



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey  
Speaker*



**Vol. LXXIX No. 2 - 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 20, 2024**

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

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALTOMARE, 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
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	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, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	Ind.
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 20, 2024

### *The House met at 1:30 p.m.*

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

**The Speaker:** Introduction of bills?

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Standing Committee on Public Accounts Fourth Report

**MLA Jim Maloway (Vice-Chairperson):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

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

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**The Speaker:** Dispense.

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

#### **Meetings**

*Your Committee met on November 13, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.*

### **Matters under Consideration**

- *Auditor General's Report – Archives of Manitoba: Preservation and Access to Records dated February 2024*
- *Auditor General's Report – Management of Provincial Tourism dated January 2020*
- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-Up of Previously Issued Recommendations dated March 2023*
  - *Management of Provincial Tourism*
- *Auditor General's Report – Follow Up of Previously Issued Recommendations dated February 2024*
  - *Management of Provincial Tourism*

### **Committee Membership**

- *Mr. BRAR*
- *MLA CHEN*
- *MLA DELA CRUZ*
- *MLA DEVGAN*
- *Mr. GUENTER (Chairperson)*
- *MLA KENNEDY*
- *MLA LAMOUREUX*
- *MLA MALOWAY (Vice-Chairperson)*
- *Mr. NESBITT*
- *MLA SANDHU*
- *Mrs. STONE*

*Substitutions received prior to Committee proceedings:*

- *MLA COMPTON for MLA DEVGAN*
- *Mr. KING for Mrs. STONE*
- *Mrs. SCHOTT for MLA KENNEDY*

### **Officials Speaking on Record**

- *Tyson Shtykalo, Auditor General of Manitoba*
- *Jeff Hnatiuk, Deputy Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism*
- *Angela Cassie, Chief Operating Officer, Travel Manitoba*
- *Scott Goodine, Archivist of Manitoba*

### **Reports Considered and Passed**

Your Committee considered and passed the following reports as presented:

- *Auditor General's Report – Archives of Manitoba: Preservation and Access to Records dated February 2024*
- *Auditor General's Report – Management of Provincial Tourism dated January 2020*

Your Committee completed consideration of the following chapters as presented:

- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-Up of Previously Issued Recommendations dated March 2023*
  - *Management of Provincial Tourism*
- *Auditor General's Report – Follow Up of Previously Issued Recommendations dated February 2024*
  - *Management of Provincial Tourism*

**MLA Maloway:** I move, seconded by the honourable member for River Heights (MLA Moroz), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **TABLING OF REPORTS**

**The Speaker:** I have some reports to table.

First off, I am pleased to table the Report of the Amounts Paid or Payable to Members of the Assembly for the year ended March 31, 2024.

And I further table, in accordance with section 19 of the Legislative Building Centennial Restoration and Preservation Act, I'm pleased to table the long-term restoration and preservation plan, which includes the current annual 'implemashtation' plans for the fiscal years 2024-2025 to 2029-2030.

### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

#### **Transgender Day of Remembrance**

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** Transgender Day of Remembrance is marked every year on November 20, honouring the memory of transgender, two-spirit and gender-diverse people around the world who have lost their lives because of transphobia.

The first trans day of remembrance was held in 1999 to honour the memory of Rita Hester. Every year, we gather to recognize trans people who have lost their lives because of transphobia. We say their

names, and we say their names out loud, because their lives mattered.

Transphobia is not inevitable. It is something fostered by people who have turned their own ignorance into fear and hatred instead of curiosity, compassion and understanding. It is a tactic employed by people who want to pit us against each other, choosing division over unity.

They make trans, two-spirit and gender-diverse people scapegoats for their own unwillingness to address real issues. They target trans kids instead of working towards a better future for everyone. Honourable Speaker, they even run for office under a hateful banner targeting trans kids. We saw this with every single member of the party opposite during the last election.

This morning, the Minister for Families hosted an event here in the Rotunda to recognize trans day of remembrance. There were folks from our community at that event who shared that in recent weeks, they've been receiving phone calls from concerned parents, from community members, from people outside of our own borders who are afraid. They've been receiving those calls directly related to moments where leaders who should be championing the rights of all Manitobans instead choose a path of meanness, of putting people against each other and targeting the vulnerable. They saw those same calls at their clinic during the previous PC election campaign.

The impacts of those choices are real. Transphobia exists today because people continue, unfortunately, to target trans people. People choose to share harmful misinformation.

But on a day like today, where we mourn those who we have lost and those who we love, Honourable Speaker, we also find hope; hope in a province where citizens voted in a government that not only lifts up trans and gender-diverse folks but has them as members of their own caucus; hope in a province where the first trans MLA passes a law that enshrines the identities of two-spirit and gender-diverse Manitobans and trans folks.

And on March 31 of 2025, we will celebrate Manitoba's first official two-spirit and trans day of visibility, thanks to legislation passed by our colleague, the MLA for Kirkfield Park; and hope in a province where our Premier (Mr. Kinew) often says: Manitobans show us all the time that we can do hard things, and the way we get hard things done is by doing them together.

And together, we can do the work to root out transphobia from our communities.

Sunshine House, Klinik, Rainbow Resource Centre, Two-Spirited People of Manitoba, Parents and Relatives Allied with Trans Individuals, advocates, community members and allies who are working every day and working with us to do this heavy lifting, this important work: We thank each and every one of you.

To all trans, two-spirit, gender-diverse and all people seeing the rising tide of transphobia around the world, we want you to know that, here in Manitoba, we see you, we hear you and we support you. And we've taken real steps to protect and support you across the province.

We're improving gender-affirming health care in Manitoba because we know that this saves lives.

\* (13:40)

We've updated The Change of Name Act to remove the requirements to publish names in the Manitoba Gazette because we know this affirms lives. We are pleased to be supporting the Place of Pride, providing housing and services to 2SLGBTQ+ seniors so they can age in place in their communities and in our communities. Because 2SLGBTQ+ seniors also helped build our province and deserve to age with dignity.

