



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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



Vol. LXXIX No. 68A - 10 a.m., Thursday, October 2, 2025

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

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

Thursday, October 2, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

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

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

An Honourable Member: On a matter of privilege.

The Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a matter of privilege.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. Obby Khan (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I rise today on a matter of privilege. You have often expressed the rich history and remarks and in this House, and that your role is maintaining decorum and standards.

I would argue that yesterday, the actions of this Premier (Mr. Kinew) undermine those standards. Unfortunately, it occurred shortly after you reminded us all to be more aware of our decorum.

As we all know, there are two sets for matter of privilege: timelessness and it must meet a prima facie breach. On the first count, I would argue the matter could not be more timely. The Premier had made his remarks yesterday afternoon. I had to wait for Hansard

to come out to confirm those remarks and the impact the comments was showcased in the evening news.

To ensure I brought this up as quickly as possible, you'll notice we're currently in a one-hour—in our one-hour debate where the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) gets to bring forward her bill. I'm interrupting that very important bill and debate to bring this matter forward. That surely addresses the first test of timelessness.

On the second, I would ask that everyone listens carefully, and after that you'll have no choice but to agree; even the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) can listen.

You will agree that remarks and back and forth in the House have a historical role. What does not is concentrated and intentional efforts to defame and undermine another member's character. I've been subjected to that from members opposite for years. Now they have seemed to have renewed their vigour, led by this Premier's personal attacks and threats.

He has made it a personal mission to falsely defame and, at times, just fabricate quotes to bait out media stories.

Yesterday I did my job. As the Leader of the Opposition, and members on this side of the House, it is our job to ask tough questions of this government. The tools we have to hold the government to account are through debates, petition, resolutions and asking tough questions. That is our job. The Premier and members opposite might not like those questions, but that is what we are elected here to do. Instead of addressing the issues, the Premier fell back on his own standard defence of identity politics.

In opposition, the now Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) were regularly, viciously and personally attack the first female premier of Manitoba. I always gave that member the benefit of doubt that she was criticizing the person in place of that position in power, not intentionally targeting a woman. I gave the same benefit—I gave the same member the benefit of doubt when she was attacking former Health minister Audrey Gordon. It was not account of gender or race or—it was not—[interjection]

Members opposite heckle at this moment. I have read this matter of privilege, I wrote the matter of

privilege. It is a very serious conversation we're having here right now.

As a visible minority myself, when I talk about people attacking members in this House on their race, it is significant. It does get me emotional. It should get everyone emotional, not to the point where the member from Wolseley wants to heckle me on a conversation of race in this Chamber. Members opposite yelled at, not members on this side of the House. And that brings me exactly to the matter of privilege we're speaking about today.

When members opposite attacked or asked tough questions in mind, it was never a question if they're asking these tough questions to members based on their gender, their race, their religion, sexual orientation or anything other than the fact they're doing their job. Maybe I gave the member opposite too much credit. I give that—I give the Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz) the benefit of doubt that yesterday, when he gave his speech and ignored previous Indigenous women in Cabinet, like Colleen Mayer, a proud Métis woman, I trust that that member simply misspoke and he forgot.

I am not attacking him; I'm giving him the benefit of the doubt in this building that he simply made a mistake. Nothing to do with race, identity politics. The fact that the member—Minister of Innovation and Technologies simply misspoke. When I criticize the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine), it's not because she's an Indigenous woman, but because she's a minister of the Crown that hundreds of Manitobans had written in demanding her resignation from office. I quote the Premier (Mr. Kinew) from Hansard: Seems like gender-based violence. It seems like Indigenous-specific racism. And that is what the member opposite engaging in here, referring to me, since I was the one that asked the question.

The Premier then continued for some time, and it was obvious what he meant even when the media covered it from the Free Press last night. Quote: the Premier accused the Tory leader of attacking Indigenous women instead of him. End quote. The false message of hate and division that this Premier and members opposite are trying to spread got picked up.

As Bosc and Gagnon write in the third edition of the House of Commons Procedure and Practice, quote: in order to fulfill the parliamentary duties, members should be able to go about their parliamentary business undisturbed. Assaulting, threatening

or insulting a member during a proceeding of parliament or while the member is circulating within the parliamentary precinct is a violation of the rights of parliament. Any form of intimidation of a member, with respect to the member's action during a proceeding in parliament, could account to contempt. End quote.

As Speaker Fraser has clearly articulated, quote: the privileges of a member are violated by any action which might impede him or her in the fulfillment of his or her duties and function, it is obvious that unjust damaging of a reputation could constitute such impediment. The normal course of matter—the normal course of a member who felt himself or herself to be defamed would be the same as that available to any other citizen: recourse to the courts under the law of defamation, with the possibility of damages to substitute for the harm that might be done. However, should the alleged defamation take place in the floors of the Chamber, the recourse is not available. End quote.

* (10:10)

Honourable Speaker, when someone insults your reputation and attributes you to some of the most vile and hateful titles that we as a society retain, this is exactly the scenario that Speaker Fraser spoke of.

You, Honourable Chair, are my only recourse, because the members' privilege in this space protects the Premier's ability to make wild accusations and defame me. But you are the only member that can stop such inaccurate, vile, false, hate-filled and misleading allegations in this House, that carry outside this House.

In 2005, Speaker Mikillen [*phonetic*] ruled that it was a prima facie breach of privilege when the Ethics Commissioner made comments about a sitting member to a journalist. I would challenge that we do not hold officers of an Assembly to higher standards than that of members themselves.

This has gone on far too long. The members are abusing the protections provided to them in this Chamber. The only recourse for you is to intervene and affirm the standards do exist.

To be clear, Honourable Speaker, there is no question that as to the matter of timeliness, and I have risen at the very first available time. As to consulting—constituting a prima facie breach, I have shown multiple incidences where speakers have ruled that the rights of members include the ability to participate without offensive provocation and defamation.

Therefore, I move, by the member from Fort Rouge—therefore I move that the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kineu) be compelled to retract their remarks, apologize and the matter be referred to the Standing Committee of the Legislative Affairs for further consideration.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Prior to recognizing any other members to speak on this matter of privilege, I would remind all members to keep their comments directed very specifically to the issues raised in this matter of privilege.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Of course, what we're dealing with here today is very clearly not a matter of privilege; it is, of course, a matter of debate. Putting aside whether the member opposite thinks this is a timeless matter of privilege or not, or a timely matter of privilege, that would be for him to sort out.

What I do think is very clear, Honourable Speaker, and I'm sure you would agree, is that the protections of free speech within this Chamber, of course, are very well documented and are one of the most important privileges that we all as legislators hold.

Of course, nothing that was—has been said or cited by the member opposite has been deemed unparliamentary by yourself, and of course, we look forward to your guidance in that going forward, in question period and beyond.

What I think is very clear though, Honourable Speaker, is that you gave us very clear guidance yesterday about taking the temperature down, and I think that certainly applies to how we conduct ourselves in the House, in the Chamber, and I think all of us took your words very, very to heart.

That being said, I think it also has a larger implication outside of this House. And we know that in society right now, there are a lot of divisions, and there are a lot of ways that the algorithms and public discourse are trying to divide us.

We saw that here in Manitoba, tried to be capitalized on by the opposition when they ran a very divisive campaign. But we simply are asking them to now bring that temperature down, to bring Manitobans together, to not fan flames of division but instead find ways to come together.

Of course, there's always things that we'll disagree on, and I welcome that. I think that's part of the healthy debate that this Chamber represents. But

we do need to be very mindful of how we use our language and how we fan the flames of division, because those implications, as we've seen now in very real terms, have had consequences, not only to public safety but to the personal safety of members in this Chamber.

I think it's incumbent on all of us to just, you know, take a step back, take a breath, think about how we want to present ourselves to Manitobans. And again, we look to your guidance about how we conduct ourselves in this Chamber.

Obviously, again, this is very clearly not a *prima facie* case of privilege being breached. However, we take your guidance about how we can conduct ourselves, and just the language that we use and the way that we interact with each other. I certainly have taken those words to heart, and I commit myself to doing better, again, here in the Chamber, but more broadly in society and throughout Manitoba.

So with that, I think it's very clear, and I think the ruling here should be very specific and very swift. This is clearly not a *prima facie* case of privilege being breached.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: As matters of privilege are very serious issues and this matter of privilege just raised quite a bit of information that I need to review to make a ruling, I will therefore take it under advisement and get back to the House with a ruling on this matter of privilege.

* * *

The Speaker: Resuming business, then. I have a statement. Orders of the day.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Speaker's Statement

The Speaker: And I have a statement. I've received a letter from the Opposition House Leader indicating that the opposition caucus has identified Bill 224, The Budget Bill Public Accountability Act, as their second selected bill for this session. And as a reminder to the House, rule 25 permits each recognized party to select up to three private members' bills per session to proceed to a second reading vote.

