 676 this year. We are actually on track to achieve that 800 number in this budget. I recognize that Manitobans, again, are waiting too long. We're working very hard to build more capacity.

We also recognize that for seven and a half years the previous government was actually cutting, not investing in more capacity in our own province.

We're also making sure that Manitobans who couldn't even get their names on a wait list—they were ignored by the PCs—are finally getting care. That's part of the reason why—it is the reason why—we're seeing longer time—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Impact of Nurse Shortage

MLA Lamoureux: Honourable Speaker, nurses and health-care workers have been very clear that burnout and staffing shortages are at crisis levels. The Manitoba Nurses Union president, Darlene Jackson, repeats the frustrations and highlights that the NDP government is going in the wrong direction for improving health care. I table this article now.

This crisis is not new. According to MNU membership data, 117 nurses have left Health Sciences Centre since January, with 65 per cent of them being voluntary resignations.

Honourable Speaker, how has this shortage of nurses impacted the safety and well-being of Manitobans?

MLA Asagwara: We have a net-new over 200 nurses working at Health Sciences Centre. That is in addition to the over 900. So it's about 1,100–1,200 net-new nurses working on the front lines of our health-care system in Manitoba.

And, Honourable Speaker, it's not enough. It's just not enough. We're graduating over 1,000 nurses a year. We're training more nurses than we ever have in this province. We're training more health-care workers than we ever have in this province, and there's more work for us to do, and we're going to keep doing that work because we know that when you have more

nurses and health-care workers standing shoulder to shoulder delivering care, health care improves, safety and security improves and the outcomes of Manitobans get better.

We know there's more work to do. We're committed to doing it no matter what the PCs across the way have to say about it when they heckle in this House.

Former Premier of Manitoba New Board Appointment

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Honourable Speaker, this morning Manitobans learned that after breaking the law in this province, former premier Heather Stefanson was given yet another board appointment, this time in the Cayman Islands, and it's clear that she's still benefiting from her time as premier, a time when she broke the law and violated our constitution. And it's not the first time she's used her reputation from her time in office to get a job on a board.

Could the minister please tell the House, the Minister of Education, please tell the House more about Heather Stefanson's announcement this morning?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): It's true, Honourable Speaker. There is too much corruption in the PC party, and unfortunately for their caucus and their members they have done nothing to change it.

We know now that the Member for Fort Whyte's (Mr. Khan) mentor, Heather Stefanson, is joining yet another board. Apparently, she's off to the Cayman Islands this time, and she's told media about this appointment that serving families and foundations with integrity and innovation resonates deeply with me.

I table that press release for the House. These comments are shocking in light of the report of the Ethics Commissioner, a report that the opposition refuses to debate, despite the PCs and the member for Fort Whyte's attempt to deny it.

Manitobans know for a fact, Honourable Speaker, that the former premier broke the law, violated our constitution and undermined the integrity of our elections, all while the member for Fort Whyte was in her Cabinet cheering her on.

There is too much corruption in the PC Party and Manitobans deserve better.

Hospitalization of Child in Care Trust in CFS System

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): In September a child in care was sent to a Winnipeg hospital in critical condition, and a 25-year-old care provider was charged with aggravated assault, assault and failing to provide the necessities of life.

* (14:50)

This has undermined Manitobans' faith in our social services. What is the failed Minister of Families doing to restore that trust? *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): Violence against children is one of the most horrendous things that anybody can do, particularly the most vulnerable that are in your care. So let me state unequivocally how heartbroken I am to hear of the violence against children.

I want to thank first our first responders and police and staff from the Child Protection Branch who are investigating these horrible events. I also want to say in the House that this is why we are investing more supports for all caregivers and more support for front-line CFS staff.

We have also—we are hiring two leading practice specialists—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

And the time for question period is also expired.

Petitions? There are no petitions.

GRIEVANCES

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Honourable Speaker, I rise today on a grievance. I had hoped that my words would have been delivered as a ministerial statement response, an opportunity to join all members in a shared recognition of the courageous work of Manitoba conservation officers.

Unfortunately, that opportunity was not granted, and so I pivot today to present these remarks as a grievance, because there are truths that need to be told about how this government treats our officers and how different things looked under the leadership of the Progressive Conservative government.

Honourable Speaker, October 1 is Manitoba Conservation Officers Recognition Day. It is a day set aside to honour the service, professionalism and sacrifice of the men and women who wear the uniform

of Manitoba Conservation Officer Service. These officers are Manitoba's third largest armed law enforcement agency, and they put their lives on the line to protect our wildlife, our natural resources and our communities.

The history of the service is long and proud. As far back as 1879, an act for the protection of game in the province of Manitoba created the first game guardians, with the powers of constables to safeguard fish and wildlife.

In 2015, The Conservation Officers Act brought together enforcement staff from across fish, wildlife and natural resources and protected areas and gave them full powers and protections of peace officers. That was an important recognition of their status, but laws on paper don't keep officers safe in the bush. It takes real investment in people and resources, and the risks are real.

Since 1966, six Manitoba conservation officers have lost their lives in the line of duty. Their families, friends and colleagues carry the memory of that sacrifice. Every officer who heads into the field knows that their work can turn dangerous in an instant, whether it's confronting poachers, dealing with unsafe hunting practices or responding to emergencies in remote areas.

Honourable Speaker, when the PCs came into government in 2016, we saw immediately these officers had been neglected under the previous NDP. They were using outdated radios and dispatch systems that sometimes left them without communication in life-threatening situations. Their safety equipment was inadequate and their vehicle fleet was aging and insufficient for the vast areas they patrol.

We changed that under the PC government. We invested in modern radios and dispatch systems so officers would never again be left without back out-backup. We provided new tactical safety equipment so they could protect themselves and others. We added 11 new unmarked patrol vehicles to the fleet, giving officers the ability to move discretely and cover more ground effectively, and we expanded helicopter surveillance capacity, providing vital aerial support for operations across the province.

We also took strong legislative action. In 2017, our government established Manitoba Conservation Officers Day, a day today we celebrate so their contributions would be formally recognized every year.

And with Bill 29, the safe hunting and shared management act, we finally tackled reckless and dangerous practices of night lighting.

For too long, Honourable Speaker, the NDP ignored night hunting. Communities raised concerns, farmers raised concerns, hunters raised concerns. But nothing was done. The risks were obvious: bullets fired at night without visibility, putting people, livestock, property in harm's way.

Our PC government took action where the NDP had failed. Bill 29 curtailed night lighting, making our communities safer, protecting landowners and supporting fair and sustainable hunting practices. That leadership, real action responded to Manitoba concerns and gave conservation officers the tools to enforce the law.

But today under this NDP government we're sliding backwards instead of building on the progress we made. Conservation officers are once again being neglected, and worse, misused. Honourable Speaker, conservation officers should be patrolling our parks, our lakes, our forests and all wild spaces, not patrolling the borders of the United States.

These officers are highly trained in resource law enforcement. They're the ones who protect our fisheries, monitor hunting activity, safeguard our endangered species. They are the ones who respond when Manitobans call about poaching or unsafe activity in rural and northern areas. Yet this government has chosen to pull away from that work and deploy them to the border.

Every hour that an officer spends patrolling the border is an hour they're not in the Duck Mountain or the Porcupine Hills. It's an hour they're not in the Whiteshell or at Lake Winnipegosis, or in west-western or central Manitoba, or in our provincial forests. It's an hour they're not serving the people who expect them to be present in our wild spaces.

This is a complete misuse of service and it shows the government doesn't understand the role or the value of conservation officers. The NDP is quick to give speeches about supporting law enforcement, but the reality is different. When they were in power, conservation officers were left with outdated equipment, unsafing work conditions. They refused to act on night lighting.

Today, instead of focusing officers in their core duties, they are—have them patrolling the border. Manitobans deserve better, officers deserve better.

Meanwhile the challenges facing our conservation officers continue to grow. Illegal hunting practices are still a concern. Fisheries need protection to remain sustainable. Our parks and protected areas, wildlife—or, wildfires threaten communities and require every available hand in such a climate. The last thing we should be doing is diverting officers away from their duties that they were sworn to uphold.

Honourable Speaker, I'm proud of the record our PC government has made. We added vehicles, we modernized radio and dispatch, we equipped officers with better tools, we gave them legislative backing they needed with Bill 29.

Today, I grieve. I grieve that the government has chosen a path of neglect. I grieve that officers are being sent to patrol the border instead of protecting Manitoba's natural resources, and I grieve that safety of our communities, sustainability of our wildlife and the legacy of our wild spaces are being undermined.

On the Manitoba Conservation Officers Recognition Day I call on this government to change course. Invest in the service, equip our officers, support them in the roles they are trained. Honour the memory of those who have fallen by never again leaving their colleagues without the tools they need. Let conservation officers do what they do best: patrolling our wild spaces, protecting resources and serving Manitobans.

Because when a government neglects conservation officers, it neglects rural and northern Manitoba; neglects natural heritage; and it dishonours the sacrifices made by those who have put their lives on the line for this province.

That is why today, honour Speaker, I rise on a grieve—grievance. I commend the conservation officers on this very important day of recognition. We value, from the PC Party, we value what we do. We will continue to stand up for you, and we take your values seriously.

Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

OPPOSITION DAY MOTION

The Speaker: The House will now consider the opposition day motion brought forward by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition; and for the information of all members, according to rule 31(15), the House shall not adjourn until all members have had an opportunity to speak to the motion. When there

are no further speakers in the debate, the Speaker shall put the question.

* (15:00)

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone), that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and the provincial government to sign the memorandum of understanding with fellow provincial premiers committing to co-ordinate the safe transportation and export of western Canadian oil, natural gas and critical minerals to refineries, seaports and storage facilities in Manitoba, and across Canada and beyond with the goal of establishing a Canadian energy corridor for the next Canadian pipelines and energy transmission projects for the benefits of the Manitoba economy and to create jobs for Manitoba tradespersons and union workers in the resource sector.

The Speaker: Just before I bring the motion forward, is there leave for the motion to be adopted as—considered as written as opposed to as was spoken by the Leader of the Official Opposition?

Is there leave? Is there leave? [*Agreed*]

THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the Premier and the Provincial Government to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with fellow provincial Premier committing to coordinate the safe transportation and export of Western Canadian oil, natural gas, and critical minerals to refineries, seaports and storage facilities in Manitoba, across Canada and beyond with the goal of establishing a Canadian energy corridor for the next Canadian pipelines and energy transmission projects for the benefit of the Manitoba economy and to create jobs for Manitoba trades persons and union workers in the resource sector.

The Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, seconded by the member for Midland, that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the Premier and provincial government to sign the memorandum of understanding with fellow provincial premiers committing to co-ordinate the safe transportation and export of western Canadian oil, natural gas, critical minerals to refineries, seaports and storage facilities in Manitoba, across Canada and beyond with the goal of establishing a Canadian energy corridor for the next Canadian pipelines and energy transmission projects for the benefit of the Manitoba economy and to create jobs

for Manitoba tradespersons and union workers in the resource sector.

Is it the—the floor is now open for debate.

Mr. Khan: It gives me great pleasure to rise today to talk about such an important project, or opportunity before Manitobans, before this NDP government and Premier for the success for the future, for the vibrancy, for the jobs, for the economy, for all the social services in this province. It gives me great pleasure to stand up and talk about this today, this MOU, this memorandum of understanding that was signed with Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario.

Sadly, there's one province missing right in the middle there, and it's no other than this NDP government's province, the province of Manitoba under this Premier (Mr. Kinew). Saskatchewan, Alberta, Ontario want to build their provinces; this Premier wants to destroy this province. Under this NDP Premier, the province of Manitoba is ranked the worst province in Canada with a GDP growth at 1.1 per cent. We are the worst under this NDP government, we are the worst under this failed Minister of Finance (MLA Sala), all because—actually, we don't know why. The Premier won't say why he's really not signing this memorandum of understanding.