So yes, today is about remembering those we've lost, but it's also about committing to doing the work we need to, to ensure that more trans, two-spirit and gender-diverse Manitobans can live and thrive across our great province.

And to all those in our communities who identify as gender diverse, as trans, as two-spirit, we want you to know that your lives are beautiful, your lives are valued. We see you, we love you and we need you.

And we will keep working to make sure that you have the support that you need in order to be your true self.

Honourable Speaker, I'd ask that, at the end of any remarks on this, we all stand for a moment of silence for those we've lost over the past year to transphobia.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Is there leave for a moment of silence after members have spoken in response to the minister's statement? *[Agreed]*

**Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz):** I rise today to respond to the ministerial statement recognizing Transgender Day of Remembrance.

This day, first observed in 1999 by activist Gwendolyn Ann Smith, was created in memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was brutally murdered in 1998. Rita's tragic death drew attention to the pervasive violence faced by transgender individuals.

November 20 is now observed worldwide as a day of—memorialize those who have fallen victim to transphobic violence.

However, Honourable Speaker, it is deeply disappointing to see the government politicize what should be a day of reflection, mourning and lifting up the transgender community. This day is not about partisan posturing, attacks on your opposition or hollow platitudes; it is about honouring the memory of lives tragically taken too soon.

As vigils and memorials take place across the country today, we must focus not on political opportunism but on meaningful remembrance and unwavering commitment to building a future free of transphobic hate and violence.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Kirkfield Park.

**An Honourable Member:** It's still ministerial.

**Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park):** Oh, my bad. Sorry.

**The Speaker:** All rise for a moment of silence.

*A moment of silence was observed.*

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Before moving on, there are some guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce.

We have with us seated in the public gallery from Balmoral Hall 36 grade 6 students under the direction of Lori Anderson, and they are guests of the honourable member for Wolseley (MLA Naylor).

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Transgender Day of Remembrance

**Mr. Logan Oxenham (Kirkfield Park):** Honourable Speaker, I stand here today feeling a lot of sorrow. Today marks 25 years of the international Transgender Day of Remembrance.

Transgender Day of Remembrance, or TDOR, is a time where the community comes together to reflect and to mourn and to remember those lives who were

brutally and violently taken from us, taken from those who loved them.

Honourable Speaker, I stand here as a transgender man with a great amount of privilege as I present as a white cisgender male. I walk through this world and people don't look twice at me, but for my transfeminine sisters and siblings, their story is much more different.

Misgendering someone, for example, can do a real amount of harm. It can break someone's spirit to the point where they don't even know how they're going to get through their day or even maybe their life.

Looking someone in the eye and saying to them, I know your soul better than you do is the first step toward dehumanizing and oppressing them.

This day is an important reminder of the attacks on legislation that could undermine fundamental human rights and freedoms for gender-diverse folks, like what we're seeing all around us.

Transgender people want to live our lives, we want to love and lift up our families, go to work, pay our taxes, have access to affirming care just like every single member in this Chamber expects from their government.

Honourable Speaker, there's so many grassroots, community-led organizations that are working hard to keep us all accountable. Manitoba Moon Voices, Trans Manitoba, 2Spirit Manitoba just to name a few organizations that are trans-led and informed.

Trans people exist. Trans people are unapologetically ourselves. Trans people deserve a good life. No matter what part of the province or the country we live in, you'll find someone who breaks the binary.

To trans youth who are watching online: You are loved, you are valid—valued and you are valid. We see you.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

### Leanne Taylor

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** I am thrilled today to welcome and congratulate Leanne Taylor, who won bronze at the Paralympics in Paris this past summer.

From the small town of Oak Bluff, she became the first Canadian woman to ever win a medal in the Paralympic triathlon. This involves a 750-metre swim, 20K ride on a hand cycle, and 5K wheelchair race.

She is also joined today by her in-laws, Patty and Albert Dyck, and her husband, Scott Dyck, who has

been by her side, not only throughout her recovery and rehab, but also at every event. Scott serves as Leanne's handler during training and races.

In 2018, at the young age of 25, Leanne was paralyzed from the waist down in a terrible biking accident. She spent several days in hospital recovering from major spinal cord surgery, and six weeks at a rehab facility, undergoing intensive physio and occupational therapy, while learning how to use a wheelchair.

An incredibly motivated and positive young woman, she said: I couldn't change what happened to me, but I realized that I had so much power to change how I reacted to it.

So she challenged herself and found healing in sport. She began with wheelchair racing, then tried biking, swimming and finally set her sights on triathlon, a goal she has more than achieved.

She competed in her first para triathlon just eight months after being injured, using only her arms to swim, bike and race.

In addition to her success in Paris this past summer at the Paralympics, throughout her five-year career she has earned three victories, 10 medals, including a gold in June at the ITU World Series circuit in Wales.

She has now become one of the top ranked para triathletes in the world.

In speaking with Leanne and Scott earlier, I am such in awe with their outlook on life, love and their future goals together. Leanne continues to challenge herself, and her journey is truly inspiring. She is a disability advocate and motivational speaker.

Leanne, Scott, Patty and Albert, thank you so much for coming today. Thank you for sharing your journey and your message with Manitobans and people across Canada and the world. Thank you for representing our beautiful province at the Paralympics, and our beautiful country.

Congratulations on your success, and I cannot wait to see where the next stop on your journey leads to.

Congratulations.

\* (13:50)

### Good Neighbour Brewing Co.

**Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure):** I rise today to tell you about Morgan Wielgosz and Amber Sarraillon, owners of

Good Neighbour Brewing Co. in Wolseley. Amber and Morgan opened the first all-female and LGBTQ-owned brewery in Manitoba.

It was rare to see women as leaders in the brewing industry at the start of their careers, so their vision was to own a brewery where they could eliminate barriers that they faced and open doors for diverse folks to enter the industry.