In accordance with this letter and rule 25, the opposition will put—the question will be put on second reading motion of Bill 224 at 10:55 a.m.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 224—The Budget Bill Public Accountability Act

The Speaker: Therefore we will now resume second reading debate on Bill 224, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations, who has eight minutes remaining as—eight minutes remaining.

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations): Honourable Speaker, when our government was elected, Manitoba sent us with a clear mandate: listen to the people, lower costs for families and fix health care. They told us they wanted a government that doesn't just talk about accountability but builds it into the very fabric of how we govern.

When Manitobans voted for us, we understood the responsibility that came with it. Our job is simple: put Manitobans first. And, friends, that's not just a slogan; it's not a political talking point. It's the way we govern. Responsible governance and budgets do just that.

Every single decision we've made has started with the same question: What are Manitobans telling us? What do they need from their government? They told us they needed help with the rising cost of living and we listened. That's what budgets do.

We gave Manitobans \$300 security rebate so families and small businesses could invest in their own safety. We are adding police officers with increased funding to municipalities. We instituted the \$1,500 home property owners tax credit and are increasing it to \$1,600.

We cut the gas tax for the entirety of 2024 and then introduced a permanent 10 per cent reduction so Manitobans will never again pay what they paid under the PCs. Just this morning on GasBuddy on CTV morning live, Manitoba is way below the Canadian average in gas prices.

We made birth control free, ensuring every Manitoban regardless of income can take control of their reproductive health. We created universal school nutrition program because no child should ever be expected to learn on an empty stomach, and we froze Manitoba Hydro rates for a year after the PCs raised them again and again.

All of these budget measures came from one simple principle: when Manitobans talk, we listen.

Let's talk about our children, the next generation of Manitobans. As an educator for close to 30 years, I felt and knew the impact of government decisions every single day. The PCs cut education year after year. They left classrooms underfunded, teachers overwhelmed and parents frustrated.

French spoken

Parlons maintenant de nos enfants – la prochaine génération de Manitobains. En tant qu'enseignant pendant presque trente ans, j'ai ressenti et compris chaque jour l'impact des décisions gouvernementales. Les progressistes conservateurs ont réduit le financement de l'éducation année après année. Ils ont laissé des classes sous-financées, des enseignants débordés et des parents frustrés.

Translation

Let's now talk about our children—the next generation of Manitobans. As a teacher for almost 30 years, I felt and understood every day the impact of government decisions. The Progressive Conservatives cut education funding year after year. They left classrooms underfunded, teachers overwhelmed and parents frustrated.

English

With our budgets, we made a different choice. We committed to building new schools, three already under way in West St. Paul, Devonshire Park and Prairie Pointe, and Brandon is soon to come.

* (10:20)

We invested \$3 million to hire more new teachers this year, moving toward our goal of smaller class sizes: one teacher for every 20 students in the early years. And yes, we acted decisively by banning cell-phones in classrooms so kids can concentrate on their learning—because education is not just an expense; it's an investment in our future.

Then there's health care, the No. 1 issue for Manitobans and the No. 1 failure of the PCs. Let's not forget: PCs shuttered clinics, fired nurses, drove health-care workers out of this province. They left Manitobans waiting months, sometimes years, for critical surgeries. They forced families to drive hours, sometimes even to leave the province, to get basic care. We knew we couldn't stand by; we had to act, and act we did. We promised 1,000 net-new health-care workers. We just didn't deliver; we exceeded it. Honourable Speaker, 3,400 new health-care staff hired in just two years.

We reopened and expanded services the PCs had abandoned, including a new 'minority' and injury clinic and extended-hours clinics. This week, it has been one year since we opened the minor injury and illness clinic on 6th Street in Brandon.

The Speaker: Order, please.

I'd just remind the minister to keep his comments relevant to the piece of legislation we're discussing.

Mr. Simard: This was a budgeted decision. We are opening clinics 12 hours a day, seven days a week, during the times when folks seeking care could have gone to ERs for service.

So what did that mean in real numbers for Brandon? Honourable Speaker, 8,900 appointments in a year. That's close to 9,000 persons and families who received timely care. That's a clinic where you can book an appointment online or simply walk in with your new plastic health card. That's real actions for Manitobans, that's responsible budgeting and governing for Manitobans.

And yes, we are opening the Mature Women's Centre because women deserve specialized health care. This is what rebuilding health care and budgeting looks like: listening, investing and delivering.

The Speaker: Order, please.

Once again, I would remind the minister to keep his comments relevant to the piece of legislation. This bill talks specifically about having a public committee to review. It doesn't talk about everything else that might be in a budget.

Mr. Simard: With pleasure. Let's talk about budgets. Let—because, friends, we can't rebuild Manitoba if we don't fix the mess the PCs left behind. They mismanaged our finances, plain and simple. They didn't consult with Manitobans. They left a \$2-billion deficit. They built their budgets on temporary revenues that were never going to last, and they refused to come clean with Manitobans on their budgetary practices.

That's why our Finance Minister brought an external auditor—independent, impartial and honest—and for the first time in—since 2017, Manitoba's Public Accounts received an unqualified, audited opinion. That means Manitobans can finally have faith in their government—is telling them the truth about the books.

And despite what the opposition is trying to say with this bill, we're making sure Manitobans will always have a voice in the budget process. That's why

I was in multiple public budget consultations with our Finance Minister and staff. That's what accountability looks like.

This is what's at stake. It's a choice between going back to a government that ignored Manitobans with their budgetary practices, and moving forward with a government that listens and acts. We've made real progress with our budget, hiring thousands of health-care workers, investing in schools, lowering costs and restoring accountability to our finances. Because that's what this budget is about: accountability. And the best way you have accountability is taking ownership for what you spend your money on—not sending it overseas, not sending it to multi-million dollar corporations at the expense of education.

And trust is built when a government opens the door to its people because it ensures Manitobans will always have a seat at the table, a voice in the budget and a say in the future of this province. We are a listening government. We are a government that acts. And together, with Manitobans leading the way, we will continue to rebuild this province for today and for generations to come.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): I rise today to speak in strong and urgent support of Bill 224, The Budget Bill Public Accountability Act, introduced by my colleague, the MLA for Midland.

This bill is about democracy, it's about trust and it's about ending one of the most deceptive practices a government can use against its own people: hiding unrelated legislation in the budget, avoiding scrutiny and yes, silencing Manitobans.

I'll quote the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone), who said it best: although governments typically consult Manitobans, the important details of the budget aren't available until after it is tabled. This bill makes sure Manitobans can comment directly on the actual budget decisions that affect their lives and their finances, and that is exactly what this NDP government does not want. They don't want Manitobans to see the fine print. They don't want Manitobans to ask tough questions. They don't want accountability.

Honourable Speaker, let's be clear: last year the NDP government slipped non-budgetary items into their omnibus budget bill. They hid legislation inside a financial document. They bypassed committee hearings. They avoided public testimony.

They did it because they were scared, scared of Manitoba seeing what is in it, scared of Manitobans

being able to speak out, afraid Manitobans will be holding them accountable.

This government claims to stand for transparency, but when it came time to govern, they turned the lights off and locked the doors. Manitobans deserve better than a government that goes into hiding.

When a premier hides legislation in a budget bill, Honourable Speaker, it's not just sneaky, it's disrespectful to Manitobans—disrespectable to this legislation, disrespectful to Manitobans and it is disrespectful to democracy itself.

Public hearings are not a luxury, they are not optional, they are the cornerstone of how Manitobans participate in democracy. In committee rooms, Manitobans stand up: teachers, farmers, health-care workers, small-business owners, parents, seniors, and they speak directly to their elected representatives.

Sometimes they're nervous, sometimes they're passionate, sometimes they get angry, but always they're exercising their right as Manitobans to be heard. By using the omnibus budget bill to sneak unrelated laws through, the NDP has silenced Manitobans. They've muzzled debate. They denied people their right to speak and they did it deliberately.

Bill 224 restores that right. It forces governments, whether this one or the next, to bring legislation forward in the light of day. It guarantees that every Manitoban has the chance to speak, to question and to challenge.

Honourable Speaker, when the NDP strips the—Manitobans of their voice, they strip them of their dignity. Bill 224 gives back that dignity.

* (10:30)

The NDP loves to lecture Manitobans about fairness, about openness and about consultation. They hold press conferences, they issue press releases, they speak carefully in very carefully chosen words. But when it comes time to actually govern, their actions told a different story. Behind closed doors, they rammed through measures Manitobans never ever had a chance to speak on. They bypassed the very hearings designed to hold them accountable. This is hypocrisy, plain and simple.