It's clear that nation building projects are needed right now in this country, in this province. Every other province has got on board to booster-boost their economy, to grow their workforce, to combat Trump's tariffs.

And what has this Premier done? Nothing. Nothing. What he's done—he's picked up the phone and he called Ottawa, and he asked the Prime Minister for help, and that was it. That was literally all this Premier has done and that's the truth.

On the other side, I mean, they're not even saying anything because they know that's the truth. Premier Scott Moe went to China to grow his province and his economy. Danielle—Premier Danielle Smith has made announcements and investments to grow her economy. Doug Ford has done the same thing in Ontario.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

This Premier has done nothing; he has stayed silent. We need to get on board with the rest of Canada, with this memorandum of understanding, to grow our economy.

For some reason, the province—the Premier doesn't want it. I don't know why. It's shocking. On July 22, 2025, our neighbours—Alberta, Saskatchewan,

Ontario—signed a landmark memorandum of understanding that—to advance pipelines, critical minerals and energy infrastructure.

But the Premier's signature was absent. Kind of need Manitoba in the middle there to make this pipeline work, to get on board with the rest on—rest of Canada. The Premier talks a big talk, but when it comes to action, he has done nothing. Nothing. Nothing when it comes to growing our economy, nothing when it comes to bail reform, nothing when it comes to make our health care better in this province. All failures under this NDP, and it is a failure by this NDP Premier and this NDP government to not sign on board with this MOU.

This agreement represents a bold and necessary step towards building a true Canadian energy corridor. Why would he be against that? Well, I'm going to get to that in the next six minutes and 22 seconds. Might ask for leave; I feel like I could go on and on forever about the failures of this Premier, this NDP government. It's embarrassing, it's pathetic, it's shameful. This Premier—it's not too late to get on board with the rest of Canada. Why are you absent from this MOU?

This MOU is about pipelines, critical minerals, export corridor; it's about preparing Canada to compete globally while ensuring our industries and workers succeed locally.

Oh, hold on, wait. This Premier might not want to sign because he thinks prosperity in this province is in 2040. Honourable Speaker, 2040 is the plan this Premier talks about. It's 2025 right now, and Manitobans are struggling. Unemployment is over 6 per cent. Youth unemployment is over 12 per cent.

Honourable Speaker, 5,300 Manitobans left Manitoba this summer in manufacturing and the construction workforce to go to other provinces under this NDP. The largest exodus of workers is happening under this NDP. Why? Because they're increasing our taxes. The largest historic increase in education property taxes, under this NDP.

They're taxing you more and they're providing you less opportunity. This MOU will provide Manitobans with opportunities to grow, to succeed, to have a great job here, locally, in Manitoba.

And what does this Premier do? He says, no, we don't want them. We don't want it. We don't want this MOU. They can leave. They can leave this province and go somewhere else. We're not going to sign on with the rest of Canada because apparently, according to this Premier, he thinks he knows best when it comes

to everything. And the proof is in the pudding, where everything in this province has gotten worse under this Premier.

This is about jobs for Manitobans. It's about growing Manitoban businesses, future opportunity here in Manitoba. It is about securing investments in new mining and processing facilities. Manitoba is home to world-class deposits of lithium, nickel and other critical minerals. And this Premier doesn't want to join an MOU to help export these to the rest of the world. They want to keep it in the ground.

Actually, when I think about it, kind of makes sense why this Premier (Mr. Kinew) wants to keep it in the ground. He's been on the record saying that before. He signed the Leap Manifesto, saying: let's leave it all in the ground. That is this Premier. He has signed it, he said it over and over again. He doesn't want to do these projects. He says one thing and his actions are completely opposite of what his words are.

They claim they're going to fix health care, it's worse. They claim they're going to build-reform bail in 100 days, it's worse 700 days later. They claim they're going to grow the economy, it's the worst economy in the country, is in this province under this failed NDP government.

We're calling on the Premier to sign the memorandum as soon as possible so that we can support economic growth in this province and jobs for northern communities, First Nations, Métis, all Manitobans. We can all prosper together.

But according to this Premier, he wants to funnel you all in. He wants to get everyone into this tight silo funnel and say everything only comes from this Premier. He wants to control it all. He wants Manitobans begging for prosperity under him.

That's not the way we see it on this side of the House. We believe in free market. We believe in opening it up. We believe in supporting nation-building projects.

* (15:10)

This Premier wants to put Manitobans against Manitobans, unions against non-unions, Manitobans against Manitobans. If you're from a different part of Manitoba, you have rights. If you're from a different Manitoba, you have—part of Manitoba, you have different set of rights.

This Premier thinks that having verbal dialogue or conversation or criticizing him is a act of violence. That is how insane this government has gotten with

their ideology and policies, that even saying something against what they're saying is a act of violence, according to this Premier.

Well, on this side of the House, we say no. We say we have a right; we have a right for freedom of speech; we have a right to express our opinion, and we—all Manitobans—have a right to prosper, not be suffocated under this NDP government.

When you look at what they've done, it's nothing—absolutely nothing. And the Premier talks about—he wants to have a province—he wants to go forward with his project with consultation. With consultation was his only explanation as to why. Well, I don't think the Premier has read the memorandum of understanding, and I would table it for him to read, and maybe it will actually enlighten him.

If he looks at clause 6, it says, between Alberta and Ontario: whereas Alberta and Ontario are committed to fulfilling their respective duties to consult with Indigenous communities and advancing economic reconciliation in relation to new infrastructure development in Canada.

The consultation is baked right into the MOU, and yet this Premier says he wants consultation. There's 41 Indigenous and Bayside communities, including 29 First Nations, that are on board with Arctic Gateway to serve northern Manitoba. Where is the consultation with the Premier? Has he had any consultation? There's been no updates. He hasn't said anything. He hasn't informed Manitobans of what's happening.

Honourable Speaker, 41 Indigenous and Bayside communities, including 29 First Nations. Where's this consultation? Because of this Premier's ego, because of his arrogance, because of his blind ideology, he is punishing all of Manitoba. He is punishing Manitobans. He is destroying our economy; he is destroying for the future for all children and the success and prosperity of Manitoba, and on this side of the House, we—

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

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): I'm happy to rise and put some words on the record with respect to the opposition day motion regarding the MOU.

Now, before I put some words and with respect to the motion, I want to just take a minute and—just to show appreciation and thanks. We had probably one

of the worst—definitely the worst wildfire season in living memory for Manitoba.

And knowing the toll it takes on evacuees, knowing the fact that we've had, sadly, some loss of life—two losses of life in our province—knowing the toll it takes on communities to be evacuated away from the home community, the challenges to deal with that, the stress that it puts on, that's on top of the fact that we had an incredible amount of work go into our Wildfire Service emergency management teams to co-ordinate efforts and work with Red Cross and other partners, the Canadian Armed Forces, to co-ordinate an effective response that treated people as right and justly as possible while also providing the right protection and care and—for their home communities while fighting those fires and putting themselves in dangerous positions.

I want to just take a moment to show appreciation and thanks to the entire Wildfire Service team, to conservation officers who play that role, to the Environment and Parks staff who play the role, the emergency management team, the numerous First Nations and Métis groups who participated in that effort.

So I just want to take a moment in the Chamber to show acknowledgement. I thought maybe we could have a round of applause to show our appreciation for all the people who helped Manitobans during the wildfire season this year.

Now, with respect to this MOU, I think members opposite brought it today here very clearly to distract from their terrible record when it comes to the conflict of interest debate and the reports that were brought in. Very clearly, they just don't want to talk about the fact that their former premier—former failed premier—broke the law and was fined \$18,000. The fact that she broke the law is something that's very important for us to discuss here, and they brought this motion forward in a way to distract and deflect from their terrible record, the fact that their party has a lot of corruption issues in it, the fact that they have failed when it came to building any sort of economic development project in a good or meaningful way. That's their record. That's the record that they're trying to avoid telling Manitobans. They're trying to not talk about it and bring something like this that's, quite frankly, has no merit to it, forward for us to discuss today.

So, I'll talk around what their record is in terms of economic development. Anyone who's looked in Manitoba's GDP over the last 25 years can very easily see there was an upward trajectory under the former NDP government under Gary Doer going up with upward trajectory of GDP growth.

And what happened in between 2015 and 2025, the time period where we had that former failed Pallister-Stefanson government? We saw that GDP rate not go as high. That's their record. Their record is a lagging GDP growth in Manitoba.

Now, where all their business focus, all their unleashing mining potential, what's their record on mining? Three mines closed under their record. That's their record. Their record is three mines closing during their time in office. How about that for unleashing any potential? I don't think they even know what that means, honourable Deputy Speaker.

But what we know in Manitoba is how to get projects done. So we've rolled up our sleeves; we worked collaboratively with First Nations, Métis communities. We've rolled up our sleeves and worked collaboratively with environmental groups, stakeholders, industry, and within 18 months of us being in office, we opened our first gold mine in northern Manitoba. This is a project that's going to employ 600 Manitobans in northern communities during its construction phase and 450 Manitobans during its ongoing life of mine.

Now, this is an incredible economic potential and opportunity for northern Manitobas and it happened because we know how to get projects off the ground. It happened because we know how to do it in collaboration and it happened because we don't have to deal with a PC government that, quite frankly, fails in every single regard when it comes to building a strong and resilient economy.

We know in our current economic landscape when it comes to major projects that Churchill is on the list of the federal government. We're happy to be supporting it with—by providing \$36 million of support to the project of Churchill. We know that, over that time, we've also seen the project of growing expansions to the Port of Churchill has grown with it. MOUs signed with Saskatchewan to produce and ship agriculture products out of there. We now have seen critical minerals through HudBay shipped out of the Port of Churchill, and recently we've seen deals struck to ship Manitoba potash out of the Port of Churchill.

This is real economic deventure—potential—real economic opportunity that is happening because our government knows how to get things done. We don't just talk and have bluster like the member opposite. We actually roll up our sleeves, work together and get the job done.

On top of all of this, we've released an economic development strategy, one that is bringing forward a robust plan to make sure we have economic success, both now in into the future, one that addresses the real and current economic challenge of tariffs brought on by Donald Trump and his administration, the same Donald Trump and the same tariffs that were—that the member opposite, the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Khan) was for thanking Donald Trump for bringing those tariffs, the tariffs that threaten manufacturers, threaten rural communities and threaten our Manitoba economy. That's the same tariffs that the member opposite was saying thank you to Donald Trump for.

Now, we reject that appreciation he's showing for the president in the White House. We, instead, want to double down on investing in Manitobans, investing in jobs here in Manitoba, investing in our manufacturing base, in our aerospace sector, in our agricultural sector and in our critical mineral sector.

Pharmaceuticals and film are things that are now being threatened by the US administration, and I wonder if members opposite are going to thank the White House for threatening those sectors, too.

Now, we're not going to take that path. Instead, honourable Deputy Speaker, we're going to take the path of investing in Manitoba jobs. How do we do that? We do that by incentivizing growth. That means that we're going to change our Manitoba investment tax credit to ensure that it is going to be paid up front by removing it off of the PST. We're going to do that by increasing our loan program so that more businesses have the capital to invest in their economic growth, putting their business success first and Manitoba's jobs first.

* (15:20)

How do we do that, honourable Deputy Speaker? We do that by enhancing our Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit, by increasing the cap, lowering the threshold including more investments like SAFE, and doing so in a way that includes general partnerships.

This is real action to boost our economy, boost innovation and ensure that Manitobans who want to look at where they can set up a career, where they can set up their business, realize that it's right here in Manitoba, and at the same time, provide the right incentive for Canadians who are looking right across the country and say, where are the best opportunities and places to grow? Well, it's a place here where we

know how to collaborate, we know how to get stuff done.

