

**First Session – Forty-Third Legislature**  
**of the**  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
**and**  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-Third Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
AL TOMARE, Nello, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
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
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
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
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie	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	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	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
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, December 1, 2023

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** It is my duty to inform the House that the Speaker is unavoidably absent. Therefore, in accordance with the statutes, I would ask the Deputy Speaker to please take the Chair.

**The Deputy Speaker (Tyler Blashko):** O Eternal and Almighty God, from where—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.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 5—The Adult Literacy Act

**Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training):** I move, seconded by honourable Minister Smith—[*interjection*] Portfolio; my apologies.

I move, seconded by the minister of Housing, Homelessness and Addictions—Addictions, Homelessness and Housing—and Mental Health—Housing, Addictions and Homelessness—and Mental Health—that Bill 5, The Adult Literacy Act, now be read for a first time.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Advanced Education and Training, seconded by the honourable Minister for

Housing, Addictions and Homelessness, that Bill 5, The Adult Literacy Act, be now read a first time.

**MLA Cable:** Thank you for your patience on this Friday morning.

I am pleased to introduce Bill 5, The Adult Literacy Act. This bill supports adult literacy and learning and will help improve the quality of life for many Manitobans.

It ensures the efficacy of literacy programs. It encourages strong literacy outcomes to enable Manitobans to participate more fully in their community and society.

Thank you.

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

Committee reports? Tabling of reports?

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care—oh, and—apologies. The required 90-minute notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with rule 27(2).

#### World AIDS Day

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** It's an honour and a privilege to rise today in recognition of World AIDS Day and pay tribute to the late Dr. Richard Smith, who dedicated most of his 52-year professional career to saving lives and advocating for those impacted by HIV/AIDS epidemic in Manitoba.

The World Health Organization describes this day as an opportunity for partners across sectors to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS and encourage progress in HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment and care.

As one of the most widely recognized health days around the world, this is a key opportunity to not only raise awareness, but to also remember those who have died and those who continue to live with this disease, including families and communities impacted.

It's also important to celebrate progress and victories, such as an increased access to services,

advancements in treatments and science and prevention services, and the hard work that continues to grow across communities.

Honourable Speaker, this is why it is pertinent that we, as Manitobans, pay special tribute to the late Dr. Smith today. As one of the first doctors in Winnipeg to support patients diagnosed with HIV and AIDS, he was a leader in the provision of clinical excellence to people often ostracized for their sexual orientation or lifestyle and lived experiences.

As an advocate for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, Dr. Smith saved countless lives through his practice as a family physician, promoting education and awareness throughout his career. Dr. Smith helped to establish the Winnipeg Gay Community Health Centre, and the Village Clinic, which eventually became the Nine Circles Community Health Centre.

In 2016, he returned from retirement to help establish Our Own Health Centre, an organization that specializes in providing medical and well-being care to members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

It should be noted that Dr. Smith was one of the recipients of the Order of Manitoba, our province's highest honour, just this year.

Dr. Smith, who had pancreatic cancer, died with medical assistance on November 7 this year, at 80 years old. His hope was that his legacy in providing health care to 2SLGBTQIA+ patients would extend well beyond his life.

Honourable Speaker, in honour of Dr. Smith's life and his work, our government is establishing a research grant and chair role with Research Manitoba, with the focus on HIV/AIDS treatment, prevention and care in Manitoba.

I would also like to extend our gratitude to all local organizations, peer support workers and advocates doing important work for the prevention and treatment of HIV.

It's important for our government to work collaboratively with community organizations, health-care providers and advocates to ensure that together we work towards addressing HIV in our province. Building collaborative and co-operative relationships across organizations and respecting nation-to-nation relationships with Indigenous governments are an essential part of this effort.

I'd like to make a special acknowledgement of Indigenous health-care providers and advocates, such as elder Albert McLeod.

Albert McLeod is a well-respected knowledge keeper who has dedicated his work toward the recognition of two-spirited people in North America since 1986. This includes advocacy work for the protection of 2SLGBTQIA+ rights across our continent. He is recognized as a pioneer in promoting education and awareness on HIV and AIDS for Indigenous people.

So, once again, on this World AIDS Day, I want to thank everyone who is working towards the treatment and prevention, keeping people healthier, happier and safer in our communities.

\*(10:10)

And I would ask all members of this House to rise and please acknowledge members of the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network, community-care providers who are with us in our gallery today. We thank you.

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** I'd like to thank the minister for their statement and their tribute to Dr. Smith and his work.

Since 1988, people around the world have come together on December 1 to support the fight against HIV and AIDS, and to honour and mourn those who have lost their lives to this disease.

Today also marks the beginning of Indigenous AIDS Awareness Week, which is an important opportunity to learn more about the impact of HIV in Indigenous communities, to reduce fear and stigma and to address inequities that disproportionately impact Indigenous people.

While medical advances and new treatment protocols have made HIV and AIDS much more manageable than in years past, infection rates for sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections remain high.

There is a lot of work to do to reduce the rate of HIV and AIDS. Some of this work has already begun: for example, the addition of pre-exposure prophylaxis to the Pharmacare formulary; expanded coverage for post-exposure prophylaxis; and provincial funding support for an Indigenous-led, culturally appropriate model of sexual health care at Ka Ni Kanichihk in Winnipeg.

There is still a lot of work to do to lower STBBI rates, to reduce stigma and to encourage people to seek preventative resources, testing and treatment.

I would like to thank all of those on the front lines of HIV and AIDS in Manitoba who work to promote prevention, to make testing accessible in the community, and as well as health-care providers who provide ongoing treatment and care to those living with an HIV diagnosis.

I would also like to extend my deep condolences to anyone who has lost a loved one to HIV and AIDS and who is mourning that loss today.

I encourage all Manitobans to educate themselves on HIV and AIDS, to learn about risk factors and prevention and to seek testing if needed.

Thank you.

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** I seek leave to respond to the minister's statement.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave for the member for Tyndall Park? [*Agreed*]

**MLA Lamoureux:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise this morning, on December 1, to recognize World AIDS Day. This day has been recognized since 1988 as time to come together in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

AIDS was discovered in 1984, not that long ago, but it has made a huge impact on the lives of millions throughout the world.

We know that there are over 2,000 people living with HIV/AIDS here in Manitoba and that there are many advance treatments that can drastically improve one's life.

All levels of government have a role to play in supporting Manitobans living with AIDS.

We also recognize December 1 as World AIDS Day to honour the many victims and lives, including friends' and families', that have been changed, altered and lost at the detriment of this awful disease.

That is why, together, we need to raise awareness, provide better treatment and remove the stigma that those who are living with HIV and AIDS often face.

In closing, Honourable Deputy Speaker, I want to thank those who have joined us today in the gallery, the many organizations for the work that they do in providing care, support and advocacy and our Health Minister for bringing forward today's statement.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism—and the required 90-minute notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with rule 27(2).

### Vaughn Mitchell

**Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism):** It's an honour to rise in this House to deliver a ministerial statement honouring Vaughan Mitchell, who has been awarded the 2023 Gino Fracas Award, which recognizes national Assistant Coach of the Year through Football Canada. Vaughan serves as the volunteer offensive co-ordinator for the University of Manitoba Bisons.

Members may also be familiar with Mr. Mitchell's work in government as well, but today we are proud to recognize his—recognition of over 29 years of coaching football, including the last 18 years with the Manitoba Bisons as the offensive co-ordinator.

As a former coach myself, I know first-hand how much time and effort these volunteers put forward, balancing their own employment, time with family, with their dedication to amateur and university level sport in our province.

Simply put, almost 30 years of service demonstrates the incredible commitment to the sport of football by Vaughan. His influence is far-reaching as he was our very own Minister Moses's coach, along with other members who have served in this Chamber.

It was a pleasure to meet Vaughan and his family today, ahead of today's sitting, and I'm very pleased that we can honour him in this Chamber with members of his family sitting here.

On behalf of all members, I want to say thank you to Vaughan, congratulate him again and invite all members to say, Go Bisons.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we move on, just a gentle reminder to members to refer to other members by their portfolio or their constituency.

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, today I rise to give well-deserved recognition to Vaughan Mitchell, the assistant coach and offensive co-ordinator for the University of Manitoba Bisons football team.

Vaughan has been awarded the Gino Fracas Award, which recognizes prominent assistant coaches nationally. This has been his third straight year being nominated for the award, but it's the first year that he

has been nationally recognized, earning the Assistant Coach of the Year title that comes with this award. He is only the second Bisons member to be honoured with the Gino Fracas Award, the first of whom was Richard Urbanovich back in 2005.

Vaughan has dedicated much of his time to the Bisons football team as volunteer coach for 25 years. He has contributed to many of the team's successes, such as the 2007 Vanier Cup championship and the team's placement in the 2014 Uteck Bowl semi-final.

He is a proud member of the Bisons team, having played for the Bisons himself as a four-year starter on their offensive line between 1989 and 1993. His passion for football could be seen both on and off the field and has led to his remarkable career achievements.