I'm convinced that Morgan and Amber's success has come from their focus on creative solutions and community collaboration. These strengths have played out from their relationship with Oxus Brewing, where they were contract brewers and launched their first products, to their collaboration with The Beer Can, a pop-up summer patio in the Wolseley constituency.

Good Neighbour brewery and tasting room opened on Sherbrook in 2023, and right next door is their restaurant called Next Door. Joined by a beautiful patio, these businesses are an inviting community gathering spot for local beverages and a menu that is also a collaboration with other local businesses.

At the national Brewers Choice Awards earlier this year, Good Neighbour won best new brewery of 2023. We are so proud to have local businesses celebrated on a national stage and especially one that is such a standout business here at home.

Joining with other local businesses, they have hosted West Broadway Pride parties. At their pay-what-you-can Thanksgiving meal, neighbours from all backgrounds come together to donate, volunteer and sit down to eat turkey and all the fixings. Their annual holiday market in December includes wreath making and a local makers market while sharing holiday-inspired food and beverages around firepits.

Morgan and Amber have worked hard to build a thriving business, paving their own way as women in the industry and then holding space and jobs for other women, non-binary and queer Manitobans who were excluded from the brewery industry in the past.

Please join me in a round of applause for Good Neighbour, the absolute best neighbours.

### **Garden of Eden**

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Thank you, Honourable Speaker, for the opportunity to recognize the wonderful things that the great people of La Vérendrye are doing on a daily basis. Mel and Helen Kachur are two of these great people.

The retired farming couple, who are now in their 70s, have made it their mission to fight hunger. They

have developed what they call Garden of Eden in Pansy, Manitoba, at their home. The more-than-two-acre plot isn't your normal backyard garden, and with it comes a lot of work, but Mel and Helen make it look easy through their natural ability to successfully grow an abundance of produce while also managing the many volunteers needed.

The Garden of Eden greatly impacts the community, and this year alone, thousands of pounds of produce went to organizations such as the Grunthal MCC, Steinbach Family Resource Centre, Soup's On, South East Helping Hands and Agape House.

The passion to help people has been lifelong for Mel and Helen, but the creation of Garden of Eden began with a desire to help people affected by war in Ukraine. The sale of produce grown allowed the couple to donate thousands of dollars to an orphanage in Ukraine while also supporting the refugee settlement of hundreds of Ukrainians into Manitoba.

What is most amazing about the Kachurs' Garden of Eden is that it isn't just a handout for those less fortunate. Mel and Helen have actively involved recipients of the produce to volunteer as they teach the valuable life lessons of growing healthy food.

This 'couple' has shown us that the things we do in our spare time can touch the lives of hundreds of people. Unfortunately, Helen has suffered a stroke recently and is unable to be here today, but we pray for her speedy recovery.

Joining us today, though, is Mel Kachur, together with his daughters, Sheri and Melissa, as well as their friends and volunteers, Harry and Sylvia Hawrysko.

Thank you for everything you do.

**Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry):** It's my honour to rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the South Winnipeg Family Information Centre—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

Just remind the honourable member for Fort Garry that his turn to have a member's statement is week 2, and we're presently in week 1.

**An Honourable Member:** Leave.

**The Speaker:** Is there—the honourable Opposition House Leader.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader):** Is there leave for the member to complete his statement?

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**The Speaker:** Leave has been denied.

Give us a minute, please.

Just for the member for Fort Garry, the weeks reset at the beginning of a new session, so this is actually week 1.

Is there leave for the member to give his statement?

**Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):** I would ask we'll grant leave if the member will forgo next week.

**The Speaker:** Leave has been requested for the member to forgo giving a member's statement next week if he does his member's statement this week. *[Agreed]*

#### South Winnipeg Family Information Centre

**Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry):** My honour to rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the South Winnipeg Family Information Centre. For five decades, SWFIC has been a steadfast pillar of support, empowering families and individuals throughout Fort Garry and greater Winnipeg with essential resources, knowledge and guidance to build healthier, more resilient communities.

Since its founding on February 25, 1974, SWFIC has championed community well-being by offering a wide range of services, including parenting classes, youth programs, senior activities, food security initiatives and vital resources for families. Originally known as the Fort Garry Family Life Centre, it's grown into a central support network, serving individuals at every stage of life and fostering a community-wide ethos of strength and connection.

SWFIC also provides invaluable services through Dress for Success Winnipeg, a program that last year alone helped over 350 women and—employment clothing, mentorship and skill building to support their career aspirations. This initiative is a shining example of SWFIC's commitment to fostering self-sufficiency and dignity in every person it serves.

SWFIC's executive director, Tricia Robinson, and board chair, Marnie Jackson, along with countless staff, board members, program facilitators and volunteers, have been instrumental in driving its mission. Their dedication has enabled SWFIC to impact the lives of over 105,000 individuals across community, from

training nearly 40,000 young babysitters to empowering women with employment resources and providing over 112,000 hours of volunteer service.

As an Imagine Canada-accredited organization and a United Way partner since 1982, SWFIC exemplifies the highest standards of non-profit integrity, transparency and service. Their contributions have had a lasting impact on countless families, individuals and volunteers, affirming their place as a cornerstone of community support.

I extend my deepest congratulations to SWFIC for its unwavering commitment to Fort Garry and the greater Winnipeg area. May SWFIC continue to inspire and support our community for many more years to come. And I'd ask that my colleagues rise and help me celebrate SWFIC's 50th anniversary.

\* (14:00)

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### North End Sewage Treatment Plant Throne Speech Funding Commitment

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** A big shout-out to Leanne and Scott, and, of course, Mel. And please pass along, Mel, to Helen, thank you for everything that you and the team does out in Pansy. And, of course, SWFIC. I'm glad that we were able to get through a private member's statement.

Honourable Speaker, on this, marking the 25th year for trans remembrance day, we know that here in Manitoba there is no place for hate and for violence and really, every Manitoban should feel safe right here in this great province of ours and country, no matter their gender, race or their cultural background.