We have a strong manufacturing base. We have power—clean baseload power to do it. We have a manufacturing hub like none other in the country. Oh, and by the way, you've got a provincial government that listens and works to make sure we have businesses and Manitobans working hard.

This is how we get this done, and in face of the uncertainty—the global uncertainty and the tariff challenges we face both from the US and from China, we're supporting our agriculture sector, but we're also supporting Manitoba businesses to diversify, and that's why we're doubling the export support program, making sure more businesses have the resources to get to a new market, to make sure that they tell the incredible story of Manitoba to Europe and to Asia and to more partners throughout the United States.

That's how we grow and diversify our economy. Now, we're doing this because we know it's the right thing to do for our economy. We listen to business leaders who said that our economic development strategy is one of the strongest they've ever seen in the history of our province.

We know that we are addressing these issues in a real, meaningful and tangible way and we're going to keep doing it, regardless of what motions the opposition brings forward, regardless of how they try to distract from their terrible record of their conflict of interest, regardless of all of that, we'll continue to work for Manitoba businesses.

We'll continue to work to grow our economy. We'll continue to work to invest in realizing the potential of the Port of Churchill, working collaboratively with First Nations, working collaboratively with the Métis Federation, working collaboratively with Manitobans from all walks of life to grow an economy that works for all of us.

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Despite what the member opposite just put on the record, the truth is is that investors are fleeing this province after two years of this NDP government putting forth anti-business, anti-tax competitive policies since they've been in government.

For the past 11 months, discussions of trade and resource independence have been at the forefront for business, industry and, quite frankly, for politicians in the wake of US and China tariffs and geopolitical issues facing our country and countries around the world.

We are at a critical time here in Manitoba, a time to enshrine Manitoba's commitment to unleashing not only Manitoba's potential but Canada's economic potential, but rather than making the tough decisions to grow our economy, this Premier (Mr. Kinew) continues to take a wait-and-see approach to economic growth.

We've seen this over the past two years. The NDP was one of the last provinces to introduce legislation to remove interprovincial trade barriers, and it wasn't until our team and our party put forth a bill to remove interprovincial trade barriers and recognize reciprocity agreements that this NDP decided to do something within the last seven days of the last session.

They are chasing away investors with their labour policies and our tax competitiveness continues to lag behind other provinces in Canada. We have increased hydro rates of 12 per cent. Education property taxes are increasing and have increased by \$350 million just in the two years since this NDP took office, and we have one of the highest payroll taxes in the entire country.

Manitoba is failing to attract the investment we need to grow the economy and become a have-not province. Despite Manitoba holding more critical minerals than Saskatchewan, this year Manitoba ranked 26th in most attractive places to invest in mining. Manitoba was sixth in 2023 under the former PC government, a 20-point drop in less than two years once this NDP government took power.

Investors in this report express concern over all aspects of policy in Manitoba, including roadblocks, and uncertainty over land protectionism were identified as concerns for not coming and investing in Manitoba.

Other premiers, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, are aggressively chasing investment and pro-resource development policies. Just today, in fact, Alberta announced its plans to apply for a new bitumen pipeline to the northern British Columbia coast. Saskatchewan premier has been actively in China as a result of Chinese tariffs on our canola producers in Manitoba. Premier Smith is active, Premier Moe is active in chasing investments and Premier Ford is growing his economy in Ontario.

Yet what's Manitoba doing? Nothing. They are choosing to sit out on key nation-building projects. This is showing where their priorities lie, and it's showing that their priorities tell a very different story than what the Premier (Mr. Kinew) smiles and tells the media. Claiming to support Canadian resources

with a smile to the media while actually putting pen to paper to unleash key economic development projects are two very different things, and this Premier is clearly failing on the latter.

This summer, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario signed an MOU to study the feasibility of an east-west Canadian energy corridor project, which would signal to investors that Canada is open for business. This has the potential to create thousands of Canadian jobs and bring billions to the Canadian economy. Yet noticeably absent was Manitoba. This leaves a key geographical gap in what could be an incredibly important nation-building project.

This MOU was simply a commitment, a commitment for provinces to work together on the construction of new pipelines, rail lines and trade infrastructure and to study their economic feasibility and their geographical feasibility to see if it can be done. This lack of commitment from the NDP is incredibly problematic, particularly at times when pipeline construction would generate prosperity and national independence from not only the US but foreign energy countries. The NDP has chosen to not even be at the table, to not even partake in those conversations to study this economic feasibility. So this is very telling on where the NDP actually lies within their support for Canadian resource development.

We know that Canada is in the midst of a trade war with our largest trading partner. We also have a vast amount of geopolitical issues across the world, and this should cause concern for this Premier on our reliance on foreign energy. Reports have indicated that Canada imports 2.5 million barrels of Russian oil since the invasion of the Ukraine in 2022. In addition, roughly half a million barrels of crude oil per day are imported into Canada, with 75 per cent coming from the US. Canada has a problem despite the abundance of resources that we have sitting right here in western Canada.

This MOU to study the economic and geographical feasibility across province projects to move resources and not being at the table for Manitoba, a key geographical mess from Ontario to Alberta, was a major lapse in judgment by this Premier. Major economic development projects are years in the making, from economic feasibility, geographical complexities, environmental stewardship, Indigenous and community consultations, local permitting, provincial and environmental licensing requirements, Manitoba Hydro, just to name a few.

That's just in the province of Manitoba. We're not even talking about all the licensing and permitting and requirements that come from the federal government. These types of projects take time. For anything to get done, all of these components need to happen in tandem with each other. One does not replace the other, which is exactly why it is so confusing that the Premier of this province chose not to be at the table to discuss a major nation-building project that could be years in the making.

Absolutely, Indigenous and community consultation is critical to moving any major economic development project forward. However, one does not need to negate the other. The MOU specifically reaffirmed the Province's duty to consult with First Nations and Indigenous communities to support meaningful economic engagement through partnership programs.

* (15:30)

The Premier (Mr. Kinew) clearly did not read the clauses of the MOU when it was presented, so to intentionally choose not to even be at the table with our neighbouring provinces while resource projects aim to reduce our foreign independence on the US and Russia are explored is a major error in judgment by this Premier.

Manitoba's absence is a signal to investors that Manitoba doesn't want to be in a table—at the table, and in extension, it's a signal to investors that Manitoba will become a problem and a potential roadblock to any investment. Manitoba's absence is a signal that this province is closed for business, and its absence is a signal to other provinces that the NDP has no real intention to support nation-building projects like this.

What is not clear is the real reason why this Premier chose not to be at the table, as this could be the foundation for a major economic success story for Manitoba and the prairie province. So what is Premier Kinew's objection? Is his ideology—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

The member should be referred to by their portfolio or their constituency.

Mrs. Stone: So one has to ask: What is the Premier's objection? Is it his ideology, or the ideology of his NDP base limiting him from unleashing Manitoba's potential?

His track record speaks for itself. He signed on to the Leap Manifesto which committed to move away from western Canadian resources. He signed on to the

30x30 federal plan just last year, committed to tripling protected areas in Manitoba away from economic development. And when we asked in QP last year whether the Premier would support a west-to-east Canadian pipeline project, he refused to answer.

Kinew—Premier Kinew's NDP government—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stone: The Premier's government is putting ideology over the economy. They're putting thousands of jobs and billions of dollars at risk. Manitoba received the second highest in equalization payments, over \$4.6 billion last year. The NDP is gladly taking money from resource-rich Alberta, but will not support them in getting their resources across the country and to market.

If we want to be a have province, it's time for Kinew's NDP to quit putting ideology—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

Members of the Legislative Assembly should be referred to by their constituency or their portfolio. For the third time.

Mrs. Stone: Manitoba needs to put the economy and people overhead of the NDP's political ideology.

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

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures): Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to share a few words on the opposition day motion for the MOU.

It's interesting to hear the members stand up and talk and trying to encourage members to sign on to the work of somebody else, which is exactly what they do. They kind of just build this up and try and create wedge issues to be able to say they're putting in the work, or they're doing the right thing by Manitobans. And instead, all they're trying to do is create these wedge issues.

So as we stand up, and I heard the Leader of the Opposition, including the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) that just spoke, and I believe probably in their notes somewhere where they're talking about, there's a little star that says, make sure you mention First Nation, make sure you mention Indigenous, make sure you mention Métis, make sure you mention Inuit. Because it's not part of their notes. It's not part of who they are; it's not part of who they believe in; it's not part of the engagement process that they rightfully should be doing.

So as much as they refer to—you know, the MOU talks about that; they don't even talk about that in their motion because that's not a priority for them. And for us, that's what it is. There is a priority for us to have that engagement with Indigenous communities here in Manitoba, the rights holders in Manitoba to have that full, meaningful discussion going forward.

So for us, it's important to be able to say we're having those engagements. As the federal government rolled out Bill C-5, other jurisdictions rolled out various aspects of a bill like that. It did not, first and foremost, talk about Indigenous engagement, and for us, that's a priority. For us, that's a must. I know members opposite, that's not a must for them at all; that's not a priority for them; it's just an afterthought that they want to be able to bring to the table, to say that in a meaningful way.

But let's be clear: they made Manitoba a have-not province. We're on the path to being a have province because of the work that we're doing, because of the work that we're putting in, because of the work that we're putting in right from day one, honourable Deputy Speaker.

So our investment that we've done in Churchill was prior to the American election, prior to the nation-building project conversation, because we believed in northern Manitoba, we believed in Churchill, we believed in that Indigenous engagement as well, too, which is something we bring forth each and every day.

So as my colleague talked about the mining activity in northern Manitoba, we know we're a very have province. And, again, three mines closed under the previous government. We've opened the first gold mine here under our government. And that is done in a right way. It's brought that investment. It's going to bring over 600 construction jobs during its construction phase, 450 jobs during operations.

But what's a key thing there as well? It's also involving Marcel Colomb, Mathias Colomb in that conversation, in those jobs, in those developments, to be able to build not only the Manitoba economy but that First Nation economy as well, too. And again, a priority for us to be able to do that.

So getting into Churchill and having that conversation about what Churchill means for Manitoba, I don't think—and I think members across would agree that the investment in Churchill is much needed because being able to get to tidewater, it makes us a have province in so many different ways that add on

to the critical minerals that we have, the agriculture we have, the labour that we have that's second to none internationally, not just in Canada, but internationally.

So we want to be able to build those up in a right way as well, too, but again, build those with all our partners and doing it right, right from day one. And that's the key thing. It's not rushing into the conversation to say I could check a box, say we're going to do this.

So as we build up the conversation, and we've had significant—the conversation—especially in the political environment given the last year or so on nation building, and we've had every Canadian, every Manitoban at the table to say yes, we need to build one Manitoba. We need to have that conversation. How do we do nation building together that doesn't exclude any aspect of Manitobans? Whether it be labour, whether it be union, whether it be non-union, whether it be Indigenous communities, everybody is going to be at the table. Everybody's going to be part of that conversation because that's the right thing to do, not to create wedge politics and say do this or don't do this, you're not doing this for this reason, you're doing this for this reason.

Let's get it right from day one, which is something that we're doing. We're having that all-encompassing conversation, something members opposite hadn't done in seven and a half years. So when they stand up and they talk about the state of where Manitoba is today in terms of economic opportunities and economic activity, we're building up where they broke it. We're fixing what they broke. We're closing those gaps that they created.

So we're going to do that in the right way, with Indigenous communities at the table. So when we had this engagement with Indigenous communities, we talked about the development of a potential Crown corporation—Manitoba Crown Indigenous corporation—so it would have true ownership, true potential, true engagement, true at the table from day one. And it wasn't specific to any one project. It was a model that we wanted to be able to help develop to say: this is what we're going to do, we're going to do this together, we're in this together. And to me, that's how you bring true fruition, true results to it, to be able to say, we're having this conversation together.