On behalf of all Manitobans, I would like to congratulate Vaughan on his enormous achievement, and I wish him and the rest of the Bisons team many more successful seasons to come.

Thank you.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Brandon Terry

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Honourable Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of a constituent from Interlake-Gimli who competed at the 2023 World Police and Fire Games.

Brandon Terry, who joins us here today, is a resident of Gimli, a husband to Shelly, and a father of two. He has been serving our communities as a firefighter for the past 15 years.

Brandon currently serves as acting captain to the Winnipeg Airports Authority emergency response service, ensuring the safety of Manitobans and visitors as they come and leave our great province. Prior to this, he served with the Canadian Armed Forces for 10 years, retiring as a master corporal in 2017.

Brandon has always encouraged and organized fitness-related events over his fellow firefighters as a way to improve morale, overall health and well-being as well as increasing operational capabilities for the department. He has organized and trained teams to compete in many national-level events, often returning with bronze and silver medals.

At the World Police and Fire Games, Brandon competed in the 30-plus men's 66-kg category bench press competition. He successfully brought home a

gold medal for his department and our province from this international event.

Honourable Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Brandon Terry for his service to our country, province and our constituency of Interlake-Gimli. It is well-rounded individuals like Brandon that lead by example and guide us through their actions. They are role models for our next generation.

\* (10:20)

Members of the Legislature, please join me in recognizing Brandon Terry for his accomplishments, not just in life but at the World Police and Fire Games.

### Anna and Ashley McKague

**MLA Billie Cross (Seine River):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, November was Diabetes Awareness Month. Diabetes is a severe illness that is prevalent in our province.

Today, I want to talk about Anna McKague. Anna is a seven-year-old who lives in River Park South and attends Samuel Burland School. Anna was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when she was three years old.

Fortunately, Anna's mom, Ashley, was able to purchase a continuous glucose monitor and insulin pump for Anna. These tools made a huge difference in the McKague family's life by regulating blood sugar spikes and lows and making a needle prick at the press of a button.

Realizing the impact this had on her family, Ashley realized that all kids diagnosed with type 1 should have access to this life-altering equipment, and so began Ashley, and now Anna's, advocacy for type 1 diabetes patients.

In Ashley's work, she collaborated with other parents to create the group Manitoba Families for Type 1. Ashley also helps newly diagnosed families with social, emotional support and brainstorming ways to support their kids as they adjust to their new life living with type 1 diabetes.

Their work continues. Anna has actively raised over \$4,900 for juvenile diabetes research funding. Anna has also participated in an awareness day on the steps of the Legislature, helping to highlight the barriers and challenges folks with type 1 diabetes experience. In their next advocacy phase, this inspiring mother-daughter duo plans to advocate for insulin support in schools.

I am inspired, encouraged by Anna and Ashley's advocacy for Manitobans diagnosed with diabetes for a healthy and thriving lifestyle.

I'd like to invite my colleagues to stand and thank Anna and Ashley McKague, who join us with the rest of their family in the gallery, for their incredible work and dedication to diabetes awareness.

Thank you.

#### **Charleswood Rotary Club**

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to recognize the Winnipeg Charleswood Rotary Club and to tell the Assembly about the great work that Rotary members do in the constituency of Roblin.

Since 1985, the club has supported projects locally and internationally through donations and many, many hours of volunteer work. Today, I would like to highlight three important local projects in Charleswood.

The Charleswood Rotary Club have been stewards of the Assiniboine Forest for the last 30 years. With over 700 acres of largely undisturbed wilderness, the forest is one of the largest urban nature parks in Canada and a jewel in west Winnipeg.

Rotary volunteers work closely with the City of Winnipeg on maintenance of the forest's trails and boardwalk, the addition of new signage and enhancing accessibility so that more Winnipeggers can enjoy this beautiful and natural space.

The Charleswood Rotary Club is a major supporter of literacy programs at Westgrove School. For nearly 20 years, the club has provided funding and books for the summer literacy program, supported the school garden, provided running shoes and rubber boots for kids in need and supported the school's breakfast program.

Rotary is also working to support Ukrainian refugees through Bridge of Hope Ukraine. The club collects furniture and needed household items, and then co-ordinates with families in need who can come in and shop for what they need from the 100 per cent free store. Their selections are then delivered to the families' homes free of charge.

To support all of these worthwhile projects, the club must raise funds, and to that end, everyone in Charleswood knows and enjoys Lobsterfest. Every year, we look forward to supporting Rotary by purchasing a fine lobster dinner, and every year the

event is a sellout. Lobsterfest has been the club's main fundraiser for 34 years and enables all of us in the community to support the good work of the Rotary Club.

I'd like to acknowledge the president of Charleswood Rotary, Iain Scott, and long-time Rotarian Jack Wilson, both of whom join us in the gallery today, and thank them and their fellow Rotarians for their dedication to our community.

Thank you.

#### **Recognizing Community Organizations**

**MLA Mike Moroz (River Heights):** Honourable Speaker, the start of the holiday season provides us with an important opportunity for reflection: on the year that's coming to a close, on the many blessings that have been afforded us and to look—both as individuals and as a society—for ways to better support those in our community who face daily challenges that we can only imagine.

Too many among us are struggling, and those struggles come in many forms, some of which we never see. While some people battle very publicly with addictions, mental health or homelessness, many others will experience food insecurity, lead tragic, troubled private lives or work full-time but continue to live well below the poverty line, unseen and unacknowledged.

At this time of year we also need to honour the important work of those who dedicate themselves to alleviating that suffering, organizations like Siloam Mission, Harvest Manitoba, the Main Street Project; the many shelters and food banks across our province, who offer a daily lifeline; as well as the countless individuals who work tirelessly with local faith-based, school or charity initiatives to provide relief to those in need.

What's more, we need to consider how we might ourselves contribute to that work, not just during the holidays but year-round.

Honourable Speaker, I'm proud to say that River Heights is home to many individuals who lead those organizations and who do that grassroots work, and whose energy drives those critically important projects.

As we move into this holiday season may we fully embrace the spirit of the prayer by J.S. Woodsworth that many of my colleagues will know by heart: What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all. To this end,

may we take our share of the world's work and the world's struggles.

Thank you.

### Aaron Cockerill

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** Today I am honoured to rise in the Chamber to recognize golfer Aaron Cockerill.

Born in Teulon, Manitoba in 1992, Aaron has been a part of the Lakeside community for quite a few years.

Entering a golf tournament in Killarney at the age of 15 and winning is when he decided to quit baseball and pursue golf. As he said, golf is an individual sport. You mess up, that is on you.

He went to Texas A&M for one year of college and then continued his schooling at the University of Idaho. Aaron has his degree in finance and was on the dean's list for his academic accomplishments.

A golf coach pushed Aaron to compete professionally. Coach Means had played a very important role in these young men's lives, making it to all their weddings and maintaining contact with all the golfers, even to this day.

Trying out for qualifying school in Canada he made the cut and started his career. Maintaining his card he played in Canada for two years. In 2017, he then decided to try out for qualifying school in Europe. He made the cut which allowed him to play in the Challenge Tour.

He got to play in selected events for one year. In 2019 he decided to try again for qualifying school. This time he placed fifth overall and had the choice of what tournaments he wanted to enter.

At the end of 2023 he has been to 17 countries on four different continents.

In 2021 Aaron got married to Chelsea Scrivener of Stonewall and in February of 2023 they had their first child. Aaron found it very difficult to travel and work without his family by his side. Addison has quite a few stamps on her passport already and has had a fair bit of TV time for being 10 months old.

In April of 2023 Aaron came very close to receiving his first win in the DP World Tour. He was in Japan and playing his best game ever, where he lost in a playoff hole. That time he was very disappointed but that motivated him even more to make a goal a reality.

He's now in Africa and has started the 2024 season. He will be home for the holidays and then off to Dubai with the family in early January to continue his career.

Please join me in congratulating Aaron Cockerill for his accomplishments.

\* (10:30)

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Fuel Tax Amendment Act Future Gas Prices

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** Honourable Speaker, Manitobans have been disappointed to learn that because of the short duration of the proposed tax holiday and the NDP's love for the federal carbon tax, the gas prices might jump as high as 20 cents a litre next summer.

Now, yesterday, the Premier acknowledged that whatever short-term savings there might be, they might not actually get to Manitobans if those savings aren't passed along. So he vowed to crack down on gas stations and on grocery stores.

Is the Premier an expert on Texas crude prices or is he planning to go to the grocery store weekly and price-check Sugar Pops and farmer sausage, or how exactly does he plan to plug another hole in legislation that is full of holes?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Honourable Speaker, what is clear, gasoline and diesel prices, the tax on them is coming down to zero starting on January 1st.

Restrained consternation and faux outrage of my friend from Steinbach is being purposely marshalled here today to cover up the fact that he and his colleagues never took this step during time in office.

Instead, they were content to build up the bureaucracy in health care and to continue taxing the average Manitoban who needs to commute to get to work, to school or to lead a fulfilling life in our province.

Now, we know that there are tons of people out there with expertise in the energy markets, and that's why, in addition to bringing in this step, we are also going to ask the Public Utilities Board to bring in oversight of gasoline prices here in the future for Manitoba.