They claim to be the party of the people, but their record shows they are the party of secrecy. They claim to give Manitobans a voice, but in reality, they shut Manitobans out.

Honourable Speaker, Manitobans will not be fooled. They see this Premier's (Mr. Kinew) double standard. They see a government that hides behind words while burying laws inside budget documents. And let me be clear: this is not just bad practice, this is an absolute abuse of power.

Honourable Speaker, budgets matter. They determine how much money is invested in health care, in education, in roads, in public safety. Manitobans deserve to know exactly where their dollars are going. But, under the NDP, budget bills no—budget bills are no longer just budgets. They become Trojan Horses, stuffed with unrelated measures that will never see the light of day.

This is not how democracy should work. This is how a government manipulates the system to get away with it.

Bill 224 ends that manipulation. It ensures that no premier, no Finance minister and no party, regardless of who they are, can ever abuse the budget process to hide their agenda from Manitobans.

So I ask the government directly: if you're truly believe in policies, why are you hiding them? If you truly believe in your budget, why are you burying legislation in it? What are you afraid of?

Are you afraid of Manitobans who will line up at a microphone to say, this is wrong? Are you afraid of unions, workers, families, seniors, farmers, people who will not hesitate to tell you the truth?

If you are proud of your government's agenda, bring it forward and bring it openly. Let Manitobans speak. Defend your ideas in the open. That is how democracy works.

But you didn't; you hid. And today, this legislation has an opportunity to say clearly: never ever again.

Honourable Speaker, Bill 224 is about more than procedure; it's about trust. Trust between a government and the people it serves. Trust that decisions are made in the open. Trust that when a premier makes a choice, it's done with transparency.

When the NDP chose to bury legislation in last year's budget, they broke that trust, and once that trust is broken, it is very hard to restore. Passing Bill 224 is one way to begin to rebuild. It shows Manitobans that their voice really does matter, that their government cannot silence them, that this Chamber all around here belongs to the people—not to the Premier's political agenda.

I again commend the MLA for Midland for bringing this bill forward. She has given Manitobans a clear alternative: a government that hides or a government that listens, a government that buries laws or a government that debates openly.

Bill 224 is about accountability. It's about transparency. It's about democracy. The NDP cannot be allowed to continue this practice. They cannot be allowed to shut Manitobans out of their own democracy.

I call on the Premier (Mr. Kinew), I call on this government to stop hiding now—

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

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): So, Honourable Speaker, you and I both know that I've got a lot to say on Bill 224, as someone that's spoken on end at committee prior to being elected, but also as a young woman who, sitting in this Chamber, is so honoured to have the chance to debate, you know, changes to an institution and a governance structure that can make a real difference in this province. Many of the things that members opposite have brought forward are not of that substance.

Honourable Speaker, the member for Portage la Prairie (MLA Bereza) just said, and I quote, government that hides or government that listens is the choice that Manitobans have. And I would argue that the largest form of consultation that this province, that this country has, is that of election day where no matter what walk of life you're from—whether you have means, whether you don't, whether you're here as a newcomer, whether you've been here for time immemorial—you all have the same power to elect a government that you believe in. And in 2023, almost exactly two years since, Manitobans sent our government here to right the wrongs of the previous.

So, Honourable Speaker, the government that hides, that's them. The previous PC government shuttered Legislature doors, they closed committee meetings, they closed the doors of the Legislature so that people like me, when I was an organizer, got kicked out regularly.

Honourable Speaker, I've spoken at committee meetings, you know, opposite to many folks who are on the other side of the aisle right now. I know substantively just how important it is that each of us, not only as MLAs but members of the public, have the chance to express our opinions, but also now appreciate the fact that as an elected representative, have the

chance to show a bit of humanity and show that regardless of the mistakes that we make, we can own up to them.

And so, Honourable Speaker, I would be remiss to continue my remarks if I didn't address what two of my colleagues are experiencing as incredible barriers, frankly, violence in the workplace that is occurring before us. And in fact, each of us in this Chamber are standing, unfortunately, complicit if we don't stand up to what is happening.

So, Honourable Speaker, statements made yesterday by both sides, statement made by yourself as well as Speaker, really provokes a question of how far we're willing to let extreme discourse populate—*[interjection]* Even now, I'm being heckled as I'm trying to speak.

Honourable Speaker, it begs the question again: how—or the things that woman, as elected officials, have to face when they step forward into positions like this. Like I mentioned, I've been in committee, I've seen how MLAs in this Chamber—in committee, rather—are spoken to. And it begs the question when two of the most prominent Indigenous politicians not only in this country—

The Speaker: Order, please.

I just remind the member that we're debating a bill that talks about having a committee review the budget, and so her comments should remain relevant to that bill.

MLA Dela Cruz: To wrap that up, and just reflecting, again, on our ability to debate bills in this Chamber and participate fully as a member of this Legislature, we ought to really reflect and take seriously the message that we're sending young women, especially when the language that is used in this Chamber and, frankly, heckling that is happening right now continues to deter many of us from speaking up. *[interjection]*

Honourable Speaker, the front bench of the PC caucus is deterring me from doing my job.

* (10:40)

So they want to talk about BITSA, Honourable Speaker. I've got a lot to talk about when it comes to BITSA, as you know from the question period that we engaged in just this past spring. Unfortunately, when it comes to BITSA, when it comes to budget transparency, there is a lot of concern that a member like myself, and constituents that I represent in Radisson,

have towards this party putting forward a bill, frankly, regarding trust.

Honourable Speaker, amid a global pandemic, amid all kinds of heroic acts from Manitobans to hold our communities together, they chose to use BITSA to legislate away the rights of Indigenous children to money that is theirs. They chose to use BITSA to sneak all kinds of cuts to social services under the rug amid a pandemic. This is what they used BITSA for.

Now take us back to the time that, you know, that they are referencing when we are—as we are in power, and just recently there was a sweeping number of legislative bills that actually they got in the way of us debating on this floor and in committee of. They got in the way right on the tail of 2023's change-making election, and the consultation across this province; they got in the way of us debating sweeping legislation that could make a real difference for Manitobans, that couldn't wait another week, another two weeks, another three weeks.

They made us wait, Honourable Speaker. They went on end about countless matters of privilege that have—that, frankly, you know, we've spoken about in this Chamber already, so I won't reiterate.

But, Honourable Speaker, again, when it comes to BITSA, when it comes to giving, you know, our democratic system here in Manitoba, here in Canada, a real fighting chance, members opposite have gotten in the way constantly. They've demonstrated that not only do they have disregard for the democracy and one of the most robust committee proceedings here in this country, that rests right here in Manitoba, they have disrespect for the seat in the Chamber.

The last day that we had in sitting, many of us in this Chamber heard the Leader of the Opposition say, quote unquote, this is the best day of my life. Not being sworn in to Cabinet; not the birth of the member's son; not even winning the leadership race, Honourable Speaker. Keeping us there until 8 a.m., 9 a.m. the next morning, just to jump in to more meetings—that was the best day of their life.

That speaks volumes to just how, unfortunately, they are untrustworthy. This is rich coming from them. This is frankly disheartening, that even in opposition, they've had months over summer to come up with new legislation that can make a real difference, that we can work across the aisle on, Honourable Speaker, and instead they choose to bring forward something that they have no credibility on.

Honourable Speaker, I, again, am privileged to have participated in many a committee hearings in this Legislature, and, you know, appropriately as well, many of the committee hearings were about bills that would have stripped away democratic rights from the average Manitoban. Bills like bill 64; bills like the advanced education amendment act previously, when the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) was the minister of Advanced Education; bills that threatened to take away funding for programs and the judgment of decision-making bodies that are elected and paid for by members that they serve and put that power in the hands of government. That's what the member for Lac du Bonnet attempted to do.

And so, Honourable Speaker, when it comes to Bill 224, you know, the idea that we don't already have a robust committee structure here in Manitoba to bring a lot of the bills that members opposite are talking about, so wrongfully about—frankly, Honourable Speaker, this system works when members opposite allow it to work. And so, what I ask of members opposite today is to finally get to work.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you for the opportunity to speak on Bill 224 and I'd like to thank the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) for bringing this important piece of legislation forward.

This bill brings forward transparency and accountability to the budget, which is central and most important to our democratic process and what we represent in this great House.

This bill is something that I've heard from members opposite, the member from Radisson and also Brandon East, that we can agree on, that we can agree on further transparency and accountability. So I look forward to everyone in this House voting in favour of this bill later today.

It's concerning, though, that some of the comments that were made, especially from the member of Radisson, don't sound like they'll support the bill itself. They support the idea of increased transparency and accountability, but claim to be the victim of things that have been done in the past.