I'm not having this conversation just because I can check a box and say that I did. We're going to have true, meaningful engagement, and we've started that work well before we were in government even—having those relationships, establishing that communication,

knowing full well that that opportunity rises and rests with Manitobans all over, wherever you may live, wherever you may reside.

So when we talk about being a have province in Manitoba, we talk about it in terms of mining, in terms of energy, in terms of labour force, of agriculture, just in terms of Manitobans and who we are. So we're a very have province in that way. So it's time to build on that potential.

So we talk about our investments that we've done, we talked about our investments in Alamos Gold in Lynn Lake, in Mathias and Marcel Colomb, on our— in our investments in Churchill, steps toward moving the needle and not having us always remain a have-not province as much as the previous members always wanted to do that. Previous government wanted to do that, wanted to just sit there and say, no, we didn't do it, somebody else's fault.

Even when we talk about this opposition day motion and being able to bring this forward, talking about why are we signing on to the work of somebody else? Well, why aren't we being the leaders here? Why aren't we being the leaders and not the followers?

* (15:40)

I know members opposite do nothing, want to be able to follow and be able to kind of go behind somebody else so if something happens they can say, it wasn't me. I didn't do that. Blame somebody else.

But for us, we want to be part of that leadership, part of that leadership not just in Manitoba but across the country and across the world. Because the world wants what Manitoba has, so we need to be able to have that conversation. How do we get that to the world in a right and just way, that helps build us up all across Manitoba, no matter what area you live in, what you reside in, what area of work you may have, what career you may have, to do that in the right way.

It's about being able to do that not at the expense of exploitation, but it's also at the—being able to do that in a responsible resource management type of way.

So I looked forward to the opportunity to speak and put that Indigenous lens and perspective on this because I know members opposite were not going to do that. And I know they just kind of had a little quick note at the end to say oh, oh, this, this, this. It's not even in the motion. If it's such a priority, then put it in your motion as well, which wasn't even the case. So I wanted to highlight what was missing because we are filling that gap. We're closing that gap that they

created. We're eliminating that wedge that they're trying to put in place.

So when we talk about interprovincial trade and being able to build up our economy, being able to have Manitoba be a hub of a lot of activity, we're doing that in the right way by having these engagements, by having that conversation.

And I know the Premier (Mr. Kinew) has had many conversations with leaders all across the country as to how to build that up in a right and just way, including to the point where we're now being looked at as the model for engagement. We're looked at—the ideal way to have engagement with Indigenous nations but also with communities across Manitoba.

So when we stand up our energy projects here and we stand up this nation-building projects here, it's done in a just way. So as we go out and we talk about being able to bring 600 megawatts of clean energy online, again, with Indigenous nations at the table as part of that ownership, part of that discussion. Because they've been left out. They've been left out for decades, including the entirety of the previous government, left out of that conversation.

So we want to ensure that that engagement happens, and not just happens for the sake of happening but happens in a right way, that truly brings that nation-building project, nation-building opportunities, to all of us. Not just to the select few that the members opposite want to be able to pick and choose over. We want to build up Manitoba as one Manitoba, and that's our goal on this side, to have that conversation as to how do we build it up.

If we go into those communities all across Manitoba and we say, we know what's best for you, that's already the wrong approach. We want to have that conversation with the communities because—do you know what's best. You know what's best in your backyard. You know what's best for your community, what's best for your people. And how can we help? How can we build? How can we grow?

Because as a responsible government, as a good government, we should be able to be able to go anywhere and say: how can we help, how can we support, now how can we create the vision. We want to build up—be able to build up truly that one Manitoba for all of us.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): It's a privilege to rise and speak on behalf of the people of

La Vérendrye for the first time back in this new fall session. I trust all my colleagues had a nice summer, and I see that the ministers look well rested but probably reluctant to be back here, being held to account by the people of Manitoba.

It may be a new session, but sadly, honourable Speaker, little has changed. Manitoba is still falling behind other provinces because of the failures of this NDP government. Other provinces recognize that we cannot rely on the federal government for leadership, certainly not economic leadership, especially when resource development is concerned.

Progressive Conservatives recognize Canada's energy sector still plays a vital role and will do so for decades to come. That's why, over the summer, premiers Smith, Moe and Ford signed a memorandum of understanding to co-ordinate the safe transportation and export of western Canadian oil, natural gas and critical minerals to refineries, seaports and storage facilities across Canada and beyond.

Smith, Moe, Ford; Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario. Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario. But someone's missing, honourable Speaker. Who wasn't invited to that party? Or worse, who was invited but didn't show up? This NDP government.

Where were they? Well, while other premiers were busy working to ensure the flow of world-class Canadian energy for families, this Premier (Mr. Kinew) spent the summer doing damage controls for the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine), rather than working with other provinces to advance our resource development, rail connections and critical mineral processing capacity. Rather than safeguarding thousands of jobs, strengthening our energy security and fostering sustainable growth, this Premier is more worried about so-called progressive politics.

I must admit, there is a certain irony to environmental activists protesting at the Premier's office. That's like protesting your waiter when he puts food on the table. He's there; he's on board. We know this because he signed the Leap Manifesto to keep Canadian fossil fuels in the ground. Now he says he didn't sign the memorandum because he wanted more time to consult with First Nations, but as we know, he's just delaying because the NDP's radical base is anti-energy and so is he.

And our sister provinces, our friends and our neighbours can now see that. They can see that under this government, Manitoba is not a reliable partner, and that's a problem.

It's a problem for families trying to drive their kids to school and hockey practice. It's a problem for seniors trying to heat their homes during the winter. It's a problem for everyone trying to eat, heat and house themselves because when there are delays and uncertainty with energy costs, the cost of everything goes up.

Manitoba needs reliable Canadian energy, and the federal Conservatives came up with a great idea almost a decade ago now: a national energy corridor—a way to ensure our world-class energy can get from point A to point B across this country. A corridor so we don't need to keep having the same debate and the same consultations. We'd just have a national lane where the energy comes through and everyone benefits.

Sadly, the radically anti-resource development Liberal government, supported wholeheartedly by the federal NDP, has opposed this, so now provinces are taking the lead, showing leadership and vision—Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, but not Manitoba.

But Manitoba needs to be part of this. Manitobans need reliable access to affordable energy, and our economy would benefit so much from being a hub of critical mineral mining and shipping.

The plan to expand our capacity at the Port of Churchill is a great idea. We actually all agree on that, so let's get it done.

If the federal government won't, let's see some leadership and vision from this government to take the lead like our friends in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario. We need to send a clear signal to our neighbouring provinces and the federal government that we are serious about economic development, affordable energy and creating jobs for Manitobans. Let's show the Americans and the world that we are serious about our sovereignty and energy independence.

Manitoba is in a unique position in the centre of Canada. We know, prior to the construction of the Panama Canal, Winnipeg, Manitoba, was the transportation hub of North America, the Chicago of the North. We could be the east-west transportation hub. We have a northern port right here in Churchill. We have hydroelectric energy, major rail networks connecting us to the Port of Thunder Bay, trucking and rail networks connecting us with the US and BC ports. Let's finally reach out—our potential and be the have province we could be.

* (15:50)

If the Premier truly wants Manitoba to be a have province, he needs to get on board with economic development, responsible resource development and building an energy corridor. Why wait? Why the delay? This Premier is always delaying and making excuses.

And, by the way, if we take him at his word, that this delay is about Indigenous consultations, can I respectfully remind him and all of my colleagues across the way, the Port of Churchill and the railway to get there are owned by 41 Manitoba First Nations communities. Clearly, they are on board. Clearly, these communities have embraced the spirit of this memorandum and are already investing in the Port of Churchill and the rail infrastructure. Our First Nations are years ahead of the NDP and this Premier (Mr. Kinew), who is choosing to delay any action.

Second, more delays will only delay potential prosperity for First Nations and northern communities and all Manitobans. The memorandum could mean jobs for Manitobans, trades, union workers and relate to high wages. It would benefit First Nations tradespeople, unions, low-income Manitobans. Too bad none of these people make up the NDP base. Or wait. They do, so why not do it? Our PC team wants to unleash Manitoba's potential and grow our economy so all Manitobans can experience progress and prosperity.

So we're calling today on this Premier, this party, this government to get on board, to join with our friends in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario and stand together for prosperity for Manitobans. This Premier can come together with his Cabinet, with his supporters and sign an agreement that will benefit all Manitobans, not just certain Manitobans, as the Premier has spoke in recent days. This isn't about choosing winners and losers; this is about growing the economy of our province. This is about growing the economy of western Canada and Canada as a whole.

As we can all recognize, Manitoba can be a have province in our great nation, but it means that we need to come to the table and contribute. So today I encourage the NDP government, led by their Premier, to sign the agreement and come to the table with the rest of Canada to make our province more prosperous and our nation more prosperous.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any other—the honourable member for Portage la Prairie.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): I rise today deeply disappointed that the Manitoba NDP government has once again chosen ideology over opportunity and politics over people. On July 22, the premiers of Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan came together to sign a memorandum of understanding, an MOU, designed to co-ordinate the safe transportation and export of western Canadian oil, natural gas and critical minerals.

This agreement is about building a Canadian energy corridor, securing new markets, creating jobs and strengthening supply chains for decades and decades to come.

Yet where was Manitoba? Nowhere to be found. Our Premier refused to sign. Our province, with so much to gain, was left out of an agreement that is not just about pipelines; it's about prosperity and it's about our future.

Mr. Speaker—Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's be clear. This MOU is not abstract. It's about real paycheques for real people. It's about Manitoba's tradespeople, our union workers, our resource sector. The men and women who build, who weld, who operate, who transport. It's about creating jobs in our province while ensuring Canada has the energy security that it desperately so needs.

Other provinces understand the stakes. The—they understand that critical minerals are the backbone of our modern economy, that oil and natural gas remain essential to both domestic and global markets and that we cannot afford to sit on the sidelines while the rest of Canada positions itself for growth. Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan signed this deal because they know energy and resource development drives investment, drives jobs and drives economic security.

This NDP government is the ones that are driving a wedge. They are not letting this province prosper. They are not letting our people move forward. But this Premier and his NDP government, they turned their backs on Manitobans once again. They've turned their backs on our workers. They've turned their backs on common sense. Instead of standing shoulder to shoulder with fellow provinces, the NDP chose isolation. Instead of defending Manitoba's future, they clung on to tired ideology.

And, Mr. Speaker, let's also talk about—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Just a reminder that Deputy Speaker, Speaker, we go by honourable.

MLA Bereza: My apologies.

Let's talk about Indigenous Manitobans. Many First Nations in our province are sitting on some of the largest reserves of critical minerals in the country, resources that are essential for everything from batteries to renewable energy to advanced technologies. Developing those resources responsibly with proper agreements and true partnership means good-paying jobs, new revenue streams and real economic self-determination for our communities. It means equity ownership, training opportunities and infrastructure investment that lasts for generations upon generations.

By refusing to join this MOU, the NDP is denying Indigenous governments a seat at the table in shaping Canada's energy and resource future. That is the missed opportunity for reconciliation through prosperity.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this is about more than pipelines. It's about Manitoba's place in Confederation. By refusing to sign, the NDP have sent a message that Manitobans will not lead, Manitobans will not co-operate and Manitoba will not fight for the opportunities that could transform our economy. This is shameful.

We have seen this in the agriculture world as well, when we've seen Premier Moe, Minister Kaeding from Saskatchewan traveling all over southeast Asia trying to find markets for their canola business. And where were we? We were sitting at home doing nothing. The only thing we were doing was we were saying, we're going to wait to see what Ottawa does.

Well, you know what Ottawa did? They tried to put our farmers further into debt by only allowing them loans. Our farmers don't need more loans. We need more prosperity in this province.