### Provincial Finances Management Concerns

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot):** Well, this NDP Premier was given—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Sorry, on a new question, the honourable member for Springfield-Ritchot.

**Mr. Schuler:** This NDP Premier was given a balanced budget and a more than a quarter-billion-dollar surplus gift by the previous Progressive Conservative government.

What was this NDP Premier's response? His response was, what a mess.

But you have to understand that a balanced budget is an epic fail for socialists. Worse is a quarter-billion-dollar surplus. That, for the NDP, is a mess.

The question is: How many years of deficits will Manitobans have to suffer under this NDP Premier?

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Honourable first Premier—First Minister.

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I will note that our team is committed to fixing up the mess left by the PC government. That means that we're going to work hard to balance the books in this province while also fixing health care and making life more affordable.

I'll note that my friend from Springfield conveniently glosses over a six-month period in which his failed former administration dramatically overextended themselves with commitments trying to hang on to their own jobs, but their record on job creation is very, very poor.

So I will ask them: What happened to the jobs of Andrew Micklefield, James Teitsma, Rochelle Squires, Janice Morley-Lecomte, Jon Reyes? I could go on, but my time is running out.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member for Turtle Mountain, on a new question.

### Manitoba Public Insurance Replacement of Board Members

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, one of this minister's first acts was to fire the board of dedicated Manitobans. To the MPI board that he so unceremoniously threw aside to make way for his flunkies, I want to say Manitobans appreciate your service. These boards serve to represent Manitobans; at least, they used to.

Can the minister explain why he thinks that taking a labour leader from the picket line and putting her on the board table is fair to Manitoba ratepayers?

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I guess I shouldn't be surprised, Deputy Speaker, that it took this long for the members opposite to bring up the issue of MPI, because it was this government opposite that continuously disrespected the ratepayers in Manitoba with regards to MPI, and disrespected the workers by keeping them on the picket line week after week after week.

It's members opposite that left a mess at MPI, and it's this government who's going to start to fix it and clean it up.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member for Selkirk, with a new question.

### Selkirk Region Bridge Replacement Timeline for Reconstruction

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, the PC government committed to the people of Selkirk, St. Andrews, St. Clements and East Selkirk to replace the 90-year-old bridge that has decayed to be done in 2024.

When will this government have a start date to reconstruct that bridge, or have the NDP cut it?

**Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure):** If the member from Selkirk—is that right?—if the member from Selkirk is interested in specific details on a specific project, I'm more than happy to meet with him to provide that information.

We are on track with our—with a five-year plan. We are investing in infrastructure, roads and bridges across the province. Where that team cut, we will build.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member for Agassiz, with a new question.

### Immigration to Manitoba Throne Speech

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** The Minister of Immigration and Labour is on the record falsely stating this immigration file was completely ignored by the PC government, when actually it was the PC government that increased immigration to our province.

But what the member opposite fails to realize is the fact that the very government she represents, the NDP government, is the same government that has

completely ignored the immigration file, with no mention of it in the Throne Speech.

Evidently it's the members opposite, the NDP government, that have completely ignored this file and refused to address immigration in the Throne Speech.

With no plan ahead on this file I have to ask the minister: Why has it been ignored and not addressed?

**Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, I was asked to be in Cabinet on a Wednesday, and I was already out in rural communities, talking about immigration to our communities out there, on the Friday.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I didn't even have an email address yet. I didn't even have any business cards yet.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order.

**MLA Marcelino:** I didn't even have an email address yet. I didn't even have any business cards yet, and I was already out in communities like Brandon, Neepawa and Russell, trying to promote newcomers to go to these communities because I know how important immigration is to our province for us to continue on, for our labour sector and also for economy.

So, no, that is not true what members opposite are saying. In fact, it is this record, their record, zero accreditation rates for nurses, the highest—*[interjection]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**MLA Marcelino:** —out-migration rates. *[interjection]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. *[interjection]* A gentle reminder to members that when the Speaker is standing, there's an expectation of silence.

#### **Affordable Housing Shortage Request for Plan to Address**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, the Throne Speech failed to mention how, and if, the NDP government will address affordable housing shortage.

The PC government committed to building 700 affordable housing units. Social housing is desperately needed amongst our housing shortage.

\* (10:40)

I ask the minister: What is the NDP's plan to address the shorting—housing shortage?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** Well, when I got into this role, I can tell you there was a whole list of social housing that was set to be sold by this former government—affordable housing that Manitobans rely on.

The people—the very people that were in bus shelters that this former government were okay living in. The former government were okay with people living in tents. This government should be ashamed of themselves. They had no plan to get these folks housed. Their plan was to open up more shelters. That's not sustainable for folks living in Manitoba.

We have a plan of sustainable living for folks to have—

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

#### **Psychotherapy Services Regulation Recommendation**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** People are struggling with mental health challenges in every community across Manitoba.

One thing that we need to do is regulate psychotherapy. Regulation would ensure that more people have access to therapy and that those practising are properly trained to do so.

For the last two years, I encouraged the previous government to do this, but it didn't happen.

So I want to ask this new government: Will you regulate psychotherapy here in Manitoba?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to say that, you know, the opposition are running through their questions very quickly, but it took the member for Tyndall Park to raise the No. 1 issue that matters to the people of Manitoba, which is health care.

And I know that health care is very important to all of our constituents right across the people—right across the province of Manitoba.

And that's why I look forward to continuing our important conversations on topics like mental health, to ensure that people, whether they're in Lac du Bonnet or Virden, Steinbach, Winnipeg, northern Manitoba, have access to improved mental health services.

All of us have felt the strain of the pandemic and have begun to think about mental health in a new way

over these past few years. Our government will deliver improved services with that in mind.

### **Mental Health and Addiction Funding for Services**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** I'm tabling a page from the Mental Health and Community Wellness annual report, which shows that Mental Health and Addictions branch was underspent by over \$4 million this past fiscal year. The explanation provided was due to staffing vacancies.

Now more than ever, Manitobans need their government to ensure that everyone can access effective supports for mental health and addictions.

Will this government commit to ensuring that the Mental Health and Addictions branch will be fully funded in the next fiscal year?

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member for—or sorry, Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness.

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** I can tell that member that that is a priority for our government, to ensure that Manitobans are getting the services that they need when they need them.

We have asked our department to make sure to look at that stream, to make sure that those folks are getting those supports.

We know that there are HR—there are real challenges in terms of getting those supports and those psychiatric supports to those individuals. So we are making sure that we are getting those supports to those folks in a timely manner, and making sure that those folks are getting the supports and getting—

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

The honourable member for Tyndall Park, with a final supplementary.

### **Youth Mental Health Strategy Request for Government Plan**

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth just released its annual report with very troubling findings.

Last year, we tragically lost 37 young people under the age of 21 by suicide. This represents a 42 per cent increase from previous years and the highest annual number of deaths by suicide that MACY has been notified of.

Will this government please share what their youth mental health strategy is today?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to thank the member for Tyndall Park for this serious question.

This is an issue that has touched the lives of many Manitobans, and it is a tragedy any time we see a family experience this, and I think many of us in this Chamber can speak from personal experience, unfortunately, when it comes to these issues.

Our government, on the way into office, made a commitment to Manitobans that we are going to invest—that we are going to invest in prevention when it comes to young people to ensure that we improve prospects and health outcomes for people under the age of 18 in Manitoba.

One of the key pillars that we're committed to, and are going to implement now that we are in government, is a province-wide anti-suicide strategy; a suicide prevention strategy designed to respond to exactly the issue that the member for Tyndall Park is raising.

We know that, as part of this province-wide strategy, there needs to be a specific emphasis on young people and, in addition, there needs to be a specific focus on members of the 2SLGBTQ community.

This is something we are seriously—

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

### **Association of Manitoba Municipalities Convention Update**

**MLA Billie Cross (Seine River):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, our government is a listening government. It's a new day in Manitoba. We're building new relationships with municipal leaders to better meet the needs of all Manitobans in this province.

Several of our government ministers, including the Premier (Mr. Kinew), were present at AMM this week.

Can the minister update the House on the conversations, progress and commitments at the Association of Manitoba Municipalities this week?

**Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations):** I'd like to thank the member from Seine River for that fantastic question.

A breath of fresh of air. A new day. Hope. That is something we heard resoundingly at AMM, and

I want to congratulate AMM on 25-year anniversary of the municipalities and representing the—and having their voices here in the Chamber.

I was pleased to have three action-packed days of back-and-forth discussions, collaboration, something this government never did—never did in seven years of cuts and freezes.

I was pleased to be joined by many members of Cabinet as well as many MLAs to hear the back and forth, speaking with people from Churchill all the way down to two borders and across the entirety of the province, something members opposite never did in seven years.

#### **Arts, Culture and Sport in Community Fund Funding Commitment Inquiry**

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** The arts, culture, sport in community fund provided more than 800 grants for over \$100 million to community organizations all across our province. It funded improvements to rinks, cultural centres, sports programs, community centres and much more.