I don't think we're here to debate what past governments and administration have done, how they've handled the budget process. I think what we're here today to debate is the Bill 224 that's brought before us.

My concern, and the people that I represent's concern, is that the slippery slope of seeing less

accountability, less transparency from this government and governments across our country, is a concern. As the member—or the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) had often said, if a government shows you who they are, believe them. And we're seeing that from this government right now. And we will see that later today when the vote is made and this NDP government does not support Bill 224.

Because what we're seeing right now is a government that is setting the stage for increased spending and increased taxation on Manitobans. As soon as they're questioned on the rationale for increasing school taxes on property owners across our province, it's deflection that we're seeing on to other issues.

It's that this government has been the victim of things that have been done in the past, and that's concerning, because what this government is doing by not supporting Bill 224 to increase transparency and accountability in the budget process is also allowing this government to fill the BITSA bill with more unrelated pieces of legislation that changes the direction of this government without the formal input and voice of Manitobans.

I think, so long as we have governments that respect the process that we've brought here to carry out, and so long as we have elected representatives that are in touch with their constituents, we don't need to bring legislation like this forward. But we've definitely seen the deception in the last two years from this NDP government, and the NDP government is claiming that they've been victim of that in the past.

* (10:50)

So I think it's important that we come together and pass Bill 224 right now. I don't really see the negative impact that this could have on us carrying out our duties in this Chamber and in this Legislature by giving Manitobans the ability to have a voice on the budget of the government. I think the budget of the government is central to the workings of our province, and it's important.

It may be something that was overlooked because of honour and trust in the past, but that honour and trust by the public has been diminished by misleading budgets, misleading pieces of legislation that have been pushed through a budget, and the trust has been lost.

So this is the opportunity for this government to come together. It's an opportunity for this government to do what's right and pass a bill to represent all Manitobans. Because as the Minister of Environment

is heckling that there are MLAs like myself and the MLA for Portage la Prairie that deeply care about our constituents and the concerns that are central to their day to day, we have a government and ministers, as that specific minister, who are out of touch with Manitobans or out of touch with their portfolio. And as a result, Manitobans have lost the trust in this government being able to represent them in a transparent and accountable way.

We're already seeing the attempts of this government to silence the ability of Manitobans to come forward and have a voice on so many things. They're exercising that right, and Manitobans expect more and deserve more.

So my big concern is a government right now that claims to be representing one Manitoban, but yet not wanting to accept transparency. I think we need to really question what is being hidden in future mandates of this government; what is going to be hidden in future budgets; what is going to be hidden if they were, unfortunately and for some unknown reason, being given another term and another mandate.

I think Manitobans need to really question what is being hidden in their intentions if a bill like 224, which simply allows Manitobans to come to a committee, state their concerns or support—as we see in the committee process, this isn't all about negative feedback; you can have the public come forward and state their support. If we're willing to allow that, as we should and historically, as we have always done, why are we not able to give that same support to Manitobans, and that voice, for their budget?

Moving forward, as I've stated, the budget is the most important part of the function of the Province, the function of this Legislature and this House. So I call on the NDP government, the members of that caucus, to come together later today in a few moments on a voice vote, and later this morning to stand up and vote in favour of Bill 224.

I greatly appreciate the member from Midland bringing this bill forward and having the foresight to see that, you know, we have a government who claims to be listening, but we aren't seeing the results. We can put our differences aside and come together for the greater good of our province and for the people that we represent.

So as I said, we have ministers like the Minister of Environment who seem to be so far out of touch that they have to heckle that—

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

The—in accordance with rule 25, and as previously announced, I'm interrupting debate to put the question on second reading of Bill 224, The Budget Bill Public Accountability Act.

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 Nays have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): I request a recorded vote.

The Speaker: A recorded vote—[*interjection*]

Order, please. Speaker is standing.

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

* * *

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Yes, can we please call Bill 222. Resume debate.

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

The Speaker: It has been announced that we will now—now been announced that we will resume debate on Bill 227–222, I'm sorry, The Criminal Trespassers Act and Amendments to The Occupiers' Liability Act. It's standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine), who has seven minutes remaining.

Is there leave to have it remain in the honourable minister's name?

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: Leave has been denied. Therefore, we will resume debate—the floor is open for debate.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Are we in debate here? Can I—

The Speaker: Yes.

MLA Pankratz: —put a few words on the record on 222?

The Speaker: Yes.

MLA Pankratz: So I'm honoured to have the chance to rise again today. It's the second day of our fall session here. We've gotten off to a strong start, I think, so far. And, you know, this gives me an opportunity to quickly speak a little bit about some of the work we're doing around making sure that Manitobans can feel safe here in Manitoba. We've done a ton of work around making sure that people are supported in that way.

I know when the opposition was in power, they made quite a few cuts, unfortunately, to our Justice department, including getting rid of police officers and a number of other folks who would be involved in some of the work that would be done to make sure that some of these trespassing issues were taken care of. So I very much appreciate this bill being brought forward, and it specifically speaks about the occupiers' act as it relates to trespassing.

And so one of the things we've really made sure that we focus on is actually listening to the folks who are doing the work on the front lines to make sure that we can stop this from happening in the first place. So this act specifically, it's speaking about—and we're in common law here, and may include—so a person who is in physical possession of premises or a person who has responsibility for and control over the condition of these premises.

So there are number of folks I know in Waverley specifically that I've 'spoken' to—spoken to about this very issue. And we've had some really productive conversations in terms of what we can look at in regards—so how we can start to mitigate some of these issues upfront. And so one of the things our government has committed to is funding for new police officer positions, which is something that was cut.

And as a front-line worker myself, I just want to commend the police officers in Manitoba, the RCMP, for all the incredible work that they do every single day in that regard.

We've also put together a retail crime committee to make sure we're speaking to folks in community and getting feedback from them directly about what they're seeing and what we can start to put in place to

deal with this very specific issue. We know that the effects of this sort of—the trespassing, these issues with—

* (11:00)

The Speaker: Order, please.

The time for debate on private members' bills has come to an end.

Before we move on to private members' resolutions, I just want to clarify that, on the previous leave request, leave had been denied for it to remain standing in the name of the honourable minister. Therefore we now move on—[*interjection*]

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz) will have eight minutes—seven minutes remaining.

DEBATE ON RESOLUTIONS

Res. 13—School Tax and Education Property Tax Increases

The Speaker: The time now is private members' resolutions. And the resolution before us this morning—excuse me—is debate on resolution 13, School Tax and Education Property Tax Increases.

Is there leave for the debate to remain—stand in the name of the honourable Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz), who had one minute remaining?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

The Speaker: Leave has been denied. Therefore, we will now open the floor to debate.

An Honourable Member: Question.

The Speaker: Is there no one wishing to question? Then we will move on.

The honourable member for St. Boniface—the honourable Minister of Advanced Education.

Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): It is truly an honour and a privilege to stand here today, and this being my first time to address the House since an extended absence from it, I want to extend my sincere thank you to everyone in this Chamber for offering me the opportunity to take care of my own health and to get well.

So thank you to the members; in particular the MLA for Seine River, the MLA for Transcona, the MLA for Tuxedo, for really taking care of things,

and obviously the Minister of Innovation and New Technology (MLA Moroz) for helping to mind things while I was away.

It is—often in this House things can become very heated; we lose sight of the human-ness in one another, and I really want to extend gratitude for that.

And lastly, thank you for affording me this opportunity to say this, Honourable Speaker, I want to thank the health-care workers who worked tirelessly each and every day to ensure that Manitobans are kept safe and healthy.

So back to the business at hand, Honourable Speaker: today we are talking about school and education property tax. And I want to first start by saying that education is an investment, and while this debate has been framed perhaps in a way that we should view education as a cost to society, I would venture that most people in this Chamber, hopefully, understand that it's an investment. It's an investment not only in the students today but the economy of tomorrow.

And, you know, when our government came into office we made a commitment to Manitobans that we would invest in education; not just K to 12 but in post-secondary, in a reliable, sustainable, equitable way to ensure that every young person in Manitoba had the opportunity to leverage the Canadian dream.

And when I say the Canadian dream, I mean that opportunity to get a good education that will leverage a good job to live a fulfilling life. And we know that this is one of the great equalizers in society. Just two days ago we had Orange Shirt Day, which is in recognition of not only the students who survived residential schools but those who didn't make it home and the families that were left to mourn.

And I raise that because Chief Justice Murray Sinclair notably said that education got us into this mess, and education will get us out of this mess. And each and every day I know the Minister of Education and early learning comes to her desk with that in mind and the understanding that investments in public education will help ensure that the tomorrows are better than today.