* (16:00)

We hear a lot from this government about affordability, about the cost of living, about jobs. Well, here's an opportunity to deliver all three. Why wait? Energy corridors mean jobs for Manitobans, opportunities for apprentices and paycheques that support families. Energy corridors mean lower costs when our province can move resources efficiently. Energy corridors mean a stronger economy, which means more revenue for health care, for education and the services that we all rely on.

We have also heard, just a few days ago, that the Premier (Mr. Kinew) wants to make Manitoba a have province by 2040. Not only is that 15 years away, but

how on earth can we grow our economy when our most valuable resources are nowhere in this equation?

And make no mistake: this is about sovereignty as well. Do we want Canada to control its own energy future, or do we want to watch opportunity flow south while Manitobans are left with nothing?

Mr. Speaker—sorry, honourable Deputy Speaker, the Progressive Conservative caucus is clear: Manitoba must not be left behind. That is why our opposition day motion calls on the Premier to sign this agreement, to join fellow provinces in creating an energy corridor that secures Canada's future, and to put Manitobans back to work, especially when we're seeing such a high unemployment rate right now.

This is about a vision. This is about leadership. This is about building a province where our kids and our grandkids don't have to leave Manitoba to find an opportunity.

I call on the Premier and the NDP government: stop. Stop isolating Manitoba, stop turning your backs on workers, stop turning your backs on Indigenous governments and sign this MOU.

Stand up for our tradespeople. Stand up for our economy and stand up for Manitoba's place in the—Canada energy future, because Manitobans deserve better, and together, we can build a stronger future. We need to send a signal to our neighbouring provinces and the federal government that we are serious about economic development and creating jobs for Manitobans. We don't want to be left out of national infrastructure projects because this NDP's Premier dithering and failures.

Manitoba is in a unique position in the centre of Canada as the east-west transportation hub, with a northern port in Churchill, plentiful clean hydro energy, major rail networks connecting us to the Port of Thunder Bay and trucking. Let's—

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

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): It's great to be back in this great building, be able to put some words on the record regarding this opposition day motion.

Think it's important to note that we have many provinces—Saskatchewan, Alberta, Ontario—all signing on to this agreement, but somewhere right in that middle, Manitoba, is not signing on to this agreement.

And with the worst GDP growth in the country, highest unemployment rates, property taxes that are skyrocketing, school taxes that are getting out of control, business taxes that are up, 5,300 people leaving this province to find a better life in other provinces.

They can't afford to live here in Manitoba. Hydro is up, MPI rates are up, gas rates are up, critical minerals are not being mined and they're no longer considering Manitoba for major projects.

But what I will agree with, what I can say, is that the Premier has put in pipelines in Manitoba, but they're pipelines to poverty. And that's what's happening in Manitoba right now. There's no economic advantage for Manitoba. We are a have-not province. In the last two years, this has dropped incredibly because of the poor performance of this NDP government.

And so I have to ask: why are we standing in the way of progress? One signature is all it would take to move this forward, to make sure Manitoba joined the many other provinces that have joined to make sure that there's economic viability for their province and for their country, and Manitoba should also join.

Let's speak about directly our province of Manitoba, a province with tremendous potential and strategic geographic positioning within Canada. As a centrally located province, Manitoba is the natural bridge between the energy producers in the west and the industrial and consumer markets in the east. Manitoba is both an oil producer and a clean energy producer through Manitoba Hydro with our water and wind generation.

By joining this agreement, Manitoba would leverage its hydro power capacity to support national energy transmission goals. We would expand our own critical mineral development, including lithium, nickel and cobalt. These are all vital to the deposits—or, sorry, are vital to electric vehicle and clean tech sectors. They play a key logistical role in pan-Canadian transportation corridors, making Winnipeg a pivotal hub in east-west trade, and putting Manitoba on the map.

Furthermore, Manitoba's Indigenous and Métis communities are already deeply engaged in energy and resource development. This agreement provides a stronger framework to ensure economic reconciliation continues in partnerships with First Nations leadership. Manitobans in—Manitoba's inclusion would complete the puzzle, connecting the vision from the prairies to the Great Lakes.

So right now the only holdouts on this MOU are two premiers that are both with the NDP party: our Premier (Mr. Kinew) and the premier of British Columbia. The NDP leader, our Premier, has said he wants to start with consultations with First Nations and Indigenous and Métis communities before signing any MOU or making any decisions. But the MOU itself has First Nations consultations built into the framework. So are we left to wonder, what is this Premier waiting for? Or is it because he wants a 'signator'—or, sorry, is because he was a signatory on the Leap Manifesto and is concerned about alienating some of his activists within his own party?

So we want to ask whether these consultations have started or not, and what is his timeline for these consultations. The time is now ticking on this, and his government is now reaching the midway point in its mandate, and we have seen no economic movement.

* (16:10)

The MOU has satisfied the governments of much larger provinces and prosperous provinces, including Alberta and Ontario, as well Saskatchewan, which is now becoming a have province very quickly because of the stewardship of their party. Saskatchewan has—maintains its status as a have province for many years now by embracing resource development, such as potash and oil and gas. While under decades of the NDP government, it appears that Manitoba has been held back from fully developing our resources.

You could write a tale of two provinces comparing the paths of Saskatchewan under the guidance of the resource development friendly Saskatchewan and the different path chosen by this NDP government in Manitoba that have led to continue to wallow as a have-not province.

Our PC team made some progress by signing the northwest trade partnership agreement and beginning to reduce red tape and embrace resource development, and Manitoba became an economic driver. This has all come crashing down in the last two years.

But the Premier's unwillingness to sign a simple MOU and his very unambiguous target of 2040 to get Manitoba to be a have province does not bode well for this NDP government.

At a time, honourable Deputy Speaker, when global supply chains are fragile, geopolitical tensions are high and energy security is more important than ever, Canada and Manitoba must act decisively.

It appears the rest of Canada is acting decisively and Manitoba is the province that's holding this back. The MOU is a model for co-operation amongst Canada. Many of the provinces are taking a lead and not waiting for Ottawa to do so and working together to serve the national interest, all the provinces except Manitoba under this failed NDP government.

Let us not forget the world is transitioning to new energy sources, but not completely abandoning traditional fuels, and the world is hungry for the cleanest, most ethical, most sustainable energy sources. Canada has it and Manitoba certainly has it with clean hydro and our energy supply, and if we want to compete, if we want to lead, we need to be aligned with our fellow provinces.

There's a saying that we either lead or we follow or we get out of the way, and it's time for this government to lead or get out of the way and make sure that our province becomes the have province that we were on the track to before October 3, 2023.

Right now I applaud the leadership of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario for taking these historic steps, but I also say to our Premier (Mr. Kinew): you need to join this MOU for the good of all provinces and for Manitoba.

Thank you.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Thank you to my colleague from Brandon West. And I want to welcome everyone back to the Chamber here today. I know summer was a busy time for most of us as we got to celebrate and take part in many, many events across our constituencies and I know that's probably the best part of our jobs is meeting with our constituencies, our members in our constituencies.

But today I am happy to stand here in strong support of the motion that was put forward by the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan) and seconded by the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone), calling on the Premier and this NDP government to sign the memorandum of understanding with our neighbouring provincial premiers from Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. This is an important memorandum of understanding as we're at a very pivotal moment in our history here in Manitoba, and this moment demands our collective action and vision for the future.

Like I mentioned, leaders from the surrounding provinces signed a landmark MOU aimed at advancing pipelines, critical minerals and energy export infrastructure. This agreement serves as a bold declaration, and it's time for Canada to unify and take

decisive steps toward economic independency and prosperity; and that we need to do here in Manitoba, and the Premier needs to sign on to this and join the other members across our nation.

Premier Ford articulated it well by stating, and I'll quote: As the world grapples with President Trump's unfair tariffs, it's more important than ever to build a resilient and self-reliant economy here at home. And this sentiment resonates throughout our provinces and serves as a call to action here in Manitoba. We must seize the opportunity and lay the groundwork for a brighter future and one that secures our long-term prosperity.

The MOU would strengthen our interprovincial trade; it would connect Saskatchewan, Ontario, Alberta through shared infrastructure development and co-ordinated market strategies. As Premier Smith noted, we are taking action to grow our economy. We're going to build real infrastructure, get major projects moving and, together with these provinces, we would demonstrate what is possible when we unite for responsible development, economic freedom and common sense.

Saskatchewan has taken the lead in advocating for free and fair trade, calling upon all the provinces to join the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, which represents over 11 million Canadians and a combined GDP exceeding \$818 billion. This is a significant opportunity for all of us here, and Manitoba must not left-be left behind. And with the Premier neglecting to sign on to this MOU, that is exactly what is happening here in the province. We are going to be left behind.

We all recognize and understand the importance of engaging with our Indigenous communities. The Arctic Gateway Group, for example, is owned by a partnership of Indigenous and Bayside communities. I think members have made mention of that already. And this, again, showcases that there is local ownership and models that ensures economic growth that benefits those who call the North home. It's time for the—for Manitoba to embrace the spirit of collaboration and join this forward-thinking initiative.

We must also address the pressing question: Why has the Premier chosen not to sign this critical MOU? I know some of my colleagues here on this side of the House have brought forward some rationale as to why he maybe has not. But while consultation with Indigenous communities is essential, it is crucial to recognize that the MOU already incorporates this aspect.

We cannot afford to delay action that will lead to good jobs, economic growth and prosperous future for our tradespeople and all of us Manitobans. Manitobans stand a unique—at a—is at a unique crossroads as the geographic centre of Canada. Some of the members—my colleagues on this side of the House—mentioned we could become a hub as we are blessed with being centred in Manitoba, Winnipeg being here, and in Canada. We are blessed with abundant resources and infrastructure that connect us to both the eastern and the western markets.

* (16:20)

By joining this agreement, we can leverage our clean energy resources, expand on the critical mineral development and play a vital logistic role in pan-Canadian transportation corridors.

We have the incredible opportunity to build from right in the centre of Canada. Our northern Port of Churchill, for example, the rail networks and there is trucking industries that connect us right here across Canada and down into the southern parts of the United States. The Premier's (Mr. Kinew) reason for not signing initially was to conduct further consultations, but I must ask: With whom has he been consulting, and have those discussions been wrapped up? Again, is this just another delay tactic that the Premier is doing here?

Honourable Speaker—honourable Deputy Speaker, we have seen the unemployment rate rise here in—across our province, and the issue of affordability for many of our families continues to be a challenge. There is a chance here in Manitoba to grow our province with good-paying jobs, adding to our economy here. Yet this Premier still refuses to act and make a positive change that could bring wealth and prosperity to our province.

Manitoba has much to gain by this. For example, we could look at Manitoba Hydro that could benefit from increased demands for clean energy in our neighbouring provinces; our transportation sector, which will flourish with increased exports. Our construction industries will have the opportunity to build new infrastructure, benefitting all our tradespeople and union workers as well. And we could witness wage growth and the creation of good-paying jobs for many Manitobans, helping with our challenges on the affordability front.

The Manitoba government needs to start taking action or we risk being passed by other jurisdictions that are finding alternative routes to export their goods. This MOU is about pipelines that responsibly

move Canadian energy east and west, critical minerals that power electric vehicles, batteries, green technologies and export corridors that link our provinces' ports and partners. Manitoba stands to lose out on big business.

It's time for the Premier to act. Why do we wait for others to lead? Instead, we should take our place at the forefront of this initiative. The success of our province, our Indigenous communities and our economy depends on our ability to collaborate, innovate and build together. Why do we continue to make excuses and delay growth and development?