This helped to improve my community, your community and communities all across this great province.

Can the minister please confirm for the House, will his NDP government be cutting the arts, culture, sport in community fund, yes or no?

**Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism):** Well, after years of chaos and cuts, the needs of communities across Manitoba needed to be met, but it was met with year after year of municipal freezes; municipal freezes that they had to not put money into infrastructure—eleventh-hour promises.

The fund that he talks about was supposed to be a three-year fund, condensed just before the election—eleventh hour.

We are working for Manitobans, and not like what their slogan was: fighting Manitobans.

#### **Food Security Fund Funding Commitment Inquiry**

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** For over 100 years the Christmas Cheer Board has worked hard to ensure every family can celebrate the holidays.

This year, there is more of a need for their kindness than in years past, with over 30,000 phone

call attempts were made after they opened their hotline.

The PC government created the Food Security Fund, \$4 million to support these community organizations.

Will the NDP government continue this important fund and commit to the much-needed funding for food banks and cheer boards, or will they cut this program too?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** I want to thank the Christmas Cheer Board for all of the work that they do, and all of the Manitobans for the work that they do.

\* (10:50)

The Christmas Cheer Board is such a vital resource to our community, and so many Manitobans give to that Christmas Cheer Board. I know when I was a teacher, many of our students would go out and we would deliver hampers. And so many Manitobans are a vital part of that process.

So, I want to encourage all members in this House to give generously to the Christmas Cheer Board, because they rely on so many of our community members.

I was listening to CJOB as I was coming in to work this morning, and they were talking about, as well, as giving to Harvest Manitoba. So I also want—

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

\* \* \*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member for Tyndall Park.

**MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** I don't even know what I'm asking. *[interjection]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Order.

#### **Universal Access to Birth Control Government Announcement**

**MLA Nellie Kennedy (Assiniboia):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, in the Throne Speech, our government announced that we are taking steps to ensure prescription birth control is free for all Manitobans who require it. This is amazing news for women and gender-diverse folks who use this form of health care.

Can the Minister of Health inform us about their conversations with health-care professionals and

providers of accessible reproductive services in Manitoba, as well as experts' opinions on this historical announcement?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I want to thank my colleague for that great question.

What I've heard since becoming the Minister for Health from health-care experts in Manitoba, from front-line health-care providers, is that for seven years under the previous government, they saw cuts to women's and reproductive health care. They had Health ministers who wouldn't even talk about contraceptives. They dealt with a government that attacked women's health-care rights year over year over year.

And these health-care workers and experts finally feel hopeful, because our government has made the commitment to provide universal free coverage of contraceptives across Manitoba. And we're going to deliver on that commitment for Manitobans, because we respect, we affirm and we lift up the health-care rights of women and those who depend on these health-care services.

So, we look forward to continuing to work with these experts to get this done in Manitoba.

#### **Surgical and Diagnostic Services Wait Times Removed from Website**

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** The NDP government deleted all of the surgical and diagnostic wait times data from the website.

What are they trying to hide?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Manitobans deserve to have timely and accurate information about the diagnostic and surgical wait times in our province.

Our government is committed to ensuring that there is transparency for Manitobans when this issue goes forward into the future.

This information should never have been taken offline. This was a mistake, and for it, I sincerely apologize without reservation.

The information online has been restored as of about an hour ago, and we look forward to ensuring that this information continues to be provided to the people of Manitoba, so that we can be held accountable to deliver on our No. 1 commitment: fixing health care.

#### **Provincial Transfers to Municipalities Request for Funding Levels**

**Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside):** The Minister for Municipal and Northern Relations committed at yesterday's AMM forum that the municipalities will be receiving annual increases in provincial transfers.

Can the minister tell us whether his increases in—  
*[interjection]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. King:**—municipal funding would be greater than the rate of inflation, or what those increases will be?

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable minister for municipal and northern affairs and Indigenous Economic Development.

**Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations):** I understand the member opposite has a scripted question given to—by the member for Fort Whyte (MLA Khan) that he has to try and stick to.

But what we clearly heard over and over again from municipalities from Portage, La Vérendrye, Lakeside, Spruce Woods, Selkirk, Brandon, Agassiz, Morden-Winkler, Midland is, time and time again, do I have a new voice in Legislature?

And let me ask you: Ask your front bench then, why were they not at AMM?

#### **Fuel Tax Amendment Act Exemption for All Fuel Types**

**MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie):** The members across mentioned about the word seriousness, and that brings my question forward.

As the price of groceries continue to skyrocket because of the cost of productions for farmers that grow their crops, will this minister explain to Manitobans why propane and dyed gas is not part of the NDP fuel tax cut?

**Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture):** Well, obviously, it's kind of a common sense way of saying this: they had seven years to make that decision, they chose not to.

It took this government to come forward with the opportunity to help out people in a time of challenges, dollars that they *[inaudible]*.

May I say this as well: they went through three agriculture ministers to address a problem that they

didn't even know who to leave as far as dealing with the Crown land issue at the very end.

And will you talk about affordable living for agriculture producers? Actually, you know what, in the first time in a number of years, we have the lowest number of cattle in the province—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. The member's time has expired. *[interjection]*

Order.

### **Bail Reform Government Position**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** Bill C-48 recently passed the House and the Senate. So obviously they're doing the work for this government.

The minister has said that Manitoba can go on its own way without the federal government for bail reform. Is that his way of saying he can actually do more to keep violent offenders behind bars?

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I had an opportunity to speak with Federal Minister LeBlanc and Federal Minister Virani, and to bring forward Manitoba's position that we want to see bail reform at the federal level, and we want to see it now.

But what we also said is that Manitoba will do our part. We'll make sure that violent offenders are being monitored. We'll make sure that we work with our counterparts across the country, and that we'll make sure that those who committed violent crimes are being held accountable.

We're going to do our part. We're not just going to fight with other levels of government like the previous government did.

### **Sio Silica Sand Extraction Project Request for Licensing Update**

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** On June 23rd, the Clean Environment Commission report on the proposed Sio Silica sand extraction project east of Winnipeg was released.

On July 26, RCT Solutions signed an MOU with the province to explore the construction of a \$3-billion solar panel production facility utilizing this high-quality sand, creating 8,000 permanent jobs.

It's been over five months. When will the Minister of Environment and Climate Change make a decision on the licensing of the Sio Silica project?

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** I'd like to thank the member opposite for their question, and I would also like to—because I forgot to do it yesterday—congratulate the member for their successful re-election.

And I want to also commend them for putting their name on the ballot, unlike almost half of his former colleagues, who didn't have the courage and couldn't face themselves in the mirror to put themselves on the ballot and join the former PC government.

\* (11:00)

To answer the question, this is a very important decision, one that our department is examining very, very closely and one that we will not be rushed into by the opposition.

### **Child-Care Spaces Government Intention**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Our PC government had opened or committed, as of July of 2023, over 12,000 child-care spaces for the age of zero to 12 years of age, Mr. Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Why is the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning cancelling those spaces, and has he called Chief Anderson from Norway House Cree Nation to let him know that this minister and this NDP leader are cancelling those spaces that we either opened or committed?

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Hon. Nello Altomare (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning):** I'd like to get up to answer this question, because yesterday we had the Child Care Coalition of Manitoba here at the Manitoba Legislature outlining their concerns regarding early childhood learning and all the spaces that need to be created.

I can tell you, Honourable Deputy Speaker, we're getting to work on that right now.

As a matter of fact, simultaneously, while they were holding their press conference yesterday, we were out in St. Laurent avec la *[with the]* Manitoba Métis Federation, opening new spots in St. Laurent, Manitoba.

I want to remind the member from Lac du Bonnet that that number he floated before is actually 1,400 spaces created in two years. At the rate that they were going, it would've taken 30 years—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. The member's time has expired. *[interjection]*

Order.

### **Manitoba Hydro Rates Government Intention**

**Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods):** The Premier (Mr. Kinew) and I had such a wonderful exchange on Wednesday. I'm curious whether he is going to answer this question or the Finance Minister.

While the Finance Minister continues to try to blame Progressive Conservatives for the weather, we believe Manitobans need to be told the truth. The minister knows it takes water to generate electricity in this province, hence the hydro in Manitoba Hydro.

Can the minister confirm: Did he just not notice that it hardly rained this summer, or did he deliberately campaign on a province—a promise he knew they couldn't keep?

**Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro):** You know, for years in this province, Manitobans had a government that was not fully transparent and were not fully accountable.

And this is another great example of where the previous government failed to be transparent with Manitobans. They knew well ahead of time before they released their Q1 result that Hydro's water was low. And what did they do? They hid that from Manitobans to create a false sense of where we were fiscally.

The days of a government lacking transparency in Manitoba are over. Manitobans can count on our government to be clear about the reality of our fiscal situation. We're going to make life better every single day, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

### **Fuel Tax Amendment Act Proposed Amendments to Bill 3**

**MLA Obby Khan (Fort Whyte):** Honourable Deputy Speaker, we heard from Manitobans at committee two nights ago for Bill 3, the gas tax holiday.