I do have a quick question. Post-Throne Speech yesterday, Honourable Speaker, is the Premier prepared to put dollars to fund the priority of Winnipeg's North End water treatment plant, or is he just going to do more verbiage and talking as he usually does?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** We're going to get the North End Water Pollution Control Centre built. I'm spending my time with the federal government advocating for this. I'm talking to the mayor about it all the time. Where the PCs failed, we're going to deliver for you, the people of Manitoba.

In yesterday's Throne Speech, our government committed to you, the people of Manitoba, that we're going to build on the savings you realized when we cut the provincial gas tax by freezing your hydro rates



for a year. Plus, we're going to crack down on anti-competitive behaviour in the grocery industry. Plus, we're staffing up health care. Plus, we are reopening emergency rooms.

We're fixing health care. We're making life more affordable. And what did the PCs have to say about it yesterday? What was their big reaction here in this esteemed Chamber? Did they talk about you? Did they talk about health care? Did they talk about affordability? No. They could only talk about themselves.

They can keep doing that; we're focused on you and making your life better.

**The Speaker:** Member's time is expired.

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

**Mr. Ewasko:** Honourable Speaker, it looks like the Premier's put on his angry eyes today.

Honourable Speaker, yesterday, and I quote from the mayor of Winnipeg, His Worship: No capacity means no homes can be built, no commercial or industrial. And this was a concern shared by His Worship.

Currently, Winnipeg should hit 1 million residents by 2046, but this target is in jeopardy with the necessary sewage capacity to facilitate that growth. And, of course, yesterday's Throne Speech offered nothing more than vague phrases with zero actual commitment.

So instead of promises to make progress, will the Premier commit to the necessary funding in the upcoming budget to prevent the economic catastrophe?

**Mr. Kinew:** We're going to get the North End plant built, and wh—I'm the Premier for the entire province, so we're going to build infrastructure everywhere, in southern Manitoba, the Pembina Valley, Eastman, Westman, the Interlake, the North. The building crane is no longer an endangered species as it was under the PCs.

And if they thought this North End plant was such a great idea, why didn't they build it within their two terms here in office? Nothing got done. No single picolitre of water was purified in a new North End plant.

And, of course, we come here with ideas to save you money, ideas to fix your health care, a plan to get this North End Water Pollution Control Centre built. And what is their response? How do they use the opportunity that they have before the Lieutenant Governor, the King's representative to Canada, to Manitoba?

What is their response? Waah, look at us. Let us talk about ourselves.

Keep talking about our—yourselves; we're going to keep talking about—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Again, Honourable Speaker, things that the Premier does is unbecoming of a Premier. And Manitobans, people watching, the hundreds of people watching today, are going to hold him to account.

I quote again: We are at risk of putting up a closed-for-business sign up in terms of future development and future investment. Who said this? Lanny McInnes, president of the Manitoba Home Builders' Association.

Imagine that the driver of our economy, the heart of our continent, is at risk, and the best thing the NDP can offer up is a single sentence in their Throne Speech. More delays will only result in more costs; more delays will only result in more damage to our lakes and streams, Honourable Speaker; and more delays were only cement that the NDP's legacy as environmental duds.

Will the Premier end the delays and add a dollar sign to his Throne Speech commitment, or is he willing to jeopardize all of our future?

**Mr. Kinew:** Is everybody following along at home? The person who just asked the question came out of two terms in government in which no North End water pollution control facility was built. They failed.

We are going to build it. We're working with the federal government. We're working with municipal government. We're working with private sector. We're working with workers. We're talking to the people in the hard hats, something that they never ever did and still refuse to do to this day.

We're standing up for you, the people who go to work each and every day. We're making it easier for you by cutting the cost of the provincial gas tax. We're saving you money, we're fixing your health care, we're making sure that the water and air and land is going to be beautiful for the next generation.

And that's why we invited a group of schoolkids here to sing O Canada. We were going to make them the stars of the show. And how do the PCs respond? No, put the spotlight on us instead. Listen to us complain about ourselves.

We say no. We're focused on you—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

### **Grace and Brandon Hospitals Emergency Room Services**

**Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin):** The Grace Hospital ER is in chaos. Dr. Doug Eyolfson, an ER doc at the Grace, described the situation to the media as, quote, a catastrophe, with 52 active patients crammed into a space designed for 30, and another 40 waiting for care.

He warned, quote: There's no way you can safely care for that many active patients. Grace Hospital wait times are out of control: a median 5.5 hours in September, up from last year, and one in 10 patients waiting over 11 hours.

This Premier failed to deliver on his promise of more beds at the Grace by March, and he has let ER wait times climb under his watch.

Why is the Premier failing the people of west Winnipeg?

**Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier):** Just for the full context of everyone, the member who asked that question thought it was a good idea to run under the banner of Heather Stefanson, the most damaging Health minister that this province has ever seen.

I invite members opposite to read the entire article to see Dr. Doug Eyolfson's entire contributions to the public discourse. What did Dr. Eyolfson say? He said consolidation was a mistake. It is going to take a decade for us to fix the damage.

What is consolidation, you might ask? It was the plan to close emergency rooms launched by Heather Stefanson and Brian Pallister.

People across the province—west Winnipeg, of course, but people in every region of Manitoba—are worse off because the PCs cut nurses, they cut hospital beds and they closed emergency rooms both here in the city and in rural Manitoba.

Here's the good news for you, for Dr. Eyolfson, for everybody in the province: We're staffing—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Roblin, on a supplementary question.

**Mrs. Cook:** The Grace isn't the only emergency department in chaos, thanks to the NDP. The Premier boasted that the minor injury clinic was a solution to ER pressures in Brandon, promising publicly that it would, quote, function like an urgent care centre and

allow patients to walk up to the clinic and be in and out in 20 minutes.

Instead, as confirmed by front-line workers in Brandon this week, the clinic doesn't accept walk-ins, lacks diagnostic tools and isn't fully staffed. They told me directly that this clinic is no replacement for urgent care and that it will not help ease pressure on the Brandon ER.