In closing, I urge all of us to embrace the vision set forth by Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario. Let us work together to build a stronger, more connected Canada one project at a time. So we are asking on this Premier and this NDP government to get on board and to sign the memorandum of understanding. Do the right thing for Manitoba and the many people who live, work and play here in our province.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

MLA Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Today I rise not only as a representative of the people of Manitoba, but also someone who holds deep, unwavering beliefs in the immense potential of our province: its extraordinary capacity to lead, to innovate, to build and to serve a vital connector within the broader fabric of this great country.

For generations, Manitoba has played a quiet yet crucial role in Canada's ongoing story. We have long been builders of essential infrastructure, champions of ground-breaking innovation and connectors of people, goods and ideas across this vast distance.

But the time for quiet contribution has come to an end. In this new era marked by rapid technology, change, fierce global competition and unprecedented opportunity, Manitoba must no longer remain content to watch from the sidelines. We must now raise our voices, stand with confidence and act with both urgency and purpose. Because if we wait, we run the risk of being overlooked. If we delay, we face the real danger of falling behind. And if we hesitate, we risk the risk of watching opportunity pass us by, opportunity that rightfully belongs to the people of this province.

So today I'm proud to stand and speak in strong support of the private member's resolution brought forward by the Leader of the Official Opposition, the honourable member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan). It is a resolution that reflects the bold ambition we should

all share for Manitoba: a vision of a province that steps forward, not backward, that leads the conversation rather than merely reacting to it.

Today we ask that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the Premier and the provincial government to sign the memorandum of understanding with fellow provinces and provincial premiers, committing to the co-ordinated, the safe transportation and export of western Canadian oil, natural gas and critical minerals to refineries, seaports and storage facilities in Manitoba, across Canada and beyond, within the global—the goal—with the goal of establishing a Canadian energy corridor for the next Canadian pipeline and energy transmission projects for the benefit of Manitoba, the Manitoba economy and to create jobs for Manitobans and Manitoba tradespersons and union workers in the resource sector.

A little history for context: on July 22, 2025, the premiers of Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan came together to sign a memorandum of understanding focused on strengthening collaboration around pipelines, critical materials, minerals and energy export infrastructure. This 'strategic' agreement reflects a shared commitment to opening up new markets, reinforcing national and regional supply chains and jointly advocating for much-needed federal regulatory reforms. The goal, again, is straightforward: to enable the safe, reliable, efficient export of western Canada's vast natural resources, including oil, natural gas and critical minerals, to both domestic and international destinations.

The Premier (Mr. Kinew) has stated that he chooses not to sign this memorandum at this time in order to allow for further conversations with First Nations' Indigenous communities regarding resource development. However, this delay may also be influenced by his concerns with the NDP's base, particularly regarding the memorandum's connections to the natural gas and crude oil pipelines issue that are often contentious among environmentally focused supporters.

Recent protests by environmental activists outside of the Premier's office may have added further pressure. It's also worth noting that the Premier previously endorsed the Leap Manifesto, a document advocating for keeping fossil fuels in the ground, authored by Avi Lewis who is currently seeking the leadership of the federal NDP.

The MOU already includes a framework for First Nations consultation, which raises the question: What exactly is the Premier waiting for? This hesitation suggests there may be other factors at play.

Manitoba has already started investing in the Arctic Gateway and upgrading the Hudson Bay Railway to Churchill, initiatives launched under the previous PC government. The rail is co-owned by 41 Indigenous and Bayside communities, including 29 First Nations, who are already actively supporting and investing in this infrastructure. These communities have embraced the spirit of the MOU, moving forward while the NDP and the Premier continue to delay.

* (16:30)

Beyond regulatory alignment, the MOU lays out important groundwork for the co-ordinated exploration of new transport corridors by both pipeline and rail, and for scaling up the process capacity of critical minerals.

This collaborative effort makes a significant step forward in ensuring that Canada's resource-rich regions are better connected and more competitive and well positioned to meet the growing global demand in years to come.

Manitoba is uniquely positioned not only to contribute to this initiative, but also to benefit tremendously from it. Our province is home to world-class deposits of critical minerals, including lithium, nickel and other elements that are essential to the global energy transition. We are fortunate to benefit from an abundance of clean, reliable hydroelectric power, an asset that gives Manitoba a real and lasting competitive advantage in sustainable development.

Our skilled and growing workforce stands ready to meet the needs of a changing economy, and we are in support of robust integrated transportation networks that 'seemingly' connects rail, road and air across Canada.

All of this positions Manitoba as a vital hub for trade, innovation and long economic growth—long-term economic growth. By joining this memorandum of understanding, Manitoba has a rare and timely opportunity to secure significant investment in new mining and processing facilities, further unlocking the incredible potential of its critical mineral resources. It also positions our province to partner in the development of a pan-Canadian infrastructure such as pipelines, rail networks and transmission lines that are absolutely essential to building a modern, connected economy.

Most importantly, it allows Manitoba to step into its rightful place as a key logistics hub for the movement of Canadian energy and critical minerals,

serving both domestic and international markets. The memorandum will play a vital role in creating well-paying, stable jobs for tradespeople and union workers across Manitoba.

By prioritizing local labour and ensuring fair wages, it not only strengthens our workforce but also generates widespread economic benefits. This initiative is especially significant for First Nations and Indigenous communities throughout the province, offering meaningful employment opportunities and contributing to a long-term prosperity and self-sufficiency. In doing so, it supports more inclusive and sustainable economic future for all—of all Manitobans.

Let's be bold in our approach. Let us be united in our purpose and let us fully commit ourselves to building the Manitoba of tomorrow: one that is stronger, more connected and truly led. Let us stand together behind the development of energy corridors that will strengthen our economy and unite our country from coast to coast. Let us be committed to bold, forward-looking vision, one of more connected, more resilient and more prosperous Canada in which Manitoba plays a leading and indispensable role.

And finally, let us choose to join this MOU, not out of obligation or intimidation, but because it reflects our deepest values, our vast potential and what we know to be right for the future of all Manitobans. Our PC team is committed to this and unleashing Manitoba's full potential.

Thank you.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain): Well, honourable Deputy Speaker, there's no surprise that the—this government and its—you know, they always have that saying: history doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme. And the fact is, the rhyming here is that I know when the opportunity for the Selinger government to sign on to the New West Partnership. And that was declined by that government at the time, to collaborate with other successful provinces that are have provinces would really make us more of a have province.

And that was the direction we had. We had a direction of economic development. I was the minister of Transportation and Infrastructure at the time when the first female premier came—was sworn in, and I was one of the first new ministers to be appointed by the first female premier. And the fact was the—one of the opportunities I had was to collaborate with Manitoba—I mean, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

We actually had some meetings with the—we were part of the WESTAC conference, where it comes to

all of the transportation companies, organizations; anything to do with transportation, including CN, CP. We had these conferences.

And one of the conferences that we came up with, we—Minister Dreesen, he's still minister with Alberta and Minister Cockrill, who was the minister at the time with Saskatchewan—we actually came up with the idea of doing a MOU to have trade corridor; especially northern trade corridors, having the opportunity to have actually—from all the way from the riding—the Rocky Mountains, all the way to the tidewaters of the Hudson Bay; the opportunity of a trade corridor.

This would allow us to—LNG would be—liquid naturalized gas—could be brought in to the Hudson Bay in containers. And the fact was—the opportunity was also that the railway was already established from The Pas, which a lot of Saskatchewan grain does—used to go up to the Hudson Bay—and this was an opportunity to utilize the Arctic gateway, the Hudson Bay railway line to Churchill.

And the opportunity there was—we signed the MOU. I remember it was right after Easter of 2023, and we—I flew to Edmonton to meet with the two ministers to actually sign the MOU for the trade corridors.

And the fact was we were also looking at doing a feasibility study, if there was a possibility of—and before the election—to do a feasibility study to see if it warrants for another port in the Port of Churchill, to actually allow heavier materials to flow through another possible—another port along the Nelson River. That was another option out there, but we wanted to do a feasibility study, but at—this government has not gone anywhere with that. And the fact is the—that was probably why the minister—the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Premier of Alberta are now working with the Premier of Ontario.

And I had the opportunity actually to go to a conference down in the States last year, in—last December, and the fact was the one person I actually sat with was the legislative assistant for Doug Ford, and he was also—was the caucus chair.

And one of the conversations we had was the opportunity of the Hudson Bay. And he was so excited about the opportunity of the Hudson Bay that he actually—when I had to go up the stairs to go in my room to pick something up before the next conference session, he actually contacted his premier and he said, you're on this and we need to look at—this sounds like an exciting project that Manitoba and Saskatchewan

had done. And this government right now is not doing any of that type of work and working with other provinces.

And the other day—this past summer, I had the opportunity to represent the province at the midwest legislative conference in Saskatoon. And again, one of Danielle Smith's legislative assistants, he actually was going to do a trade corridors session on the trade corridors. Shane Getson is the name and he's the legislative assistant for Danielle Smith but also is focused on trade corridors. He actually worked with us on the MOU. He specializes in that. He was a consultant before and he asked me to be part of the conference, to present about trade corridors.

We had so many—actually, it wasn't just the excitement from Saskatchewan, Alberta that was there—and Ontario—but there was excitement from the Midwest states because they know the opportunity of—if we actually look at the Hudson Bay; that is the solution for all the Midwest states because a lot of their states, too, are finding the same examples that Alberta and Saskatchewan are finding: they're landlocked. They're landlocked and they can't get stuff out. They have to either ship it by train but then now the capacity of ports in, let's say in Thunder Bay or from Duluth or whatever—wherever the shipments are going, they're getting to a point where they're getting oversaturated with ships and stuff.

Our opportunity now is to flow a lot of that goods and services, especially in the Great Plains of the United States, and the Midwest is actually shipping that through Manitoba. This is our opportunity, mister—honourable Deputy Speaker, to actually make Manitoba the gateway of trade corridors.

The Speaker in the Chair

And the—because we are the keystone state and province, much like Pennsylvania is a keystone state, we are the province that actually has the key things for trade corridors. We do have the major railway lines that go down to the United States. We've got across Canada, CN, CP. We actually have BNSF that actually goes straight down to the United States to connect us to Texas and the Gulf of Mexico.

* (16:40)

And this is the opportunity that we could be doing the—a lot of that shipping up to Churchill, to any other port.

And don't forget when we have the—when I had an opportunity to tour the Vancouver port authority, again, they're basically over capacity. They actually

now need more shipping container capacity, and they're actually doing an expansion. But it took many, many years for them to get the federal licensing to do that expansion. And right now, by the time that expansion gets done, they're going to be over capacity, and they're not going to have enough capacity to flow any goods and services that—for the future.

Our future for Manitoba to sign up with the other provinces and working with the united—with the States. When we were in that conference, at that conference in Saskatoon, we did that trade corridor session, and not one of the NDP members who—there was probably about eight of them, nine of them there—none of them even came to that session because they had no interest. They have no concept of how important this was to—when it came to the trade corridors to make sure that Manitoba is actually right in the hub of all this.

We could be the gatekeepers, and our Indigenous peoples of the North are going to benefit with new jobs and opportunities at ownership of some of these great projects.

An Honourable Member: Oh, our?

Mr. Piwniuk: Sorry, our—the Indigenous people of Manitoba. And I would say that this is so important to them to make sure that they are going to have a great, bright future in the future and the opportunity for the next generations. There's opportunity for Thompson. There's opportunity for Churchill.

And like I said, when it comes to the Vancouver port, there was opportunity there to actually—you know, they have three ports, actually, in greater Vancouver. They have Burrard Inlet, they have the delta, and they actually have Fraser River port. All three of them are bigger than ports in all of—all—the top three in Canada. And we have an opportunity to actually have a couple ports in Hudson Bay. One to take goods and services to northern connections, to the Inuit up in the North, to actually allowing heavy materials to be flown—actually shipped by rail to—through the Nelson River area and to make sure that there's stable ground. Because right now, the challenge that we have right now going to Churchill is the muskeg and the permafrost that is disappearing right now. And we need to look—like, again, also, invest in that railway line. But we have an opportunity to do a feasible study. It's gone nowhere, Honourable Speaker, when it comes to what this new NDP government has done. They have done nothing to move forward.