Will the Premier and minister listen to what we have been calling for and make amendments to the bill? Will they remove the arbitrary end date and will they make amendments and make coverage universal for all uses of vehicles, yes or no?

Will they listen to what we have been calling for on this side of the House?

**Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance):** You know, since we've been elected, we've been hearing from people all across the province about the struggles that they're facing, struggles that they faced after many, many years of this previous government failing to take action. They failed to take any meaningful steps to improve affordability in this province.

But things have changed. We have a new day in this province. Our government is committing to taking action, and we're going to ensure that the taxes on fuel will be reduced to zero on January 1.

The only question is whether or not the members opposite will support. We know the other night at committee they voted against clause after clause after clause.

Manitobans want to know: Will they vote for the bill, yes or no?

### **Arlington Bridge Closure Repair or Replacement Inquiry**

**Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland):** The Arlington Bridge has been closed for over a week now, bottlenecking traffic and causing delays for essential services, and yet this NDP government has been noticeably silent on providing any support to the City of Winnipeg to fix or replace the Arlington Bridge.

Why is this bridge not a priority for the NDP government?

**Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations):** Health and safety is the utmost priority for us across—on this side of government, as well, and that's the reason. And we will—unlike members opposite, we will listen to the experts, we'll listen to engineers, the structural people that are involved in the health and safety of all Manitobans.

And if members opposite so believed in infrastructure of not only Manitoba but our city of Winnipeg, why did they freeze municipalities year after year after year?

### **Grocery Stores Tax Inquiry**

**Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North):** Honourable Speaker, history has shown us the consequences of communist and socialist governments and what happens when they interfere in free markets. Product shortages happen, stifled innovation and zero economic growth.

Yesterday, the Premier told the Brandon Sun that he has taken interest in the federal government's

action on grocery stores. Well, Honourable Speaker, Ottawa has threatened new taxes on grocery stores.

Now that we know the NDP Premier has an interest in doing the same, can he tell Manitobans today what new taxes he's planned for grocery stores in the new year?

**Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture):** When we talk about food, we talk about agriculture, Deputy Speaker, but we talk about the importance of making life affordable for people, not only in Manitoba, but in Canada.

Our discussion with the Agriculture Minister with the federal government, we are working towards making life affordable, but we're doing in partnership with the federal government to make it a reality for the benefit of people that we—are being taken advantage of—inflated prices.

As we know, a number of the grocery chains are very profitable at this point in time, and it's time to be realistic on sharing with the people and accepting the fact that our cost of living needs to be reduced and we need to work on our food prices in partnership with the federal government—

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

The honourable member for Selkirk—or, sorry, Steinbach.

#### **Child Care, Education and Health Care Government Management Record**

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** Honourable Speaker, since coming into government, the NDP have cancelled daycare spaces, they've cut schools, they eliminated surgery options for Manitobans, they unplugged the wait-times computer and apparently now they plugged it back in this morning, they reduced hours at the Ste. Anne emergency room, they cut money to the arts.

I want to ask the Premier: After all those cuts, is he just trying to lower expectations for Manitobans, or is he really that bad at governing?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** It's very important that a provincial government is straight up with the people of Manitoba, and when we came into office, we saw quickly that we inherited a serious financial challenge from the outgoing administration.

And so, we are hard at work to be able to chart a course towards responsible fiscal management here in

the province while making good on our commitments to fix health care and lower costs for your family.

Along the way, we're taking many important steps to ensure that everyone in Manitoba has a role in this new plan, and that's why we were happy to announce Brandon Burley as our southern Manitoba Cabinet office, which means that finally the people of southern Manitoba will have something that they never had over two terms with the PCs: a voice in the provincial government.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member for Steinbach, with a supplementary question.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, they had to give somebody a high-priced job because they couldn't elect anybody in southern Manitoba. And now he throws the independent financial auditor under their bus, the financial auditor of Manitoba, who said there is a quarter-billion-dollar surplus.

\* (11:10)

And they took that quarter-billion-dollar surplus and decided to cut schools and cut daycares. They decided to cut money to the arts. They decided to cut the emergency room hours in Ste. Anne. Cut, cut, cut. A quarter-billion dollars, and all they could do was cut.

Will the Premier admit that nobody should be supporting his Throne Speech this afternoon? And we won't, because he's a cutter.

**Mr. Kinew:** You know, I welcome a debate about electing people to the Legislature any day, any time. We can bring that to the floor with a government motion if they like.

You know, there are days when question period is a forum for serious debate on issues that matter to the people of Manitoba. But when you have my friend from Steinbach, who was personally the person who cut three of the biggest emergency rooms in our province, bringing forward this fake outrage, trying to accuse us of cutting services, I think we know that the rhetoric is going a bit too far.

What Manitobans should expect from us is serious governance. We are going to put a path toward fiscal management back on track here in the province. We are going to fix health care by showing respect to the front lines. And we are going to lower costs for the—for you, the people of Manitoba.

Who would disagree with a plan like this? Certainly, our team is implementing it each and every



day. Why would the PCs oppose lower costs for Manitobans—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. The member's time.

And with that, the time for oral questions has expired. *[interjection]* Order.

#### Point of Order

**The Deputy Speaker:** The leader of the—no, sorry—Official Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** On a point of order. Yes, obviously, the NDP, they lost their place in QP and it gobbled up a lot of time. I would ask to extend QP for another minute and 12 seconds, please.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave to extend oral questions for another minute and 12 seconds? *[interjection]*

Leave is denied.

**An Honourable Member:** I did not ask for leave, it was a point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Can you repeat that for us?

**An Honourable Member:** It was a point of order—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The—

**An Honourable Member:** —not a leave request. I'm not asking for leave, it's a point of order that the time was wasted, they did not get up. And we had members that were standing that were not recognized and I would like to have question period extended another minute and 12 seconds, please.

**The Deputy Speaker:** So, unfortunately, that's not a point of order. Time gets used up during oral questions in all kinds of ways: in moments where maybe the Deputy Speaker gets confused who is speaking, maybe longer applause than might be necessary by some parties—all parties.

And, unfortunately, the only way to extend oral questions is through a leave request and not a point of order.

\* \* \*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Petitions. The honourable leader—House leader for the official opposition.

**Mr. Johnson:** I ask for leave for the additional two questions, please.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave for an additional two questions?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Leave is denied. *[interjection]*

Petitions? *[interjection]* No?

Order. Order. Order.

So maybe for the second time today, I'll remind new members, returning members, that when the Speaker stands up, it means I need your attention, which also requires the noise to go from wherever it is to zero.

So we'll move on to, petitions?

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I'd ask that we resume debate on the Throne Speech.

#### THRONE SPEECH (Sixth Day of Debate)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It has been announced that we are continuing debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Standing in the name of the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, who has 19 minutes remaining.

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** It gives me great pleasure to be able to stand up in the House today to put a few words on the record in favour of the amendment brought forward by our Leader of the Opposition, the MLA for Tuxedo. And as some of our members have already stated, we are—will be not supporting the Throne Speech put forward by the NDP leader, the Premier (Mr. Kinew).

Today, Honourable Deputy Speaker, I do want to say, thank you. I want to say thank you to the Lac du Bonnet constituents, the 23,000 constituents that reside in the Lac du Bonnet constituency. Plus, I want to say thank you to those almost 200,000 seasonal constituents that, on a yearly basis from April to the end of October, contact my office and have—we have many great conversations representing the entire area.

Now, the constituency is named Lac du Bonnet, but technically, geographically, it is a very large constituency. We go from the shores, the east shores of Lake Winnipeg and Victoria Beach, all the way through, straight east to the Manitoba-Ontario border, to approximately 20, 25 miles south of the No. 1

Highway, and then zigzags through the Rural Municipality of Reynolds, all the way up to Beausejour, Garson and Tyndall, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

The constituency is made up of ten municipalities, 20-plus communities, two school divisions, two Hutterite colonies and, of course, a wonderful First Nations community, which also includes the Whiteshell Provincial Park, which we have West Hawk and Falcon in there, as well.

So, I am truly, truly honoured to be asked to—chosen to represent the Lac du Bonnet constituency yet again.

Starting my 13th year, Honourable Deputy Speaker, I do want to thank my campaign team, who worked 'tiously' to get us re-elected and I'd like to give a shout-out to Bob, Phil, Robert, Leanne, Dwight, Teri, Bob Y, Doug, Dab, Lydia, Kevin and countless other volunteers.

Of course, you cannot do this alone and for now, entering my fourth term, Honourable Deputy Speaker, you have to have the commitment and the approval of family. Because as many wise former colleagues and current colleagues have said, that when this wonderful opportunity to represent constituents comes to an end, whether that's by choice of the constituents that you're serving, or by the choice of the member, you have your family that needs to be there.

So I want to give a big shout-out to, of course, my wonderful wife Tracey and my two wonderful sons, Braydon and Jarvis; my mom, Lydia; and my mother-in-law, Sylvia.

And this next little bit, Honourable Deputy Speaker, is going to be a little bit tough to get through. But during the election, unfortunately, after six and a half, seven years of battling cancer, during the election, we lost my sister-in-law, Monique, my brother's wife, a few days before her 46th birthday.