Honourable Speaker, for seven and a half years, our public education system was severely underfunded by the previous government. And it was—you know, those cuts were couched in all sorts of rationales and doublespeak.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

But, honourable Speaker, we know the truth. And the truth is we have a number of educators on this side of the House who came from the public school system that was under attack under the previous government, and they will tell you first-hand that those cuts meant fewer EAs in the classroom, teachers, chronic understaffing, not enough clinicians in the schools, bursting class sizes.

We've now reintroduced the cap on K-to-3 education, which means that the 20 students in a classroom is the ideal situation and we are working to support all of our schools to ensure that, whether you are in my constituency of Southdale or my colleague's constituency of Fort Richmond, that students will have equitable access to excellent education.

And it's interesting to me, honourable Speaker, that when we talk about education in this Chamber, that it is really—I don't know, we're talking about taxation, and I want to talk about student success, so what it means to make those investments into public education. It's not just a number on a balance sheet; it is the future doctors, nurses, lawyers, carpenters, plumbers.

I know that, in this House today even, one of my colleagues needs a plumber—it is those future folks in Manitoba that we are investing in. And so while I am one hundred per cent on the side of Manitobans and their need for affordability, I really would rather talk about what the investments mean in real life, in schools.

I have some stats here from when the members opposite were in office and the measures that needed to be taken by school divisions: 28 of the 37 school divisions in Manitoba, funding was cut across the board; 15 to 20 per cent of 15 school divisions. So Winnipeg School Division, which is close to us here, has one of the most diverse populations in the province—definitely diverse in terms of culture, background, socioeconomic status, all of the measures, incredibly diverse—they were cut close to \$5 million, including nutrition programs and subsidies, therapy subsidies and kindergarten, honourable Speaker.

Under the previous government, not only were meal programs and therapeutic pieces cut, but kindergarten. And if you can just take yourself outside of your own existence for a moment and think about what that means for an individual, at the start of their academic career, at the start of their journey into broader society, to not be given the tools and the opportunities to ensure that they are well adapted, that they have a sense of belonging, that they are—know

that there is a group of loving individuals that care about their well-being. Imagine that not being an option.

* (11:10)

And then imagine, fast-forward 10 years and wondering why we're having challenges with people coming to school, we're having challenges with petty crime, we're having challenges with social issues. Honourable Speaker, investments in education not only impact the child and their immediate family; they one hundred per cent affect every aspect of our society. And we need only to look at countries in other areas of the world where there have been consistent and chronic cuts to education to see what the outcomes are. And I can tell you, it is not a hopeful outcome.

Honourable Speaker, I am so proud of our Minister of Education and early learning for ensuring that the universal nutrition program was implemented and funded across the province. And each and every day that a child receives a snack, a lunch, something notable from the teacher to fill their tummies, we know that that was only possible because of our late colleague, Nello Altomare, may he rest in peace, because he understood the vision and the needs of children in our communities and the importance of investing in education, not when it was the easiest and sometimes thinking really outside of the box as to what students really need.

And, honourable Speaker, I can tell you that this government is one hundred per cent committed to ensuring every student has the opportunity and the tools they need to succeed.

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to again remind Manitobans about the NDP's botched, sloppy education property tax rollout that is costing many Manitobans thousands of extra dollars in taxation every single year.

We have been hearing about education property taxes for a number of years, which is exactly why the PC government began the process of eliminating them altogether from property taxes. And what we heard this year, because of the decisions that this NDP Finance Minister made to change that 50 per cent rebate to a flat tax credit, is the result of 55 per cent of Winnipeg property owners that are now worse off under this NDP government than they would have been under the PC government's education property tax rebate.

Homeowners across Manitoba are now seeing historical and unprecedented property tax bills that have been coming into their mailboxes since May and they are shocked at the decisions that this NDP government has made that are now costing them thousands of extra dollars on their tax bills. And this is all happening at a time when we are in a cost-of-living crisis when individuals are struggling to pay their mortgages, when unemployment is continuing to rise and our economy is struggling.

It is certainly not a sustainable and long-term solution to continue to place the tax burden for our education system on property tax bills. What we need is a fair and equitable education funding model that is not on the burden of property taxes and property tax bills when we know that property values continue to rise every single year.

Property values continue to rise, which is something that this NDP Finance Minister failed to consider when Winnipeg–City of Winnipeg tax assessments and property value assessments are reassessed every two years. So this is not just going to stop after this year. Manitobans are going to continue to see their tax bills go up and up every single two years when a general assessment takes place.

In fact, Manitoba is actually the last jurisdiction in Canada to continue to charge education taxes on properties. It is an outdated, antiquated system and not a long-term or sustainable way to fund education.

Unfair taxation, taxation without representation, affordability issues and rising property values: this is exactly the reason why the PCs were committed to eliminating education property taxes from property tax bills.

So let's actually just take a moment and run through exactly how badly this NDP Finance Minister botched the rollout of his new credit to replace the fair, better 50 per cent rebate that the PC government had.

So first, what they did was they eliminated that 50 per cent rebate for homeowners and replaced it with a flat \$1,500 credit. Well, as we know, this \$1,500 credit does not adjust for inflation, nor does it adjust for rising property values. As I mentioned, in Winnipeg, what we saw—and this was confirmed by the City of Winnipeg Assessment and Taxation division—is that 55 per cent of Winnipeg property owners—that's 132,000 properties in the city of Winnipeg—are worse off under this new NDP tax scheme than they would have been under the previous 50 per cent rebate that they were getting.

So for those that have a primary residence in Winnipeg, even with the \$1,500 credit, they are now paying more under this change than the NDP decided to do. They failed to plan for the 2025 City of Winnipeg reassessment; they failed to plan for the provincial general assessment, which happens, as I mentioned earlier, every two years. It happened this year; it's going to happen again. And Winnipeg and Manitobans' tax bills are continuing to rise and will continue to rise. And as a result, homeowners are now paying the price for this NDP government's sloppy rollout of their education property tax scheme.

The second botched rollout: the \$1,500 credit does not apply to everyone, whereas the previous 50 per cent rebate applied to all property owners in Manitoba, including small businesses across the city of Winnipeg, including in the member for Riel's (MLA Moyes) constituency and including generational cottage owners. Small businesses who have now lost that rebate have seen their taxes skyrocket, and we have seen the bills—as I'm sure the MLA for Riel has seen bills from his small businesses in his constituency—because they went up as a result of not receiving any rebate. Their taxes have skyrocketed, and why is that?

Because the NDP has allowed school divisions across the province to set historic mill rate increases because this NDP government is not funding school divisions properly. Many generational cottage owners are now facing skyrocketing education property taxes because they didn't receive a \$1,500 credit.

I attended a meeting at Victoria Beach this past summer where we had over 100 individuals show up to tell us what their tax bills now are, as they are paying historic tax bills this year. They're not allowed to vote for their—*[interjection]*

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

I just encourage members, if they wish to have conversations across the floor, maybe go to the loge so that we could hear what the member from Midland is saying.

Mrs. Stone: The reason that the NDP and the members opposite are heckling is because they know this is true. We've seen the emails; they're getting the emails. They know that their Finance Minister botched the rollout of the property education tax scheme and their own constituents are paying the price.

We're getting bills from the MLA for Riel's constituents concerned about how much their taxes have

increased when they are struggling to pay their mortgages, when they are struggling to continue with their businesses during a time of global uncertainty and economic tariffs across the country, as well as at a cost-of-living crisis and affordability challenges.

So what is another reason why this has become so problematic and where the NDP failed to plan for what was happening? Well, they removed a cap on school division tax increases. There was previously a 2 per cent cap. The reason that was put in is to essentially keep property tax bills low for Manitobans and Manitoba property owners while increasing education funding to move towards fair and equitable education funding model.

But they removed that, and what we have seen is we have school divisions that have wild swings in their mill rates and their taxes: double digit increases in every single city of Winnipeg school division.

Mayor Scott Gillingham said that these were historic increases that he has never seen. We saw 25 per cent increase in East St. Paul, 40 per cent increases in Victoria Beach. These are just a couple of examples.

* (11:20)

Like I had mentioned earlier, 55 per cent of Winnipeg properties are worse off as a result of the decisions that this NDP Finance Minister made. The NDP capitalized on assessment changes to underfund schools and let the school divisions hike up their rates on the backs of Manitoba homeowners and property owners so that this NDP government could avoid accountability and making the tough fiscal decisions needed in the name of affordability for Manitobans.

This was simply sloppy fiscal planning by this NDP government. And families, hard-working families in constituencies and communities across Manitoba, including the MLA for Riel, the MLA for Southdale, the MLA for River Heights, the MLA for River East, just to name a few—we've seen those bills. They are historic. Manitobans are struggling to pay for them.