And even—I was talking to a federal minister about the trade corridors, and they're getting frustrated

about the lack of work that's being done by the local area and by the provincial government here, Honourable Speaker.

There is time that we are seeing that this government has—our Premier's (Mr. Kinew) always on campaign mode, but he's never been able to activate anything that we can actually see that there's actually results in this province for our economy, Honourable Speaker. Right now, this Premier is basically just showcasing—he's going on, doing, you know, going on to doing campaigning. Like, he was in Spruce Woods a lot. But the fact is, he has to start now running this province and making sure he makes the right decisions to make this—move this province forward.

We had a big opportunity here economically when we were in government. We had—we were showcasing our province. People were looking—taking attention to Manitoba. Right now, this NDP government has just chased away business and opportunity for our province.

And I'll give an opportunity for someone else on my team to speak on this, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Thank you, Honourable Speaker, and welcome back. Hopefully you had an enjoyable summer and right back at it here in the Manitoba Legislature. As you could tell, I took a few seconds to stand up, my turn to speak because I heard a little bit of heckling coming from the government benches. But, as usual, lots of heckling, but actually when it comes time to stand and to put a few words on the record, nobody wants to stand up and back their Premier (Mr. Kinew).

But this is nothing new for you know who and their—and his team, the MLA for Fort Rouge, Honourable Speaker.

So of course, it gives me great pleasure today to stand and put a few words on the record in regards to the opposition day motion brought forward by the MLA for Fort Whyte, our Leader of the Opposition.

And then seconder—[*interjection*] Oh, I hear somebody from the government benches again, Honourable Speaker. I'm going to give them a pass and not name them or their position. I'm hoping that they will stand up and maybe put a few words on the record in regards to some kind of economic development in this province because we've heard just recently—it's a little laughable—but we heard just recently that the Premier, he's going to go out and he's found his horse somehow

and—the one that was pulling the economic cart, and he was going to put shoes on that horse. Well, what in the heck is going on? We all know that the Premier went out and actually shot that horse and actually has no plan to move any kind of economic development forward at all.

But, Honourable Speaker, the opposition day motion brought forward by the MLA for Fort Whyte, our Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, and seconded by the MLA for Midland, is basically calling on this Premier, the Kinew government, to sign the MOU with the other premiers that are neighbouring our great province of ours.

And I don't know how much longer the province and Manitobans are going to be able to put up with the broken promises of the Kinew government and because we see over—we've seen over these last almost two years many broken promises. We've seen economic development is stagnant. We've seen our health care is deteriorating. We've seen crime increase. We've seen unemployment rates go up, and all because this Premier can't get his act together.

So, I mean, the opposition day motion is pretty simple. It's, you know—we're asking and we're calling on the Premier and the provincial government to sign the MOU with the fellow provincial premiers, committing to co-ordinate the safe transportation and export of western Canadian oil, natural gas and critical minerals to refineries, seaports and storage facilities not only in Manitoba, across Canada, but then also have the opportunity to work with other countries in this great country and abroad, Honourable Speaker.

So we know, as some of my colleagues—our colleagues on this side of the House, has stood up and put a few words on the record. We know that this is all stemming from a—basically a news release brought forward by the Premier of Saskatchewan and other premiers—of course, Premier Scott Moe, Premier Doug Ford, Premier Danielle Smith—talking about how do we co-ordinate these efforts on pipelines, critical minerals and energy export infrastructure. That was done in July 22 of 2025.

Well, Honourable Speaker, the news release went on to say—and this is a public document, and I'm pretty sure that, you know, one or two of the NDP government's side possibly have read this but probably not because we know that they talk a good game, but when it comes time to actually delivering on some action, they can't get their stuff together.

So it said in this news release that Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe, Premier Doug Ford from Ontario

and Alberta Premier Danielle Smith signed a memorandum of understanding to co-ordinate the transportation, export of western Canadian oil, natural gas and critical minerals to refineries, seaports and storage facilities all across Canada and beyond.

So one of the quotes that were in that, and it came from Premier Moe, was saying that we're—that he/they were sending, and I quote: We are sending a clear signal that Canada's energy future will be built by Canadians for Canadians. This is Premier Moe.

He continues to say: This agreement commits our provinces to work together to unlock new markets, shore up our supply chains from mine to port and advocate for the federal reforms our industry needs. By advancing pipelines, rail connections and critical-mineral-processing capacity, we are safeguarding thousands of jobs, strengthening our energy security and fostering sustainable growth. End quote.

* (16:50)

So where is this Premier? Where's the Kinew government on all of this?

Well, we know, Honourable Speaker, that as my former—as my colleague who spoke just before me spoke about the Midwest conference which was hosted by the Province of Saskatchewan in the city of Saskatoon—and, matter of fact, part of today's memorandum of understanding, our opposition day motion to the government—I'm a little shocked that it seems that a lot of the NDP MLAs who attended that conference in Saskatoon who—you know, some of which, some of who attended some of the guest speakers and the professional panelists that were there speaking on energy and other things, which was pertinent not only to Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, but of course the Midwest states—and I don't know why none of those NDP MLAs came back to Manitoba and shared some of the good news that was happening at that conference.

Or, if they did, Honourable Speaker—if they did, once again, the Premier was sticking his head in the sand and not listening to his colleagues, which we've seen time and time again—that this Premier, he just wants to try to create his own fiascos over there, and then, when it comes time to actually be held accountable to anything that he says, he decides to try to deflect and dodge questions, much like he did again today in question period.

It is actually disheartening, but the more and more Manitobans watch this Premier, the Premier of Manitoba, the Kinew government on their inactions on many of

the things moving forward—and again, as I said earlier, Honourable Speaker, we see that crime is up; we've seen that the economic development is stagnant if—and, matter of fact, it's decreasing because many of the businesses that had thought to bring business here to Manitoba is now pulling out and going to either other provinces or to some of the states.

We see that some of the infrastructure projects that we were hoping to have here in Manitoba, because of this Premier electing to not sign the MOU with the other provinces, is that we're going to be left out of national infrastructure projects because of this NDP Premier's flip-flopping, just like the pickerel on the dock that the Premier likes to reference on more than one occasion.

We saw, under the Doer-Selinger time, 2008, that Tembec had closed. We, on this side of the House, the former Progressive Conservative government, had signed the agreement to sign the forest management licence with four First Nations: Hollow Water, Black River, Saugeen and Brokenhead to go ahead and take that opportunity—the forest management licence—and to be able to create jobs, to create opportunities not only for eastern Manitoba, but for all Manitobans, Honourable Speaker.

And where is that today? The ball has been dropped again by this Premier. And so, with that, Honourable Speaker, I know that there's others that want to get up and put a few words on the record. I'm encouraging members of the government to maybe get off their seats—I know it's their first day back in session, but get some authority. Tell your Premier to sign the MOU on behalf of Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Today—

An Honourable Member: It's the Speaker.

Mr. Wowchuk: Or, Honourable Speaker.

Today we gather not only to discuss a memorandum, but to confront a moment of reckoning.

On July 22, our neighbours in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario signed a nation-building memorandum of understanding, an agreement that commits provinces to work together to develop pipelines, critical mineral processing and energy infrastructure to secure our future.

But what did Manitoba do under the NDP? Nothing. Not a signature, not a statement of support, not a

commitment to build, just more dithering, more delay and more empty excuses. There appears—that's why they like those signs of do not idle here, because they've been idling for quite some time.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Honourable Deputy Speaker—or, Honourable Speaker, this—oh, we got the Deputy Speaker here now, so I'm right.

An Honourable Member: They're mixing you up.

Mr. Wowchuk: Yes, you're confusing me here.

This MOU is a blueprint for economic growth and energy security and yet, Manitoba's absent. We're watching opportunity slip through our fingers not because we lack potential, not because we lack resources, but because we are saddled with a government more interested in appeasing the anti-development activist inside his own world than supporting our workers, our tradespeople and our northern communities.

At a time when our fellow provinces are saying yes to growth, the Kinew government is saying not yet. They're saying wait 'til 2040. Well, I don't want to wait because I might not even be alive in 2040. They say they need more time. They say they're consulting, but Manitobans are tired of words. They want jobs, they want development, they want to build.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, let's be clear about what this MOU offers: co-ordinated framework to move western Canada oil, gas and critical minerals to refineries, ports and markets across Canada and beyond.

And I see all the members opposite nodding their heads in agreement; they know what is right. A commitment to building infrastructure that links producers in the Prairies to manufacturers in Ontario and exporters out our coasts, a path to unlock the full potential of the Arctic Gateway, the Port of Churchill, co-owned by 41 Indigenous and northern communities. And while those communities are already investing in rail and port development while Ontario and Alberta are planning pipelines using Ontario steel, Manitoba's government is still sitting on the fence.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, the world is not waiting for Manitoba and neither are our neighbours. Let us not forget Manitoba's a critical link between Alberta's oil fields and Ontario's refineries. Let us not forget that Manitoba holds the key to getting lithium, nickel and cobalt from our north to market. Let us not forget that Manitoba Hydro, once a pillar of economic

pride to be positioned to export clean energy to support mining, electrification and grid development across Canada.

If only we had a government willing to lead, but what do we have? A Premier (Mr. Kinew) who, even now, refuses to commit to growth, a government still clinging to the outdated rhetoric of the Leap Manifesto, pretending consultation is a reason not to act when it actually baked into the very MOU we're debating today.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this Premier says consultation must come first. We agree, but consultation should not be used as a shield against responsibility, and it certainly should not be used as an excuse to avoid making tough decisions.

The Indigenous and northern communities in this province, especially those along the Hudson Bay rail line, have already stepped forward. They're already investing, leading and partnering. They are not waiting.

So who exactly is the Premier waiting on? Perhaps, honourable Deputy Speaker, it's not the communities he fears upsetting, but the radical anti-development activists in his own party: a faction that sees every pipeline as a problem, every mineral project as a risk and every job in the resource sector as something to be apologized for.

Let's be absolutely clear: on this side of the House, we support responsible development, we support Indigenous-led partnerships, we support high-paying jobs and we support growing Manitoba's economy from The Pas to the Port of Churchill.

* (17:00)

And the numbers don't lie. The agreement could deliver thousands of jobs in construction, transportation and the resource sector. It could revive our northern rail lines, expand port infrastructure and turn Manitoba into a true energy and mineral hub instead of chasing all developers away from the province, as is happening now under this government. And it would position us, finally, as a have province, not in 2040, as the Premier whimsically dreams, but in the next five years, just like Saskatchewan did under Premier Wall.

But under the NDP government, Manitoba continues to fall behind, clinging to ideology instead of grasping opportunity. Honourable Deputy Speaker, in the face of international tariffs, economic uncertainty and geopolitical instability, what this MOU offers is more than a pipeline agreement. It's a declaration that provinces will no longer wait for Ottawa to act. It's a

signal that our resources will no longer be stranded and it's a chance for Manitoba to be a leader, not a laggard. But the chance will vanish if we continue down this path of delay, deferral and deflection.

On this side of the House, we believe Manitoba should be a builder, and we believe it's time this government finally put ideology aside and join Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario in shaping Canada's future.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, the people of Swan River and the people of every community depends on resource jobs, northern trade routes and economic growth deserve better. They deserve a government that says yes to jobs, yes to development, yes to prosperity and yes to the united vision for a stronger, more connected Canada.

It's time, time for Manitoba to sign the MOU, time for the NDP to stop standing in the way and time for the province to get building again.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): It's my pleasure to rise today to present a vision, a pathway towards prosperity, sovereignty and reconciliation.