They also shared that, as of today, for December, the minor injury clinic is fully staffed for just six of 31 days.

How can the Premier justify so directly misleading Manitobans?

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, I would just like clarity from the PC side of the House: Do they still support Heather Stefanson and Brian Pallister's plan to close beds and to close emergency rooms?

\* (14:10)

Because again, I have to say it's pretty difficult for us to sit here and watch them, who still hold the match in their hands, complain about us not bringing the firehose quick enough.

And again, if their entire approach to opposition is to look at the great work of our Health Minister and to say, these wonderful new health-care initiatives that you're bringing in—why aren't you bringing them in more quickly, then I invite them to continue to do so.

But first, put on the record today: Do you still support the plan to close emergency rooms in Manitoba, yes or no?

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I would just caution members that using words such as directly misleading are dangerously close to being deemed unparliamentary, so please watch your language.

**Mrs. Cook:** Medical professionals in Brandon have sounded the alarm, describing their ER as unsafe and unsustainable, with a 34 per cent vacancy rate among emergency physicians that will rise to 42 per cent in January.

In a letter sent to the Minister of Health, which I'll table, they state, quote, we are frankly on the brink of collapse, end quote; we are witnessing levels of burnout and exhaustion that we have never witnessed previously. They end the letter with, quote: In our current conditions, we will experience a catastrophic outcome that could have been prevented.

The Grace and Brandon hospitals need help now.

What is the Premier doing today to address the immediate crisis in our emergency rooms?

**Mr. Kinew:** Here's the thing that the PCs get wrong on health care. Our team understands that you deserve to have access to an emergency department when you need it. And so that's why we're working with doctors. That's why we're working with nurses, allied health, nurse practitioners, support workers, to be able to serve you in your time of need.

But what the PCs get wrong is that if they wanted more physicians in the emergency room in Brandon today, they needed to be training them seven years ago. If they wanted a nurse at the bedside in Brandon or the Grace tomorrow, they needed to be training them years ago.

Who was in office during those times? It was Heather Stefanson and Brian Pallister. And where they made cuts, where they closed emergency departments, we continue to see the multi-year damage.

The good news: you actually have a capable Health Minister today. You have a team that is committed to investing in health care. We are reopening emergency—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

#### **Sustainability of Lake Winnipeg Establishment of Stakeholder Working Group**

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Honourable Speaker, in 2013, the Global Nature Fund declared Lake Winnipeg as the threatened lake of the year. That is the legacy of the NDP. But suddenly, we find out the minister has a renewed interest in Lake Winnipeg.

Can the minister advise if her new Lake Winnipeg stakeholder working group will combine grassroots membership and the expertise of science advisers to focus on advancing evidence-based solutions to reduce phosphorous loading?

**Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** I thank the member opposite for a question on Lake Winnipeg.

I am a little bit surprised on the member's sudden interest in Lake Winnipeg considering that he was responsible for seven and a half years, or at least for a portion thereof, and took absolutely no action on the protection of Lake Winnipeg.

On this side of the aisle, we are so proud—and I'm so glad to hear that he was paying attention during the

Throne Speech—to hear about the newly announced Lake Winnipeg stakeholder group, and—[interjection] Thank you. Yes, it deserves a round of applause.

We're a listening government. We've been listening to Manitobans for just over a year now. We've been working with experts. We've been working with First Nations, Indigenous communities, municipalities all across our province, who I know are going to be great partners and contributors—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Riding Mountain, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Honourable Speaker, all Manitobans agree that the sustainability of Lake Winnipeg is of paramount importance. What Manitobans take issue with is an NDP government that fails to recognize the efforts and advocacy of an organization that has for the last 20 years worked to ensure that policy and practices informed by evidence are implemented and enforced.

The Lake Winnipeg Foundation is a membership-based environmental charity that is doing the work the minister is now waking up to. I'll table the Lake Winnipeg Foundation's board and staff list, including credentials.

Can the minister share who on this list fails to meet the credentials that could qualify them as a member of a stakeholder working group?

**MLA Schmidt:** Contrary to the member opposite's suggestion, on this side of the aisle we welcome the partnership and the advice and the expertise of the Lake Winnipeg Foundation, also, other groups, like the Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium, who we've had a great luxury of getting to visit with them.

Many—not just myself, Honourable Speaker, many members of our caucus were able to visit with the Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium and spend time on their amazing research 'veshel'—vessel, the MV Namao that provides critical research and analysis and science-based evidence to teach us on how to respond to the problems on Lake Winnipeg. We are happy to work with them, happy to work with the Lake Winnipeg Foundation, happy to work with all of our partners.

On this side of the aisle, we are a listening—

**The Speaker:** Member's time's expired.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Honourable Speaker, if there is one thing this Throne Speech offers Manitobans in terms

of environmental awareness, it is recycling, as that is a consistent theme throughout. But instead of reinventing the wheel in order to garner some misplaced credit, I would simply urge the minister to reach out to the Lake Winnipeg Foundation, set up a meeting and find out how to ensure the sustainability of our precious lake.

Will this minister make that call today, or is she content with starting from ground zero?

**MLA Schmidt:** If the member opposite is so interested in this new Lake Winnipeg stakeholder group, I would urge him to provide us with the list that he had for his stakeholder group. Oh, wait, Honourable Speaker, that's right. They didn't have one. For seven and a half years this province had zero leadership on the environmental file.

Now Manitobans had the good sense to elect a new government, one that cares about the environment, one that cares about working with stakeholder groups and communities. We're going to get it done.

You know what else we're going to get done? The North End waste pollution control plan, something that they did not do in seven and a half years.

#### **Flood Protection Plan Interlake Channels Project**

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Much of Manitoba has experienced its first snowfall, and as many of us know, eventually all that snow will melt, resulting in localized flooding. The Premier (Mr. Kinew) claims in his Throne Speech that he's, quote, moving forward with the channels in the Interlake to protect all communities from flooding.