The NDP needs to put their ego aside, recognize that this was a botched, sloppy rollout, that this \$1,500 and even more embarrassingly \$1,600 credit that they increased to because they realized their mistake, which is just a slap in the face to Manitobans that are now seeing hundreds and thousands of additional dollars on their property tax bills. They need to realize that this was a mistake and they need to eliminate education property taxes from property tax bills altogether.

Thank you, Deputy honourable Speaker.

Hon. Mike Moyes (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): Thank you, honourable Speaker—or honourable Deputy Speaker, my apologies.

As a teacher and as a parent, I'm always happy any time that I get to rise to discuss education and specifically the funding of education. Because ultimately what we're talking about is our kids. And I would hope—and I say that, you know, with a lot of enthusiasm—I would hope that all members in this Chamber would think about those kids. Because it wasn't a good situation for seven and a half years.

So let's talk about, first of all, what we've done in two years, because there was a lot of catch-up to be done. First, we have funded education, an increase of \$170 million, record amounts in two years. We have funded \$60 million for a universal nutrition program to ensure that no kids go hungry and that they can learn. We have hired hundreds and hundreds and hundreds, to the tune of 1,661 educators so that we can lower class sizes. We are ensuring that kids can get the support they need.

Now, let's be clear: there's more work to do. We don't fix an education system after the eight years, almost eight years, the two terms of dark times that were felt under the Conservatives' watch.

Now, I guess I'd be—I also want to—I had a little note here and I should also—I'd be remiss if I didn't also mention the fact that we're building schools. It's a beautiful thing. We're building 11 brand new schools to ensure that people across the province have beautiful spaces to learn in.

This is much different—this is different than the back-of-the-napkin plans that the Tories had when they were in power. They said they were going to build schools; we're going to do this, we're going to do that. But yet it wasn't budgeted for; yet there was no plans in place. They would just like to take the photo op and say, hey, here's some land and we're going to build the school, but there's nothing there.

This is much different than what we're doing. We have opened these brand new schools. We have—let's go through them first. There is an announced new school in northeast Winnipeg, Devonshire Park. There is construction of a new kindergarten, K-to-8 school, in West St. Paul. There is going to be another K-to-8 school in southwest Winnipeg to keep up with that growing Waverley community—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

I would just encourage the member to bring it back to the topic of the resolution, which is property tax and education taxes.

MLA Moyes: These are things that we are investing through the education funding. This is how we do it. This is an investment in our kids.

And, you know, we can have a grown-up conversation on how we fund this, what the Conservatives never did. They said, you know what? We're going to just get rid of the property taxes. And yes, you can have those pie-in-the-sky announcements and say all that, but there was no actual plan in place.

Education is an investment. It's a \$1.8-billion investment or somewhere around that. It is an investment, and to suggest that we can just get rid of that without any plans is actually a bunch of malarkey.

So let's go through the Conservative record on this, because I think that's also important—their education record, which, you know, we're talking about funding and all the other pieces, and I know that the member for Southdale (MLA Cable) mentioned some of them, but I think it's important to highlight here.

So: cut core operating funding for education by \$36 million over three years; 28 of 37 school divisions had a cut, as compared to the three years previous when the PCs took office. That's a 15 to 20 per cent cut for 15 school divisions.

Winnipeg School Division: cut close to \$5 million, including nutrition programs, therapy subsidies, kindergarten. Seven Oaks: cut 28 educators. Brandon: cut 11 educators. River East Transcona: eliminated 13 librarian positions. Pembina Trails: cut \$6.6 million in 2021, which meant cuts to the teacher librarian hours, English as an additional language specials and EA staff.

St. James-Assiniboia: cut 12 full-time teaching positions. The Seven Oaks School Division was facing a \$900,000 deficit and had to debate between what do we eliminate: learn to swim program, charging for band, field trips, cutting after-school and summer programs, cutting skating, swimming, bicycle riding programs, cutting school bus transportation for those students in grades 7 through 12—and had to reduce 25 to 30 teaching staff.

We want to talk about the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen). We're facing a \$2.7-million deficit. Hanover School Division had to make cuts to their school bus replacements. They had to cut their maintenance budget. The grade 2 swim program and

summer reading programs were cut—\$235,000 worth of programs—and 25 teaching programs.

The list just goes on and on and on. So let's have this discussion about education. Let's talk about this discussion about funding education. And let's be clear: we understand the struggles of Manitobans. We understand that affordability is often top of mind for many Manitobans. It is something that we are addressing and something that we addressed from day one. That's why we brought in immediately the gas tax holiday. For one year, Manitobans did not have to pay a gas tax—not one penny. And we reduced that so that each and every Manitoban, when they were filling up their vehicle, could have a little bit more money in their pocket.

That's important—that's important. And I know that members opposite like to suggest that, oh, it wasn't this or that or, you know what? That doesn't add up. But the average Manitoban, that made a difference. It reduced inflation. We had the lowest inflation at a time of record inflation across the country.

What are some other things we do? Right now, we froze hydro rates. Unlike members opposite, which would come up with new and novel ways to crank up hydro rates, we froze them because we know that's another way that we can help the average Manitoban.

And to the point of this resolution, what did we bring in? A homeowners affordability tax credit: \$1,500 off each and every Manitoban's tax bill. And what does that do? It makes it more affordable for over 80 per cent of Manitobans, those that need it the most, those constituents in Midland.

I would bet dollars to donuts that the constituents in Midland, the vast majority, if not all of them—if not all of them—are better off with the NDP's plan than what Heather Stefanson ever did in education. All those rural communities: we're there for them.

They keep bringing up the people in Riel. They say that, oh, the people in Riel understand this. And there's people in Riel, the vast majority of the people in my constituency, are better off because 80 per cent—over—well over 80 per cent—are better off under our plan.

And that's why, you know, the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) brought up a point and said like, oh, well, this isn't linked to inflation or this or that. Exactly, and that's why in Budget 2025, we increased it another \$100. We said \$1,600 because we

understand average Manitobans. We're going to keep fighting for those folks.

* (11:30)

So I do wonder what the members opposite, what do they say to their constituents? What do they say when they're like, you know what, we're actually fighting for a program that's going to increase your taxes. I wonder what—how those conversations go. They talked about, yes, we—it went across the board in terms of the tax cut. Yes, including millions of dollars to Cadillac Fairview. These corporations that have very little basis in Manitoba—I guess they're running the biggest shopping mall in Manitoba; you know, that's great. But that is not who we're fighting for.

Here on this side of the House, we fight for the average Manitoban, the rank and file person that just goes day in and day out to work, that gets their hands dirty, that is just trying to provide for their family, put food on the table. That's who we have in mind when we develop our programs, unlike members opposite. And we'll get—we're going to continue to do that over and over and over, day in and day out. That's—it's so important.

Now, I can see that I only have so much time left, and so I just want to reiterate. Education is so important. We have countless educators on this side of the House, and we understand that we need to make that investment, and we can have a grown-up conversation about how do we fund it, what do we do. But we can't get anywhere if we're just doing this pie-in-the-sky math over there that the members opposite want to do, where we can just say, oh, poof, we don't need to have property taxes anymore.

We're going to do better. We're going to keep fighting for everyday Manitobans.

Thank you, honourable Deputy.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to stand up and put a few words on the record in regards to this wonderful resolution put forward by the MLA for Roblin.

I know that, obviously, the MLA for Midland is living rent-free in members opposite's heads, and it's unbelievable that they just can't—*[interjection]* So we're looking at a bit of a pause. I'm hoping everybody—the clerks can hear me okay; this mic is on. As opposed to, honourable Deputy Speaker, when the resolution was brought forward and there was a huge pause on the debate portion coming from the

government side because, once again, it seems—and this is not a surprise to Manitobans—that the NDP were not properly prepared and ready to debate this resolution this morning.

So we are going to put a few words on the record in regards to school tax and education property tax increases. And the fact is that the previous member put a whole lot of misinformation on the record just now, and what's a little disheartening, what we're seeing on this side of the aisle, seeing about the NDP side of the aisle, is that the two previous NDP members who got up to speak are actually Cabinet ministers. They don't have the trust in their other MLAs but to put up Cabinet ministers, honourable Speaker, to bring forward and to have comments in regards to this resolution on property taxes. *[interjection]*

I know that the member—one of the members opposite are heckling me, and so I'm going to refrain from calling them out or anything, and they'll have an opportunity to get up and put a few words on the record.

We know that, you know, the previous member likes to talk about large businesses and small businesses getting the tax advantages of a school tax rebate. It's unfortunate that the member doesn't seem—had never maybe put their own capital at risk to employ anyone, but you know what, honourable Deputy Speaker, that could be true, and that could be untrue. It's possible that the member has. But to attack those companies, those business owners, whether they're Manitobans or others that are wanting to bring in economic development into our province and pay those property taxes, it deters people from doing that.