\* (11:20)

So I just want to send a message to everyone in this Chamber. Congratulations to those of you who are here for the first time, and those of you who have been re-elected, but technically, family is the most important piece to this job. *[interjection]*

Thank you, Honourable Deputy Minister, for that quick little pause, and thank you to everyone for the applause on that, because it is very important.

I know that the Education Minister—the new Education—Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning (MLA Altomare), I want to congratulate him on his portfolio, being named the minister. It is truly, and it was a true honour, to represent Manitoba and PC government in the Education and Early Childhood Learning file.

I do want to give a big shout-out to the civil servants and the staff that I had the pleasure of working with for over a year and a half, and it does—they deserve a lot of credit, but at the same time, it was an absolute honour working with them.

It is unfortunate that some of the civil servants, not only in the Education and Early Childhood Learning department but other departments, had lost their jobs. But that's not really surprising, Honourable Deputy Speaker, because that's the way the NDP do things when they get into government; they cut people from various positions.

And in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning, they actually promoted and seconded a Deputy Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning that at one time was the main fundraiser for the NDP party and was the former superintendent of Seven Oaks School Division, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

And so it's interesting how they make those decisions. And actually, even people that were within the higher echelon of the civil service who actually either fundraised or raised money or donated money to this NDP Leader, still saw fit to cut or fire those individuals.

So, again, I don't think anyone in the civil service really should be sitting comfortable because we've seen the track record of the Leader of the NDP, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) of Manitoba.

Now, there's a few things that I do want to talk about today in regards to the amendment to the Throne Speech and also the Throne Speech, and I know that the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, a few days ago when he was bringing forward his speech to the amendment, I know he took an opportunity to do a little bit of a teachable moment, a lesson to new members and to returning members.

And so this gives me an opportunity, Honourable Deputy Speaker, to also put forward a little bit of advice to new members and to returning, obviously, because I need to remind the Education and early learning—Early Childhood Learning minister of that.

When you are standing up and speaking in this Chamber during debate, during question period, during ministerial statements, anytime, these things are recorded. And so when these things are recorded, it gives the opportunity to the public, it gives the opportunity to the media to actually take a look at what exactly was said.

And so, my advice to the newly elected members on all sides of the House, and the returning members of the House, is do your homework. Don't go willy-nilly and putting things on the record, which is going to show up in Hansard, that you're going to have to either stand up and apologize for, or maybe be accountable to the media if the media would happen to ask the new Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister some questions.

It is very interesting that from their seat, the Premier (Mr. Kinew), the NDP Leader, is busy heckling. Well, that's no surprise, honourable deputy minister—or, Deputy Speaker. It is no surprise that he is sitting there and heckling during a very important speech. The Premier already has shown his true colours, and he will continue and more and more will come out.

So, not that many days ago, the Premier stood up and took credit for the large investment that we, the Progressive Conservative government, had done with partnerships of the federal government to replace some very well-needed turbines at a very important dam in the province of Manitoba, and it just so happens to be in my constituency. And so the Premier stands up with the Finance Minister, takes a photo op with the federal minister and is taking—trying to take credit for something that we did prior to that.

Because these projects don't just happen overnight; \$314 million to replace eight generators at which dam? At which dam? The Pointe du Bois Dam. So, the Pointe du Bois Dam. And we've already had public consultation on the phase 2 of the rerouting of another line, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

But what does the Education and Early Childhood Minister do? Again, doesn't do his homework, stands up and puts falsehoods on the record. This is my good friend and colleague, the MLA for Transcona of 33-plus years of education and working in the early years sector, Honourable Deputy Speaker. Stands up and says that he is congratulating his Premier on the announcement that I've just stated, except he's saying that they're going to put in \$500 million, with the federal government, to deliver low-carbon, affordable electricity with the outlying

plans—this is off of Hansard—with the outlying plans to redevelop the Pinawa Dam. The Pinawa Dam?

Well, Honourable Deputy Speaker, I have to tell the minister and the Premier, if they can get in their vehicles and travel outside the Perimeter, because the old Pinawa Dam is an actual park, where you can go and walk and enjoy the sights and see what was there many, many, many years ago. And for that—it's outside of Winnipeg; it's not right next to Springfield-Ritchot, like the Education Minister put on the record.

It's the Pointe du Bois Dam that is getting rejuvenated, not the Pinawa Dam. I'm going to table pictures of the Pinawa Dam. What in the world? It would be far more than \$500 million, Honourable Deputy Speaker. I'm going to table and pass around the pictures for people to see. It's a beautiful site. Go check it out. It's a very nice walk. Go trail walking. It's good. Google-map it.

But you know what? This isn't the first time.

And so my advice, Honourable Deputy Speaker, to everybody: do your homework, and when you are putting things on the record, make sure it's factual because I, as a teacher myself—*[interjection]*

Once again, Honourable Deputy Speaker, from the NDP government benches we hear heckling and heckling's fine. You know what? This is a long time here in the Chamber, and, of course, there's heckling. But there's always some personal attacks.

All I'm saying is do your homework. You're putting information on the record. And also, educators in this great province of ours sometimes pick up the Hansard and actually use it to educate our youth.

\* (11:30)

And so that's my lesson today to the Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister on that. Just do your homework. When you're putting things on the record—I know it gets heated in here once in a while. I had the pleasure of being in here now, like I said, the start of my 13th year. It does get heated in here. But just be careful what you're putting on the record.

So, Deputy—Honourable Deputy Speaker, I did want to touch base on a couple other things in regards to the Lac du Bonnet constituency. And as I've already heard—as we've put on the record many times in this House, and we've shared, that the NDP leader, the Premier of Manitoba, has already cut many things.

And I'm hoping that within the Lac du Bonnet constituency, lot of the Progressive Conservative

government commitments, which has gone through Treasury Board and approved through Cabinet, will continue to move forward.

He has put on the record himself that he is in support of the Lac du Bonnet personal-care home. I'm asking him, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) of Manitoba, to move the money and to get it working, because it seems like that Premier is holding it up. He's got it on the record multiple times that he's in support of the personal-care home in Lac du Bonnet. I want him to proceed with that and get it moving as quickly as possible; matter of fact, faster than that, because they're holding it up, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

There's also other things that are going on, not only in the Lac du Bonnet constituency, but all across this great province of ours, Honourable Deputy Speaker, where we're seeing child-care spaces being cut in the province by this new Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister. I know that it's not him. I know that it's not my friend and colleague, the MLA from Transcona. I do know that it's probably his boss, the NDP leader, the Premier of Manitoba.

We've already seen the cut of schools, which has over 3,400 child-care spaces there. I hope that the Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister is not the one that has to make those phone calls to those school divisions that they're cutting those spaces. I'm hoping that he will stand up to his Premier, his boss, NDP leader, and get him—because it's his direction to cut those spaces—to get him to make those calls to those school divisions and tell them why they are cutting those new schools and those new child-care spaces, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Again, I'm going to be voting in favour of the amendment put forward by our Leader of the Opposition, the MLA for Tuxedo.

I know that we on this side of the House, the former Progressive Conservative government, had made many great strides in education and early childhood learning, as the—as it's been reported in local papers. The \$10 a day—we are the ones who made child care more affordable. We are the ones who partnered with the Manitoba association for child-care centres, partnered with them to make sure that they had received some well-deserved raises in their wages, because the former NDP government had 17 years; they didn't do a thing. They didn't value early childhood educators. We gave them raises.

Is there more work to do? Absolutely, Honourable Deputy Speaker, and I'm—be looking to this

Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister to advocate on behalf of all those spaces.

We've opened and committed over 50 per cent of the way to our 23,000 new age zero to 12 child-care spaces. It's exciting times. It had been exciting times.

All the Education and Early Learning Minister has to do is just keep moving along our plan, because we know that, deep down, they don't have a plan. They never had a plan for education. They're going to stand up and they're going to talk about various other things in education.

On our side of the House, we more than doubled the money that was going to the Manitoba–Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba. They sat on their hands. They didn't do a thing. They didn't raise it. We more than doubled the money for their council.

And matter of fact, what did the NDP leader and his teammates do over there? They voted against it, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

So, over the next few months we're going to see some missteps by this Premier, and our job, now that Manitoba has put us into opposition, is to hold them to account and to make sure that—on a day-to-day basis, Honourable Deputy Speaker—is to make sure that we're putting factual items on the record, not misinformation like the members opposite.

Thank you, Honourable Deputy Speaker.

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** I want to begin these remarks with a special thank you to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba. It was a tremendous feeling when we heard Her Honour, here in this Chamber, read the words from our government's first Throne Speech.

I'm just so full of admiration and respect for Her Honour, and we've had a chance to share many memorable moments over the last little while. There was a time during the transition period in which Her Honour invited me over to Government House, and you know, in the midst of campaigning and putting together a platform, nominating excellent candidates, contesting the election and then setting about our affairs to form government, you never actually think about this moment.