However, just a few weeks ago, his Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure told Manitobans that she cut flood mitigation by more than \$100 million as well as asking the federal government to pause any necessary approval that would allow the project to proceed. And I table that.

Which version are Manitobans to believe? The—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure):** Thank you for the opportunity for me to once again put the facts on the record.

Certainly, this member had the opportunity to ask about this question many, many times in the Estimates process and was given the same answer. The Lake St. Martin Channels project requires real consultation before there can be shovels in the ground. And that is

the work that our government has been doing since we came into office.

We've had the opportunity to meet with the affected First Nations. We've had the opportunity to engage with them in a real way, and that process is ongoing.

So I'm really excited about our announcement that we will be able to continue this work and move forward in the coming years to complete a project that the previous government could not get done.

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

**Mr. Narth:** Honourable Speaker, the minister speaks about relationships, but her Premier has previously thrown local Indigenous leadership under the floodwaters. He's blamed these leaders for flood mitigation inaction. He said, quote: Why isn't the local Native leadership doing more? And then specifically called out Roseau River First Nation leadership.

If this minister's moving forward, will she stop her boss's blame game and move on with this vital project?

\* (14:20)

**MLA Naylor:** I am so grateful to serve with a Premier who is a Premier for all Manitobans.

I have had the privilege to sit at a table with dozens of First Nations leaders over the past few months and to begin to build the necessary relationships, not just for the channels project, but for so much infrastructure development across this province.

These communities have been neglected for so long. Under this government, that will not happen. Under this government, we are working together in collaboration, listening to First Nations and to the Métis Federation in the same way we listen to municipalities and we work together—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mr. Narth:** The minister needs to realize the importance and time sensitivity of this project.

The 2011 flood was a billion-dollar flood. A billion dollars, the direct result of not having the channel completed. Moving forward on the channels project will not only save billions of taxpayer dollars long-term, but it will limit the stress financially and mentally that displaced flood victims face each spring.

Will the minister commit today to making the necessary investments protecting communities from flooding and moving this project to completion?

**MLA Naylor:** I will ask the member opposite to cast his mind backwards to when the channels project was developed and created under the previous NDP government.

I will also remind him that in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, nothing happened when they were in government.

We are moving forward and we will protect—  
[interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler) will come to order. The member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk) will come to order.

The member for—or, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure has the floor.

**MLA Naylor:** I'm happy to reiterate that our government is doing the necessary work, the important—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

### **Grocery Prices, Hydro Rates and Tax Increases Cost-of-Living Concerns**

**Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland):** Honourable Speaker, Manitobans have been waiting a year to hear what the NDP are going to do about grocery prices and affordability. After a year of dodging by this Premier (Mr. Kinew), he again has no tangible plan.

Costs are rising. Baby formula, up by almost \$10. Meat, another 8 per cent. Fresh veggies, up 10 per cent.

Why should Manitobans trust the vague promises made by this Premier on anti-competitive contracts, and when can Manitobans expect a realistic and actionable plan?

**Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance):** It gives me great pleasure to stand in the House to talk about affordability.

And you know, we know for seven and a half years, Manitobans had a government that made life more expensive for Manitobans. Whether it was raising hydro rates through legislation, continuing to apply fuel tax and raising costs for renters, they continued to have costs go up and up and up.

One thing they didn't take any action on for seven and half years was helping to respond to growing grocery prices. I was very proud, along with

this team yesterday, in that Throne Speech to see our government announce that we're going to be taking action, real action to help control grocery prices, to help make life more affordable for Manitobans.

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

**Mrs. Stone:** The NDP inherited the second lowest hydro rates in North America because of the work that this former PC government did.

Manitobans need real savings today. Last spring, this minister increased hydro rates by 1 per cent and authorized rate increases at the Cabinet table by 4 per cent. Now, he's promising a phony hydro rate freeze that won't put any additional money back in the pockets of Manitobans while increasing fuel taxes, income taxes and property taxes.

Can the minister tell us how much in fuel taxes Manitobans can expect that he will raise as of January 1?

**MLA Sala:** I know it's hard for the members opposite to understand that a government is actually working to reduce costs for Manitobans.

That's because for—[interjection] That's right. For seven and a half years, all they knew was to do the opposite. For example, legislating hydro rate increases, increasing costs for renters.

We're doing the opposite. We're doing that very important work. We came right out of the gate as a new government with our fuel tax holiday that saved hundreds and hundreds of dollars for families across the province. This initiative we announced yesterday in the Throne Speech will help to control grocery prices, and we're going to do that by banning restrictive covenants.

We ask the members opposite: Will they or will they not support that initiative to make life more affordable?

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

**Mrs. Stone:** Under this NDP government, Manitobans are paying as much as 17 per cent more in school taxes, more in carbon taxes, more in markups at the Liquor Mart, skilled professionals paying more in income taxes, seniors and homeowners are paying 148 million more dollars in education property taxes, and they are paying more at the grocery store.

What is this minister's plan on the fuel tax that Manitobans are expected to see a 14 per cent—

14-cent increase on January 1? Because there was no mention of it in the Throne Speech.

**MLA Sala:** Our team is incredibly proud to have brought in that fuel tax holiday to save Manitobans money every time they go to the pump.

And not only that, we brought in a \$1,500 homeowners affordability tax credit, broad middle class tax cut, doubled the Fertility Treatment Tax Credit, increased the renters tax credit, increased the seniors' top up, free prescription birth control and on and on and on.

And now we ask them: Will they help us to make grocery prices more affordable for Manitobans, yes or no?

### **Post-Secondary Education Student Safety on Campus**

**Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk):** Honourable Speaker, Manitoba students deserve to feel safe on campus, and this government is responsible to make sure those resources are available.

In the last month, there has been three high-profile incidents at the University of Manitoba, and students are extremely concerned.

What resources has this minister made available so students feel safe?

**Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training):** Honourable Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. It's an important question.