As a province we stand at a crossroads. We can sit on the sidelines as the world builds new corridors of energy, resource and trade, or we can choose to lead, to shape a path and to ensure Manitoba's voice, interests and values are central.

I propose that Manitoba immediately sign the memorandum of understanding with Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan, a framework to co-ordinate pipelines, critical minerals and energy export infrastructure across our provinces. I understand the weight of that choice, but I believe the alternative—opting out, like the Premier (Mr. Kinew) has—is far more risky.

Let me share with the House why I believe the Premier and this NDP government should sign the MOU, on what terms, and how we ensure that this is done right.

First, because Manitoba is not passive land: we are geographically central. We have rails, roads, intermodal terminals, access to ports, a northern frontier and untapped potential. In today's world, corridor geography is destiny.

Second, because the global demand for critical minerals and energy is rising. To be a raw commodity supplier is to surrender value. We need to be part of the full chain: extraction, processing, refining and export.

Third, because infrastructure built today determines where jobs, growth and investment flow for decades. If we aren't in the room we may be locked out of opportunities.

Fourth, because Indigenous nations deserve to be partners, not afterthoughts. We will insist that any project crossing their territory be built with their authority, consent and equity. We must and will lead reconciliation by example, not rhetoric.

Fifth, because climate and environment are not obstacles; they are imperatives. Our corridor must be climate-aware, flexible, resilient and built for transition, not fossil lock-in.

Sixth, because national sovereignty, trade resilience and domestic leverage depend on our unity, we cannot rely on external routes or foreign checkpoints. Canada needs multiple export lifelines; Manitoba must be one of them.

Now, how do we sign this MOU? Signing does not mean blind commitment. It means partnership under terms we set. Indigenous consent and partnership are non-negotiable, period. Environmental and climate guardrails are binding. Transparency, oversight and accountability will define the process. Risk and cost must be shared equitably. Local benefits, jobs, processing, revenue must accrue here in Manitoba, not elsewhere. Development of the corridor must be phased with decision gates responsible to changing markets. Any corridors must be multi-use, not fossil only, leaving room for hydrogen, electricity and minerals.

In short, we sign not to be compelled; we sign to lead.

There's risks, and how do we mitigate them? Skeptics will say, what if oil demand collapses? What if our environment suffers? What if Indigenous communities object? These are real and valid concerns. We guard against them by building exit clauses and reassessment points; requiring full environmental reviews including climate modelling; ensuring Indigenous control and benefit, not burden; designing flexibility into the corridors so they adapt to energy transitions; sharing liability, cost and risk, not bearing the burden alone, subjecting every project to public scrutiny, independent oversight and accountability.

This is not risk free, honourable Deputy Speaker, but passivity is risk too, the risk of irrelevance and forfeited opportunity.

We need to tell Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario that we are ready to partner, not to be passengers, to build

together corridors that unify supply chains, multiply value and reinforce national sovereignty. But let us do so with conscience, accountability and shared purpose.

To Indigenous nations, I stand here knowing that your voices, rights and authority must guide this journey. Our future is intertwined. This is not your problem to bear; it is our shared enterprise. We will bring you into building, not push you aside.

To Manitobans, this is not a promise of instant boom but of planting a foundation, of building corridors that serve a generation yet to come. It is a vision for real jobs, prosperity, energy sovereignty and environmental responsibility. If we do this right, Manitoba can stop being a backwater and become a hub. We can attract investment, create jobs, anchor supply chains and shape Canada's resource future.

We can ensure that our children—Indigenous, rural and urban—benefit from the corridors we build, not just pay the costs.

I urge this NDP government to commit to signing this MOU. Let us build not just for today but for our grandchildren. Let us walk together—Manitoba, Canada, Indigenous nations—into a future shaped by us and worthy of us.

This Kinew government should do the right thing and sign this MOU with our neighbouring provinces today.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): It's a pleasure to put a few words on the record on this very important opposition day motion. And I say important because it's not just important to Canada—but it is—it is also important to Manitoba. And I think that all members who've had the opportunity—and I know many members have had the opportunity to go to Churchill or travel the North—have often said and who believe that there's great opportunity in northern Manitoba, untapped opportunity in northern Manitoba.

* (17:10)

The Speaker in the Chair

And there's been lots of debates, of course, over the years about the railroad to Churchill and the need to improve and enhance that, and I was part of a government who was proud to put money into enhancing the railroad to Churchill with the hope that the port and other things that Churchill has to offer would be improved and be utilized more.

And often what happens in government and in nation building is you have to have an opportunity that

has to arise, and nobody would have foreseen or wished the opportunity that Canada now has upon us because it comes under stress and it comes under some duress. Of course, what is being done by the current administration in the United States when it comes to tariffs is putting tremendous stress on the Canadian economy, and it's causing Canadians from coast to coast to worry about their economic futures.

And so there's been a lot of discussion about nation building and national projects and the importance of it, and I know that many would say—and I'm sure people on both sides of the House—that it's too bad we didn't have these discussions years and maybe decades ago. They were too reliant on one trading partner, but that is difficult to change now.

So we deal with today's reality, and today's reality is that we need to utilize the assets that Canada has, and Canada has many, many great assets, and at least one of those resides here in Manitoba, and that's Churchill, the Port of Churchill. And others, of course, have talked about Port Nelson and there may be opportunity there as well, but we know clearly that Manitoba has access to tidewater.

And I've been pleased to hear Premier Moe and Premier Smith, and Eby as well, I believe, Premier Eby, speak about the opportunities that exist in Churchill. That hasn't always been the case that premiers of other provinces to the west of us have recognized the economic advantage of the Port of Churchill, but now there is an understanding that there are things that we can do, and that is why I and many others were greatly disappointed when the news came out about an MOU to build a pipeline that our province wasn't signed on to it, because I don't know if there would be a province that would benefit much more than Manitoba—of course, Alberta would be a beneficiary—but from a port and transportation perspective, than Manitoba.

This was a tremendous opportunity, so there was disappointment, for sure, but there was also surprise because we'd heard from this Premier (Mr. Kinew), over the course of months, that he believed in these nation-building projects. He said he believed in the opportunity and the potential of Manitoba. And yet, when it came to actually putting your signature and having action towards those beliefs, there was nothing; there was an empty line. There was a blank space where the signature of Manitoba should've been. The Premier was missing in action, and I think that Manitobans were greatly disappointed by this, and they should be disappointed by it.

But what they're learning about this current Kinew government is that what is said isn't always backed up by action. There are other examples of course, Honourable Speaker.

We've heard from the Finance Minister about balancing the budget, and yet we're not getting closer; we're getting further away. There's talk about doing something but when you actually see the results, it's not happening. In fact, it's getting worse, not better. You know, it was just last week that he announced that they didn't meet the deficit target for the last year. In fact, it had gone up by about three or four hundred million dollars despite getting record revenues in from both the federal government and a court settlement that came from big tobacco that was settled and booked into that particular year, and we're further away. And yet, he still continues to say, oh, don't worry. In a couple of years, we're going to get there.

Of course, there is the example of health care. We hear all the time from the NDP about trying to do this or that, and yet we hear over and over from Manitobans that things are getting worse—that things are actually getting worse in terms of wait times for surgical procedures, for MRIs, in the emergency rooms, and that's been well articulated by my colleague from Roblin, who's doing a fantastic job in pointing out the challenges that Manitobans are facing.

So there's what's said by the Kinew government and then what actually happens. And more and more, after two years, Manitobans are realizing the disconnect between what the Premier speaks, and he can speak well on certain things and people go, oh, that sounds really good, but then they look for the action of it and it never comes; it doesn't happen. And more and more, they're seeing that.

And on this particular opposition day motion, that is the crux of it. That is the crux of it because the Premier will go to FPTs or to the council of federations with the other premiers, and he will sit around the table, and he'll sit at the news conference, and he'll talk about how important it is to have these nation-building projects and include Manitoba in that, and Manitobans rightfully go, oh, there's hope here. There's importance to this. We believe in this.

And then when there's actually an opportunity to turn that hope into action by way of the MOU that was signed by the other provinces to the west of us, he's not there. And he doesn't really explain why he's not there, and he doesn't explain when he's going to be there. He just goes out again and talks about the promise of Manitoba. But the promise of Manitoba

will not be fulfilled unless you have a premier that's actually willing to put it into action. That means you actually have to be engaged, means you actually have to be involved, means you actually have to do things and not just talk about them.

And this is the opportunity. This is the opportunity, today—[interjection]—well, I hear somebody saying that we need a Doer, and I'm not here to spend a lot of time to talk about Gary Doer. But I do suspect that Gary Doer actually would have had some action on this, that he actually would've tried to move this forward with the other premiers in the western provinces.

For whatever reason, this is a Premier who talks a lot about things but doesn't actually deliver the results, and that is true right through the government.

So I would hope that the government would look at this as a friendly opposition day motion, if there is such a thing. It's an opportunity for them to show that they are serious about signing on to this MOU. But that's not enough. The vote here will be important—it'd be an important first step that we're going to have for them to say, yes, we really are serious about this, but then they have to back it up.

I would hope that today the Premier would support this opposition day motion, he'd return to his office in room 204, he would talk to his Intergovernmental Affairs deputy minister, and he would say, all right. Let's get the other premiers on the phone. Let's tell them that I'm ready to sign on to this MOU, come up with some reason why he didn't do it after the council of federations had met and tomorrow have that signing ceremony where he's there—to show that Manitoba is in: in to improve our prospects in this province, in to improve the future of Churchill, in to improve the future of northern Manitoba and really in to improve the fortunes and the future of all of Canada.

Because that is what we're facing. This is one of those moments that history will look back and judge what leaders did, not what they said. In 20 years from now, in 10 years from now, maybe even in five years from now, the words that the Premier has been speaking will be forgotten; people won't remember the speeches that he gave, but they will look back at the actions that were taken at a critical time in Canadian history, at a time when our economic foundation was being threatened, to see if he actually took the action that was necessary.

So today is a motion; it's an opposition day motion. It's not something that when he votes in favour of it, hopefully, it puts us on to the MOU, but it indicates that he's going to do so. So I hope that he looks at this

in the spirit that the opposition has brought it forward. We brought it forward because we want Manitoba to succeed. We brought it forward because we're concerned about the future of Canada, because we believe in the vision of the North, because we believe in the future of Churchill, we believe that there are other things that could happen in northern Manitoba, and it's time for the Premier (Mr. Kinew) to not just say fancy words but to actually get down to action and do the things that people elected him to do.

Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Are there no further speakers?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Speaker: So the question before the House is the opposition day motion brought forward by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Khan).

* (17:20)

Do members wish to have the motion read?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I heard a no. *[interjection]*

Okay. Then I have to find it again—oh, there it is, right here. Okay.

So the motion is that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the Premier and provincial government to sign the memorandum of understanding with fellow provincial premiers committing to co-ordinate the safe transportation and export of Western Canadian oil, natural gas, critical minerals to refineries, seaports and storage facilities in Manitoba, across Canada and beyond, with the goal of establishing a Canadian energy corridor for the next Canadian pipelines and energy transmission projects for the benefit of the Manitoba economy and to create jobs for Manitoba tradespersons and union workers in the resource sector.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

The Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion, the Ayes have it. *[interjection]* I'm sorry?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please.

Apparently my hearing is a little off today. The Nays have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Respectfully, Mr. Speaker—Honourable Speaker, could I ask for a recorded vote.

The Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested, call in the members.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

* (17:50)

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

The question before the House is the opposition day motion put forward by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

Division

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

Ayes

Balcaen, Bereza, Byram, Cook, Ewasko, Goertzen, Guenter, Johnson, Khan, King, Lagassé, Lamoureux, Narth, Nesbitt, Perchotte, Piwniuk, Robbins, Schuler, Stone, Wowchuk.

Nays

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

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Ayes 20, Nays 30.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

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

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