But it is a significant one, and it is the moment in which Her Honour sat me down in Government House and she said, the Premier of Manitoba has tendered her resignation and I am asking you to form our next government.

There's part of me that was, you know, me? You know, this team? And it was with enthusiasm and glee that I assented to that request and set about the business of standing up our new administration, naming our first Cabinet and assigning important roles to every single member of the government MLA team.

And this Throne Speech that we're debating here today is the articulation of our government's plan for our first year in office. And so, when Her Honour and the party walked in through these doors and we had the opportunity to hear the drum sound and to hear the good words spoken from the dais, it was truly an honour and one that I think fills every single member of our team with a deep-seated sense of humility.

Humility, because we have been asked by the people of Manitoba to carry out a sacred duty, which is to govern for them and to govern well. And so, in the pages of these documents, you see the outlines of how we intend to restore a path to sound fiscal management; to fix health care, starting by respecting those working on the front lines; to lower costs for families; and, of course, to end chronic homelessness over the next eight years, in our great province.

These are significant challenges. These are tasks which are very important. But I know that the way that we tackle difficult things here in Manitoba, the way Manitobans always have over the past 153 years, is by working on them together. And that is the speech—that is the speech of this team.

There's another story that I would like to share for the permanent record of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, and it has to do with a good friend of mine named Chris. Chris and I spent a lot of time together growing up, and we were people travelling on the powwow trail together. We sat at the big drum many times when we were young people.

We had a lot of fun travelling southern Manitoba, North Dakota, southeastern Saskatchewan, you know, even going back to the northwestern Ontario area that I was born in. And we spent a lot of time together, Chris and I. And, in fact, you know, at the time our girlfriends were best friends, and so we used to hang out, you know. Day after day, night after night, making good memories, being good buds.

\* (11:40)

And like any serious friendship, we had our ups and downs. We had the moments where, you know, we may have butted heads on a given issue, but we always came back to a positive place and to do good things together.

And I really, really cherish those memories in that time of our life. We were at the same spot. We were at the same place in our lives when we were there together, Chris and I.

Tragically, my friend Chris was found in a bus shack in south Pembina early this summer, and he was somebody who had been living a hard life these past number of years.

And I will leave to others to share the details as they see fit, but I think that I want to encourage all Manitobans to understand that when you hear of somebody like Chris passing away, when you see us losing a relative, a Manitoban, in a situation like this; somebody living in a bus shack, somebody out there on the streets, I want you to know that that was a real person, that had friends and family and relationships that mattered.

And I want to tell every single person: you may have a certain judgment, a certain idea of who that is who ends up out there, in different communities across our province. But I guarantee if you ate at a trendy restaurant in Winnipeg 15 years ago or so, this person would have cooked for you. He would have put his hands on the food that you consume. And he was a very talented chef and cook, at that.

So these are real, real people that we're talking about when we get to the serious issues of trying to improve things at the provincial level here in Manitoba.

And as somebody who traveled, you know, to community in southwestern Manitoba where we laid him to rest, Mariapolis, this summer, spent the time with the mom, brothers, sisters, kids, relatives that Chris knew and loved during his time here on earth. The bros from the drum group are back together again, joking around as we did some 20 or so years ago. Beautiful sunshine, warm summer day. We sang a song and we laid him to rest.

And I couldn't help, on the drive back to Winnipeg, as we were getting set to launch our provincial election campaign, seeing as we did launch it at the start of August, I couldn't help but reflect on the fact that, as I was watching my friend being lowered into the ground, I was getting ready to run a campaign to become the Premier of Manitoba.

And I asked the Creator: why? I'm no more talented, no more able, no more hard-working than my friend Chris. And why is it that one of us left this world too soon, and what have I done to deserve to have the opportunities presented to me in my lifetime?

Survivor's guilt, some second thoughts, whatever you like to call it. I choose to use these thoughts and reflections and moments of prayer as motivation to work towards the good of all Manitobans.

You may have a picture of who Chris was in your mind. But I assure you that when we live in a province where outcomes, like, befell him are avoided for every single person in Manitoba, then every Manitoban will be better off.

We will be a richer province for having those contributions. We will be a healthier province for being able to count on more active members of our society. And we will be a happier province by having fewer relatives and communities who are wondering what exactly is going on with this drug crisis that is tearing our families and communities apart.

And I know that's as true in southern Manitoba as it is in northern Manitoba. That's as true in the small town as it is on the reserve, and that's as true in the inner city as it is in the suburbs.

And so our government, our team, our administration is founded on the idea that we are going to work on behalf of all of those people to achieve that shared goal.

Manitoba deserves unity. It's been tough these past few years. The divisions of the pandemic, the divisions of social media and so on. Let us have reasons to come together and forge a common direction.

And so, I wouldn't be so bold as to suggest that the Speech from the Throne is the solution to all of the problems that we face as a province and is the necessary step to achieve all the potential that we've inherited as Manitobans.

But I do say with the utmost humility that this document is a step. It's a step in a positive direction towards us being able to move the needle forward on important priorities like health care, the economy, public safety and ending chronic homelessness.

Our colleague from Union Station and the rest of our team know full well that anything we want to do in health care has to start with the staffing. And one of the things that we've observed both in our time in opposition and during the campaign period, and also during the early days of governing, is that we need to empower those on the front lines of our health-care system. These are folks who have spent years becoming educated, years more developing expertise at the bedside.

And if we want to truly have a health-care system that meets the needs of the great people of this province, then it is going to be one that is implemented and delivered and guided by the expertise of those at the front lines.

And so there are many health-care services that need to be repaired. But it is our expectation that these improvements will be delivered by a program that renews and invests in the expertise and the knowledge of those working with you at the bedside.

And so that's why we say, as part of this approach in this Throne Speech document, that instead of more agency nurses, our team is going to give nurses more agency. We'll do the same for physicians. We'll do the same for health-care professionals. We'll do the same for health-care aides and for everyone who works in our health-care system.

And we will do this for rural Manitoba. We will do this for people who live in the city of Winnipeg. We will do this for people who live in northern Manitoba. And our provincial government is going to take steps to ensure that folks living on reserve have access to better health care, as well.

I've often said the economic horse pulls the social cart. I don't know if that's gotten out there or not, but I've tried to repeat it a few times. I probably owe Clarence Louie royalties for that line; a great leader from Osoyoos in British Columbia. But the truth of that sentence is apparent.

There are many things that we want to do to make our society enjoy its full potential in the coming years, but in order to do so, we have to grow the economy. We have to create good jobs. We have to set the conditions at the provincial level to allow the private sector to flourish and to continue to expand.

And so, what we articulate in this document is that we're going to take those immediate steps of cutting the provincial fuel tax to save you money, to save businesses money, to ensure that there's spin-off effects reverberating throughout the economy. But we're also going to implement a long-term program to set the seeds of positive economic development here in Manitoba.

And so we are standing up a Premier's business and jobs team, which will seek to, for the first time in a long time, articulate a clear economic strategy for our province, one which seeks to invest in the areas where our strong, diversified economy is already very vibrant—areas like finance, transportation, construction, logistics, ag and value-added

manufacturing—while also leaning in to the opportunities that we have to build a low-carbon economy with advanced zero-emission vehicle manufacturers, with Manitoba Hydro, with critical minerals, with potential hydrogen industry on the horizon here, and many other promising opportunities.

And so we know that it is Manitobans' hard work and industriousness, creativity and innovation that is the economic horse, and we are committed to empowering them to be able to continue to do that good work for decades to come.

\* (11:50)

Throughout recent memory, and even into our first days in office, there have been many serious issues with crime in communities across Manitoba. And our government is committed to public safety across Manitoba.

Just yesterday, with municipal leaders in Brandon, we heard concerns about the challenges in rural Manitoba, impacts on safety, but also impacts on local economies.

Here in the city of Winnipeg we know, just today, there are updates about a very serious crime, a very disturbing crime which has reverberated internationally.

And so our government is committed to being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. We know and recognize the important work of law enforcement. We are going to invest into the justice system to ensure the proper administration of justice in our province. And we are also going to invest in the addictions—mental health services needed to help people turn their lives around, as well as the recreational opportunities to ensure that young people can always stay on a good path and avoid some of those negative experiences. This is a comprehensive approach.

And, of course, we are committed to ending chronic homelessness over the next eight years in Manitoba. And I want to be clear that that word chronic is doing heavy lifting in that sentence. We may never be able to end homelessness in all forms, and that is very, very sad, but we should have an expectation of six weeks in this province.

If somebody has lost their housing, it should be the expectation that within six weeks we will have connected with them, we will have found them housing, and we will be providing them with the

wraparound services that they need in order to succeed in life.

So we've established a new government, and we have asked a person named by BBC as one of the 100 most influential women in the world to lead this effort. Our approach here is founded on a basic insight that we need to break down the barriers, break down the silos, and have one co-ordinated response to the situation of people living without shelter.

And so that's why we have begun this initiative by setting up a new department which has housing combined with all of the wraparound services, including mental health supports, to ensure that people can leave encampments and bus shacks and other situations in which they are living rough, and be able to start taking steps towards more dignity and an overall situation in our province where everyone in Manitoba is proud to come downtown, is proud to drive down south Pembina, is proud to visit downtown Thompson, is proud to go to all areas of Brandon, and realistically, every single area in our province that has been grappling with this issue at an increased level these past number of years.