And I first want to begin by saying thank you to the Winnipeg Police Service for their very speedy response yesterday. As you know, you've seen on the news, there was an incident on campus. The campus community took it very seriously. The Winnipeg Police Service took it very seriously. And while the details are unfolding, I just want to thank again the campus staff and the Winnipeg Police Service for their tremendous efforts yesterday.

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

**Mr. Perchotte:** Honourable Speaker, my colleague from Roblin previously asked what specific actions is the NDP taking to support post-secondary institutions to ensure student safety on campus. And the minister cannot name any specifics.

So again I ask: What specific actions are the NDP taking to post-secondary institutions to ensure student safety on campus?

**MLA Cable:** I can tell you what we're not doing, Honourable Speaker. We are not cutting the budgets of post-secondary institutions like the members opposite did year over year over year.

In the years that they were in power, for those seven and a half long years, they cut funding to the University of Manitoba by 5 per cent; by the University of Winnipeg by 4 per cent; Brandon University, 4 per cent; UCN by 7 per cent; and all post-secondaries by 5 per cent.

I can tell you, Honourable Speaker, that on this side of the House, we take student safety incredibly seriously, we take public safety incredibly seriously. There are initiatives happening all over the province, including training more security officers, enhanced security on campus.

And I can assure you that the University of Manitoba is reviewing the procedure from yesterday—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

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

### **Emergency Alert System Review**

**Mr. Perchotte:** Honourable Speaker, we're hearing from the extremely concerned parents and students that they didn't get the emergency notifications until well after an hour after it was supposed to go out, or they didn't even get it at all.

Officials said towers nearest campus were prioritized, but the majority of students attending the U of M commute.

Will the minister responsible for EMO commit today to a full and public review of the implementation of the emergency alert?

**Hon. Lisa Naylor (Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure):** I thank the member opposite for that question, and I've also heard concerns that were raised yesterday.

We will be investigating to find out what went right and what went wrong, as we do with every kind of alerting system, as we, you know, still are using a relatively new technology that's also tied in with the national alerting system.

\* (14:30)

So that's an ongoing piece of work that our government will do to keep people safer in Manitoba.

### **Selkirk Regional Health Centre Capacity Expansion Announcement**

**MLA JD Devgan (McPhillips):** Yesterday our government was honoured to deliver our second Throne Speech. There were many exciting announcements and plans mentioned, including on health care for Manitobans. We know that's why Manitobans chose us to take the province in a new direction and fix the health-care mess left by the previous Heather Stefanson government.

We are a government committed to delivering quality health care for Manitobans where and when they need it.

Honourable Speaker, can the Minister of Health tell us about the exciting announcement from the Throne Speech related to expanding capacity at the Selkirk Regional Health Centre?

**Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care):** I'd like to thank my colleague from McPhillips for that really excellent and important question.

Our government's top priority is fixing the health-care mess left by the Stefanson government. It's what Manitobans trusted us to do and we take that role very seriously, and it's why our government was happy to announce the addition of 800 hip and knee surgeries to the Selkirk Regional Health Centre in our Throne Speech.

Honourable Speaker, this will reduce wait times and give Manitobans who were waiting years under the failed PC government, finally, surgery dates that they deserve. We are expanding access so all Manitobans can get the health care they need closer to home, and we're going to keep doing the important work of fixing the mess and the damage done by the PCs—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

### **Discarded Needles in Public Places Support for Municipalities for Cleanup**

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** Honourable Speaker, we've asked this government to invest and help keep communities safe from needles and other hazards, and there was no mention of this in the Throne Speech. We know the minister of addictions has no interest in addressing this.

So I ask the minister of municipal relations: Our communities are stepping up in new ways to fix this

government's mess each and every day. Will he commit today to help funding their efforts to clean up his Cabinet colleague's disasters?

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** You know, it was an important Throne Speech yesterday to really talk about the importance of bringing all of us together, and that includes folks from across this great province, and including folks from—in this member's very own community, and that is the community of Swan River, where folks have come together with government and they want to work on solutions.

They want to understand what our path forward can be when we work together. And that's why we are pleased to announce that we will be investing in a general investigations unit up in Swan River that'll bring together law enforcement to go after the toxic drugs and the drug dealers that are bringing those into our communities.

We're going to start getting solutions to public safety, and that's what this government is all about, while members opposite did nothing but cuts—

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

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

**Mr. Wowchuk:** Honourable Speaker, we're asking for a firm commitment from this government. If this minister of addictions insists on doing needle distribution instead of needle exchanges, then the minister of municipal relations needs to step up and support the municipal governments that are showing real leadership.

Will he commit to help funding them as a partner, or does he expect municipalities to foot the bill for his government's dangerous failures?

**Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness):** Well, it's nice to see the member from Swan River actually get up and talk about his community. I wonder if that member has actually met with his counterparts.

So we are actually flowing \$30,000 to that region, as well as an additional \$15,000 to work with Swan River, something we know that members opposite didn't do. We actually launched a new phone line for residents to call for needle cleanup. We know that the previous government didn't have any plans for that, so we are working alongside communities to make sure that those that need support get support.

Our plan on this side is to connect people with care so that they can get the care that they need to get off the drugs—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

### **Needle Distribution in Swan River Responsibility for Used Needle Cleanup**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** Details have emerged about this minister's crack commando committee tasked with cleaning up half a million needles that she has freely distributed within Swan River.

This minister's team is out there—*[interjection]*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Balcaen:**—Monday through Friday, 9 to 11 a.m., notwithstanding statutory holidays, and I table this document.

Honourable Speaker, 500,000 needles divided by 500 working hours equals to 1,000 needles per hour to be picked up.

Can this minister tell this House if her committee is meeting this daily quota?

**Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Again, how disrespectful the members opposite are to the incredibly hard work that the Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness (Ms. Smith) is doing in partnership with community. We are bringing folks together, and we know that's the path forward.

We also know that partnering with law enforcement is a—going to be a key element to making our communities safer. That's why, in Swan River, we're bringing additional resources so that police can do the work that they need to do to investigate those drug dealers.