We talk about, you know, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and his, to take a word from the previous speaker, the pie-in-the-sky Premier of Manitoba with all these in-the-cloud type of ideas of bringing economic development into the province. Well, I don't think it's doing Manitoba or this Premier any service when his own Cabinet ministers are actually working against him and trying to deter investment in our province, whether that's internal to—by Manitobans or from people coming from outside.

We do talk about—

An Honourable Member: How is this relevant?

Mr. Ewasko: We do talk about taxes, and the members opposite obviously are having difficulty this morning either with the hearing pieces or the

microphones at their desks, because, absolutely, we're talking about property taxes.

Fact is, honourable Deputy Speaker, is, for years, back in—matter of fact, in 2019, you know, the plan was to reduce property taxes off of—or education tax off of property within the first 10 years, to take it down to zero. For years and years and years under the dark clouds of the NDP government and now looking at over the last 26 years—I guess we're looking at about roughly about 19 years, actually, it's almost to the day—that the NDP have been in power in Manitoba, and we've seen the detriment to not only education but to various different things throughout our great province of ours due to the fact that the governing party has been the NDP. And because they go out during election time and they make promises, and we're seeing this today again that the Premier (Mr. Kinew) is breaking some more promises.

So we take a look at the—the fact is, a little of history lesson to the members opposite, is that back in 1957 when school divisions were actually created, the funding model for school divisions back then was an 80-20 rule. And the 80-20 rule basically talked about 80 per cent coming from government, 20 per cent coming from local taxation. And so over the years, specifically closer to under the NDP rule, those ratios or percentages had skyrocketed in the wrong direction.

So the NDP, of course, love spending anybody else's dollars and cents. And we know that. Multi-million dollars of promises made and paid by you, the taxpayer. They've got no problems spending your hard-earned money. And they don't want to give any of it back. So over the years that ratio of taxation on school property taxes, basically there was roughly about 55 per cent was coming from government, and then roughly 45 per cent was actually being done by local taxation, which was going the wrong way, totally away from the initial intended 80-20 rule.

And so the member talks about, you know, the astronomical funding put forward to education by our previous government; matter of fact it was the largest increase in over 40 years. And he talks about these last two years, where, if he actually does the math—and I know math is hard for the NDP members on that side of the House, whether they're schoolteachers or not, honourable Speaker—but the fact is, is that these dollars and cents that are now going into funding education, they've decreased the amount of funding to school divisions to the point where now we're seeing

double-digit tax increases on the properties put forward by school divisions.

Why are school divisions doing this to you Manitobans? They're doing this because of the underfunding by this Education Minister. Yes, absolutely, the Education Minister and her colleagues stand up on a day-to-day basis and talk about the school nutrition program, you know, a great initiative brought forward by the former Education minister, the MLA for Transcona, Nello Altomare, but that's all she has, is she's riding the coattails of Nello still. Because she has basically taken that file and destroyed it. She's not doing any service to the students that she's supposed to be in charge of as the Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister.

* (11:40)

And, matter of fact, when we were in government, the percentage of property tax and investments made by government was up to 88 per cent by government, 12 per cent by local taxation, honourable Deputy Speaker. And, basically, when you take a look at those figures, we're taking a look at now that the NDP have taken the education tax rebate off of property and now doing their—you know, the previous member talks about this pie in the sky, some kind of math that they do, honourable Speaker—honourable Deputy Speaker—we're seeing that the percentage of people who are not better off is quite high.

What does that mean? In layman's terms, honourable Deputy Speaker, is that people are paying more and getting less. And why are they having to do that? Because school divisions had to go to the taxpayer again looking for money for—to fund their education, which is a majorly important investment, but it's unfortunate that it's low on the priority of this NDP government and this Education Minister who, I'm assuming, soon will be getting up to put a few words on the record in regards to this resolution.

We take a look at—during this NDP's broken promises, and by raising taxes and by forcing school divisions, they're forcing school divisions to be the bad actor on tax increases where Manitobans should know that the actual people to blame for the major tax—the double-digit tax increases are sitting on the NDP government side. They've broken the promises, they've underfunded education, and it's just a shame, honourable Deputy Speaker.

And so I'm looking forward to this resolution passing today. The resolution was brought forward by my good friend and colleague, the MLA for Roblin.

I look forward to this passing almost immediately, honourable Deputy Speaker, and thank you for the opportunity to allow me to put a few words on the record.

French spoken

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): Comme d'habitude, les Conservateurs veulent parler de taxes, veulent parler d'argent, veulent parler de toute autre chose, sauf ce qui est important.

Les Conservateurs nous ont laissés avec un déficit de deux milliards de dollars. C'est un fait. C'est aussi un fait que les Conservateurs veulent essayer de cacher leur bilan de sept années et demie de sabotage : le sabotage de notre système d'éducation; le sabotage du succès de nos enfants dans nos écoles; le sabotage de nos écoles francophones, nos écoles d'immersion, nos écoles anglophones – le sabotage du système d'éducation.

Le système d'éducation est un système, ici au Manitoba, qui malheureusement a souffert pendant les sept années et demie de coupures par l'ancien gouvernement. J'étais un éducateur pendant ces années, et non seulement est-ce que nos familles ont souffert, non seulement est-ce que nos élèves ont souffert, mais les éducateurs ont souffert aussi. Et c'était du sabotage, pur et simple.

Le système d'éducation est la fondation même d'une économie robuste, comme on la connaît ici au Manitoba. Mais encore une fois, les Conservateurs veulent parler de taxes, veulent parler d'impôts, veulent parler d'argent. Mais à aucun temps est-ce qu'ils veulent parler d'investir dans la vie de nos enfants, dans la vie de nos familles, de la construction de nouvelles écoles et du système de français, du système d'immersion ou du système anglais.

Parlons du système d'éducation en gardant compte que notre gouvernement a mis en place un programme de nutrition pour faire certain que, quand nos enfants vont à l'école, qu'ils n'ont pas faim. Mais encore une fois, ils aimeraient mieux parler d'argent.

Je sais que notre système d'éducation, en ce moment, a besoin d'investissements, et c'est ce que notre gouvernement s'engage de faire avec la

construction de nouvelles écoles, et aussi avec l'embauche de nouveaux enseignants.

Évidemment, notre gouvernement veut que chaque Manitobain mène une vie propre, saine; ce qui signifie que nous mettons également en place plusieurs nouvelles façons d'économiser après les années de hausses et de coupes sous l'ancien gouvernement.

Nous avons 25 mesures d'économie, y compris l'augmentation du crédit d'impôt pour l'accessibilité à la propriété de 1 600 \$. Les Conservateurs ne veulent pas en parler, nous on en parle. Ceci afin d'aider les Manitobains à économiser encore plus sur leurs taxes scolaires.

Je l'ai dit, et je vais le dire encore : après sept ans et demi de compressions et de gels imposés par l'ancien gouvernement progressiste-conservateur qui a échoué, nous avons un énorme manque à gagner. Nous faisons des investissements historiques dans le financement des écoles, la construction de nouvelles écoles, l'assurance que chaque élève ait accès à un repas avec notre programme de nutrition, et le fait que chaque enfant dispose du soutien et des ressources dont il a besoin pour s'épanouir.

D'ailleurs, j'étais très fier, il y a deux jours à la marche du chandail orange, de voir des milliers de familles, de jeunes enfants impliqués dans leur éducation marcher pour souligner la Journée du chandail orange. Ce que je n'ai pas vu, c'est des membres de l'autre côté marcher avec ces milliers de familles et d'enfants.

Investir dans l'éducation publique, c'est investir dans l'avenir de notre province, dans l'avenir de nos familles, dans l'avenir de nos enfants. Pendant sept ans et demi, notre système d'éducation publique a été gravement sous-financé, et même saboté. En conséquence, les enseignants ont dû faire plus avec moins de ressources pour un plus grand nombre d'élèves.

Notre gouvernement a attendu – a entendu les éducateurs de tout le Manitoba expliquer comment les compressions des députés d'en face ont endommagé notre système d'éducation. Ils ont enlevé aux élèves des programmes importants, ils ont poussé des enseignants à chercher du travail à l'extérieur de notre belle province. Et, comme si cela n'était pas suffisant, ils ont sapé l'autonomie des divisions scolaires et tenté d'éradiquer le processus démocratique des conseils scolaires. Mais encore une fois, les députés d'en face,

qui parlent à travers leur chapeau comme d'habitude, aimeraient mieux parler de taxes scolaires.

Les divisions scolaires à travers la province ont été si gravement amputées par les députés d'en face qu'elles ont dû envisager des mesures de financement alternatives, puisqu'elles ne pouvaient pas compter sur leur soutien.