The recent election campaign was a difficult one. I'm going to pull my punches with respect to the opposition. But I do want to say that there were many times when we would drive by advertising or we'd hear conversations on the doorstep in which we would recognize that there was a serious effort under way to try and pit Manitobans against one another.

From the earliest days of the planning of our campaign, we decided to bet on you, the people of Manitoba. We decided to found our campaign on the insight that Manitobans want to come together rather than be divided.

And there were some difficult moments in there. I'm sure some of my colleagues were wondering what the outcome was going to be in the constituencies that they were contesting.

But throughout every single time that we saw one of these pieces of literature or billboards or bus benches— and staff can vouch for this—I would turn to them and say, I hope to God the forces of good prevail in this election.

When I say forces of good, I am not talking about our party; I'm not talking about the MLAs that were elected; I'm not talking about our government. I'm talking about the goodness within the hearts of the people of Manitoba.

And so on October 3rd we all watched the results come in, and our team was given a mandate to form government here in the province of Manitoba.

And I want to point out a few simple things when I say the forces of good prevailed insofar as we recognize the goodness within the hearts of the people of Manitoba.

Not only did the people of Manitoba reject advertising about searching the landfill, in the process, they elevated a family member of a missing woman into Cabinet.

Not only did the people of Manitoba reject advertising that was targeting trans children, but for the first time in our great province's history, they elected a trans person into the Manitoba Legislature.

And at the end of the day, Manitobans came together on October 3rd to reject the strategy that sought to implement through the leaders of the PC party's conduct in the debate, her decisions throughout the campaign and the advertising that she approved that sought to divide the people of Manitoba and instead Manitobans came together to say that we are one people, one province, with one shared future that we want to build together.

We get testy in here. We get partisan. But let us observe the lines of dignity, and let us commit to the people of Manitoba that for the next thousand days, we will work together for the common good of this province, and then we can put the jerseys back on and contest the next election.

But for now, let's focus on bringing people together, here in Manitoba.

And so that brings us back to Throne Speech day, which we were very proud to have read here on November 21.

And while I was involved with the conversations that saw fit to bring a drum group here into the room, I was actually surprised because I was expecting a different drum group to show up on the day. And then they explained when I was showing up on the day of the Throne Speech, that the drum group that would be singing for us was the same one that Chris and I used to sit together at two decades ago.

And as the doors opened and I followed the Lieutenant Governor here into the Chamber and the drum group began to sing, I recognized the melody of the song immediately. And I've noticed over the years that people who don't grow up on the powwow trail do not hear powwow music the same way that we do.

And it's really too bad. It's like colours of the rainbow that you can't see. When you hear about the bittersweet melodies and you hear the wonderful contours of the harmonies and you understand the emotional weight that is being conveyed in the compositions of these talented powwow singers.

But I recognized the melody of the song that was being sung immediately. The song title? The First Ride. The composer, my dear friend Chris.

And so I reflect on the good grace of the Creator, our God. And how is it that the Creator puts these things together in our lives? The explanation, I simply have to shake my head and concede that I do not know it.

But in my heart, what I took from that experience is the following: Chris may have left us in earthly form, but Chris' story is not over.

And to you, the people of Manitoba out there who are struggling, who are feeling like you don't have the same freedom that you used to because of inflation, who are worried about your child's future, who are worried about the safety of your community after seeing something in the back alley last night.

The same way that Chris' story is not over, your story is not over. Our story is not over. And so if it's not over for him, I know it's not over for you. And if it's not over for you, then it's not over for us, your new government here in Manitoba.

And we will be coming to work each and every single day. We are going to be working hard for you each and every single day to improve your lives in the areas in which we have received a mandate to lead.

And so I will repeat a message that I shared on election night, which is to everyone—

\* (12:00)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

The hour being 12 p.m., pursuant to rule 48(3), I am interrupting the proceedings to put the questions necessary to dispose of the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle), that is the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne and all amendments to that motion.

The question before the House is the proposed amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Ms. Stefanson) to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the amendment read?



**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** *THAT the motion be amended by adding at the end the following words:*

But this House regrets that the provincial government has:

- (a) failed to outline how the provincial government will make life more affordable in the long term for Manitobans struggling to make ends meet; and
- (b) omitted tax relief for small businesses in Manitoba; and
- (c) committed to making Manitoba a Maritime province without committing to fighting for the same carbon tax exemptions afforded to such provinces; and
- (d) abandoned plans from the previous provincial government to build new schools to accommodate a growing student population in the K-to-12 system; and
- (e) abandoned plans to deliver 23,000 child-care spaces to Manitoba's child-care system; and
- (f) neglected to detail the specific measures that will be taken to improve retention and recruitment of educators in Manitoba; and
- (g) refused to address immigration or Manitoba's population in any substantial manner; and
- (h) rejected much-needed upgrades to hospital projects across the province including HSC due to political ideology at the cost of Manitoba patients; and
- (i) neglected to detail the specific measures that will be taken to improve retention and recruitment of health care workers in Manitoba; and
- (j) disbanded the Diagnostic and Surgical Recovery Task Force, which provided over 85,000 Manitobans with the care they needed, with no plan to help Manitobans waiting in pain; and
- (k) failed to mention how the provincial government will serve Manitobans waiting for surgical and diagnostic procedures in the short term; and
- (l) abandoned six communities that were due to benefit from the construction of new personal-care homes; and
- (m) failed to address the need for treatment spaces or recovery-oriented care for people struggling with addictions; and
- (n) disrespected Manitoba's seniors and those suffering from addictions by disbanding the departments dedicated to seniors, mental health and community wellness; and
- (o) failed to mention how the provincial government will create new affordable and social housing units that are desperately needed amidst a housing shortage; and
- (p) failed to commit to any meaningful action or investments in community art, culture, or non-profit and heritage projects or groups; and
- (q) spurned Manitobans who appreciate and enjoy provincial parks and the recreational opportunities and precious ecosystems they hold dear; and
- (r) neglected to prevent a plan to maintain the positive momentum of Manitoba's tourism sector which contributes over \$1 billion to Manitoba's GDP; and
- (s) signalled a transition away from a positive plan to develop Manitoba's natural resource economy that was attracting record investment to the province; and
- (t) failed to mention the important role that mining and mineral development play in developing Manitoba's provincial economy; and
- (u) failed to denounce the previous position taken by NDP members by—that policing should be defunded; and
- (v) neglected to address the revolving door of catch and release through bail reform; and
- (w) disbanded the economic development board and put billions of dollars in investment and thousands of jobs at risk; and
- (x) jeopardized financial sustainability of Manitoba Hydro by committing to freeze hydro rates; and
- (y) ignored agricultural producers and the agriculture industry which represents nearly 10 per cent of Manitoba's GDP; and
- (z) failed to commit to continuing the five-year, \$500-million annual infrastructure budget.

As a consequence of these and many other failings, the Provincial Government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba and this House.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I hear a no.

#### Voice Vote

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment, please say aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion, the Nays have it.

#### Recorded Vote

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** A recorded vote, please.

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

The question before the House is the amendment to the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

#### Division

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

#### Ayes

*Balcaen, Bereza, Byram, Cook, Ewasko, Goertzen, Guenter, Hiebert, Jackson, Johnson, Khan, King, Narth, Nesbitt, Perchotte, Piwniuk, Schuler, Stefanson, Stone, Wharton, Wowchuk.*

#### Nays

*Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Cable, Chen, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Kennedy, Kinew, Kostyshyn, Lamoureux, Loiselle, Maloway, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Naylor, Oxenham, Pankratz, Redhead, Sala, Schmidt, Schott, Simard, Smith, Wasyliv, Wiebe.*

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 21, Nays 30.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The amendment is accordingly defeated.

\* \* \*

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle), that is the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

\* (12:10)

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I hear a no.

#### Voice Vote

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the Ayes have it. I declare the motion passed.

#### Recorded Vote

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Recorded vote, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

#### Division

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

#### Ayes

*Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Cable, Chen, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Kennedy, Kinew, Kostyshyn, Loiselle, Maloway, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Naylor, Oxenham, Pankratz, Redhead, Sala, Schmidt, Schott, Simard, Smith, Wasyliv, Wiebe.*

#### Nays

*Balcaen, Bereza, Byram, Cook, Ewasko, Goertzen, Guenter, Hiebert, Jackson, Johnson, Khan, King, Lamoureux, Narth, Nesbitt, Perchotte, Piwniuk, Schuler, Stefanson, Stone, Wharton, Wowchuk.*

**Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 29, Nays 22.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion is accordingly passed.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Wiebe:** Ask leave of the House to see it as 12 o'clock.

**An Honourable Member:** 12:30.

**Mr. Wiebe:** 12:30. I apologize.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave from the House to call it for 12:30? *[Agreed]*

Order, please.

The House—being 12:30 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, December 1, 2023

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