Contrairement aux progressistes-conservateurs, nous ne voulons pas que nos enfants sont contents de survivre simplement de leurs propres moyens : nous voulons qu'ils s'épanouissent. C'est pourquoi nous investissons dans notre système d'éducation avec un financement stable et prévisible.

Pour l'année scolaire 2025-2026, notre gouvernement a augmenté le financement de fonctionnement des écoles publiques de la maternelle à la douzième année de 3,4 pour cent, et a investi 39 millions de dollars supplémentaires dans les programmes universels de nutrition, les initiatives de réduction de la taille des classes, et le soutien aux immobilisations de nos écoles. Nous voulons assurer les familles et les éducateurs que nous valorisons l'éducation publique, et que nous pouvons être un partenaire fiable et prévisible pour offrir aux enfants l'éducation et le soutien dont ils ont besoin pour s'épanouir.

Les divisions scolaires ont beaucoup de rattrapage à faire, et c'est pourquoi notre gouvernement s'engage à investir de façon stratégique dans nos familles, dans nos communautés, dans nos écoles; et ce, d'ailleurs, avec la construction de nouvelles écoles.

Et je sais qu'il me reste seulement deux minutes, mais j'aimerais quand même en faire un bilan.

* (11:50)

Avec la construction de nouvelles écoles dans les communautés suivantes, nous allons 'meu' faire – mieux faire à Devonshire Park avec une construction – une nouvelle école – la construction d'une nouvelle école de la maternelle à huitième année dans la communauté en croissance de West St. Paul. Nous avons également annoncé la construction d'une autre école de la maternelle à huitième année à Winnipeg dans la communauté de Waverley West. Et, d'ailleurs, je suis heureux d'annoncer qu'une nouvelle école de la division scolaire a été construite et vient d'ouvrir, d'ailleurs récemment, à Sage Creek.

Alors, notre gouvernement s'engage à continuer à investir dans nos écoles, dans nos familles, dans notre

économie, et ce, pour des années à venir. Les députés de l'autre côté de la Chambre, qui adorent parler à travers leur chapeau, ne sont pas fiers de leurs sept années et demie au pouvoir, puisqu'ils ont saboté notre système d'éducation.

Et sur ce, Monsieur l'honorable Député-Président, je vous remercie. Et notre gouvernement – comme j'ai dit – s'engage à continuer à investir en éducation.

Translation

As usual, the Conservatives want to talk about taxes and about money: they want to talk about anything else but what is important.

The Conservatives left us with a \$2-billion deficit. That is a fact. It is also a fact that the Conservatives want to try to hide their record of seven and a half years of sabotage: the sabotage of our education system. Sabotage of our children's success in our schools, sabotage of our French-language schools, our immersion schools, our English-language schools: the sabotage of the education system.

The education system here in Manitoba has unfortunately suffered during the seven and a half years of cuts by the former government. I was an educator during those years, and not only did our families suffer, not only did our students suffer, but educators suffered as well. And it was sabotage, pure and simple.

The education system is the very foundation of a robust economy, as we know it here in Manitoba. But once again, the Conservatives want to talk about taxes, they want to talk about money. At no point do they want to talk about investing in the lives of our children or our families, or talk about building new schools or supporting our French, immersion, and English school systems.

Let us talk about our education system, keeping in mind that our government has implemented a nutrition program to ensure that when our children go to school, they are not hungry. But once again, members opposite would rather talk about money.

I know that our education system currently needs investment, and that is what our government is committed to doing by building new schools and hiring new teachers.

Obviously, our government wants every Manitoban to lead a clean, healthy life, which means that we are

also implementing several new ways to save money, after years of increases and cuts under the previous government.

We have 25 economic measures, including increasing the Homeowners Affordability Tax Credit to \$1,600. The Conservatives do not want to talk about it, but we do. This is to help Manitobans save even more on their school taxes.

I said it before, and I will say it again: after seven and a half years of cuts and freezes imposed by the failed Progressive Conservative government, we have a huge shortfall. We are making historic investments in school funding, building new schools, ensuring that every student has access to a meal through our nutrition program, and making sure that every child has the support and resources they need to thrive.

Two days ago, at the orange shirt walk, I was very proud to see thousands of families and young children involved in their education walking to mark Orange Shirt Day. What I did not see was members opposite walking with those thousands of families and children.

Investing in public education means investing in the future of our province, in the future of our families, in the future of our children. For seven and a half years, our public education system was severely underfunded and even sabotaged. As a result, teachers had to do more for more students with fewer resources.

Our government heard from educators across Manitoba how the cuts made by the members opposite have damaged our education system. The PCs have taken away important programs from students and pushed teachers to seek work outside our beautiful province. And, as if that were not enough, they undermined the autonomy of school divisions and attempted to abolish the democratic process of school boards. But once again, the members opposite, talking through their hats as usual, would rather talk about school taxes.

School divisions across the province have been so severely slashed by the members opposite that they have had to consider alternative funding measures, since they could not count on the former government's support.

Unlike the Progressive Conservatives, we do not want our children to simply survive on their own: we want them to thrive. That is why we are investing in our education system with stable and predictable funding.

For the 2025-2026 school year, our government has increased operating funding for public schools from kindergarten to grade 12 by 3.4 per cent and invested an additional \$39 million in universal nutrition programs, class size reduction initiatives, and support for our schools' capital needs. We want to assure families and educators that we value public education and that we can be a reliable and predictable partner in providing children with the education and support they need to thrive.

School divisions have a lot of catching up to do, which is why our government is committed to investing strategically in our families, our communities, and our schools, including the construction of new schools.

I know I only have two minutes left, but I would still like to summarize.

** (11:50)*

With the construction of new schools in the following communities, we will do better: a new school in Devonshire Park and a new kindergarten-to-grade 8 school in the growing community of West St. Paul. We have also announced the construction of another kindergarten-to-grade 8 school in Winnipeg's Waverley West area. And, in fact, I am pleased to announce that a new school for the school division has been built and recently opened in Sage Creek.

Our government is therefore committed to continuing to invest in our schools, our families, and our economy for years to come. The members on the other side of the House, who love to talk through their hats, are not proud of their seven and a half years in power, as they sabotaged our education system.

And with that, honourable Deputy Speaker, I thank you. As I said, our government is committed to continuing to invest in education.

MLA Jennifer Chen (Fort Richmond): Honourable Deputy Speaker, it is my pleasure to put a few words in this Chamber on this matter.

And I want to begin by acknowledging that affordability is one of the most important issues facing Manitobans today. Whether it is families managing rising costs, seniors living on fixed incomes or small businesses trying to keep their doors open, we all hear these concerns from our constituents. We all want to see solutions that make life more affordable while protecting the public services Manitobans rely on.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, that is exactly what our government is working toward. We believe Manitobans should not have to choose between paying their bills and ensuring their children receive a quality education. They deserve both. That balance, affordability today and strong schools for tomorrow, is the direction our government is taking.

The Speaker in the Chair

Honourable Speaker, we are making a difference every day. A parent in Fort Richmond recently told me that child-care savings alone have allowed her to go back to school for further training, something that would not have been possible otherwise. A senior in my constituency said the property tax credit meant she could stay in her family home more comfortably. These are the kinds of results Manitobans expect from their government.

But affordability, Honourable Speaker, is only part of the story. Manitobans also want to know that their children and grandchildren are receiving a high-quality education. Education is the foundation of opportunity and it is one of the strongest investments we are—we can make in our province's future.

That is why our government has made education a priority. For the 2025-26 school year, we increased the operating funding for K-to-12 schools by 3.4 per cent. We provided an additional \$39 million for universal school nutrition, smaller class sizes and capital improvements, and we have already hired more than 1,600 new educators to ensure that classrooms are smaller and students have more direct support from teachers.

Honourable Speaker, helping kids reach their full potential is at the heart of our work. After seven and a half years of chronic underfunding by the previous government, we now face the task of rebuilding what was lost. Instead of cuts, freezes and layoffs, our NDP government is providing stable, reliable funding so that schools can plan responsibly, without—

The Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Fort Richmond will have seven minutes remaining.

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—
PUBLIC BILLS**

(Continued)

**Bill 224—The Budget Bill
Public Accountability Act**

(Continued)

The Speaker: As previously announced, I am interrupting debate to conduct a recorded vote on the second reading motion of 224, The Budget Bill Public Accountability Act.

All those in favour—

Recorded Vote

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

Order, please. Order, please.

The question before the House is second reading of motion 224, The Budget Bill Public Accountability Act. All those in the House in favour of the motion, please rise.

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, Wharton, Wowchuk.

Nays

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

Deputy Clerk (Mr. Tim Abbott): Ayes 21, Nays 28.

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, October 2, 2025

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