As former law enforcement, this member opposite should know that, but apparently, he's running with a party that doesn't seem to get it.

### **Grocery Price Inflation Request for Government to Address**

**Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry):** After a year in office, this Premier (Mr. Kinew) has broken his promise to Manitobans. He promised that he would take on the big grocery store chains if they refuse—their prices. Not only did they refuse to lower their prices, they've gone even higher.

The Premier has done nothing to make grocery store prices more affordable.

The Salvation Army released their 2024 Canadian poverty report, and I table it now.

It found that one in four parents are cutting back on their food so that their children would have enough to eat. Those same parents say that they've had to reduce their grocery store bills to put money to other financial obligations. They are buying less nutritious food because it's cheaper.

Manitoban families are literally starving under this Premier's watch.

Why does this Premier continue to ignore the needs of Manitoba families?

**Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance):** Again, it gives me great pleasure to rise to talk about the incredible work we're doing to make life more affordable here in Manitoba, starting yesterday, of course, with our newest announcement in the Throne Speech, which is our hydro rate freeze, which is going to lower energy costs.

To the member's question, very proud that our Throne Speech specifically identified that we're going to be banning restrictive covenants, which reduces competitiveness, which ultimately increase the costs of groceries in our communities. We're going to do away with those because we understand that the costs of food have gone up for many years, especially under a government that cared nothing to do—or, that cared not to do anything about it.

We're taking action, and we ask the members opposite if they'll join us in that work of making groceries more affordable.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Fort Garry, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Wasyliv:** The latest Canada food price report shows that, overall, food inflation this past year in Manitoba went up 5.7 per cent.

Not many Manitobans got a 5 per cent—or, 6 per cent increase in pay last year. The Premier may have done that, but Manitobans certainly didn't.

The Salvation Army poverty report tells us that more than half of these accessing food banks are using them for the first time—58 per cent food bank users compared to 43 per cent a year ago.

After a year of this Premier, first-time food bank users have skyrocketed. Parents are eating less in order to feed their kids. They're buying less food and less healthy food for their families.



Why does this Premier (Mr. Kinew) continue to turn his back on Manitobans?

**MLA Sala:** Honourable Speaker, we're doing the opposite. Manitobans know that we're here, showing up for them every single day.

You know, when it comes to affordability, there's no question that our government is taking action, and we took action right out of the gate after we got into government with our fuel tax holiday that lowered costs for Manitobans every time they went to the pump.

When we're talking about food costs, one of the things that we know is changing the face of our province is our universal school nutrition program for kids in our schools to make sure every kid that goes to school can get a full belly and achieve their fullest and reach the most that they can possibly achieve.

And, of course, this newest measure that we announced in our Throne Speech, which is to ban restrictive covenants that will ensure more competition, which means more stores that Manitobans can access—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

**Mr. Wasyliv:** Manitoba already regulates food prices. The Manitoba government sets the price of milk. It is the only commodity that hasn't been affected by inflation, and it prevents the big chains from price gouging.

Milk remains affordable in Manitoba. Manitoba has the tools to lower prices on groceries. This Province could regulate other staples.

\* (14:40)

After a year in office, the Premier refuses to act. Poverty is a political choice and it's time for this Premier to make his choice clear for Manitobans.

Will he stand with Manitoban families or will he continue to stand with the big grocery store chains?

**MLA Sala:** Manitobans made a clear choice when they elected this government into power to do something to fix health care and make life more affordable, right? And that's after seven and a half long years of Manitobans dealing with a government that was making life more expensive.

Again, whether it was increasing costs for renters, increasing hydro rates through legislation, increasing costs on farmers by continuing to increase Crown land rates—Crown lease rates, we're doing that work every

single day and we're proud because we know that's why Manitobans sent us here.

The question being asked is an important one. We're making life more affordable. We brought in the universal school nutrition program. We're bringing forward this ban on restrictive covenants. We are going to make groceries more affordable and we ask the members opposite to stand with us—

**The Speaker:** Member's time has expired.

And the time for question period is also expired.

## PETITIONS

### Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly, and the petition is as follows.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The federal government has mandated a consumption-based carbon tax, with the stated goal of financially pressuring Canadians to make decisions to reduce their carbon emissions.

(2) Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with a high-efficiency furnace, the carbon tax is costing the average family over \$200 annually, even more for those with older furnaces.

(3) Home heating in Manitoba is not a choice or a decision for Manitobans to make; it is a necessity of life, with an average of almost 200 days below 0°C annually.

(4) The federal government has selectively removed the carbon tax off of home heating oil in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, but has indicated they have no intention to provide the same relief to Manitobans heating their homes.

(5) Manitoba Hydro indicates that natural gas heating is one of the most affordable options available to Manitobans, and it can be cost prohibitive for households to replace their heating source.

(6) Premiers across Canada, including in the Atlantic provinces that benefit from this decision, have collectively sent a letter to the federal government, calling on it to extend the carbon tax exemption to all forms of home heating, with the exception of Manitoba.

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all

Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

(8) Provincial leadership in other jurisdictions have already committed to removing the federal carbon tax from home heating bills.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to remove the federal carbon tax on home heating bills for all Manitobans to provide them much-needed relief.

This petition is signed by Luke Friesen, Jonathan Nicholas, Tony Doornik and many other fine Manitobans, Honourable Speaker.

### **Breast Screening**

**Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

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

Due to—sorry.

(1) Due to the evolving scientific evidence, the Canadian Cancer Society is now urging all provinces and territories to lower the starting age for breast screening to 40.

(2) Based off 2023 treatment standards, it is estimated that screening women annually for breast cancer starting at age 40 will save the Canadian health-care system \$460 million annually.

(3) After non-melanoma skin cancers, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Canadian women. One in eight Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime, and one in 36 will die from it. This is 30,500 diagnoses and 5,500 deaths every year, and 84 diagnoses and 15 deaths every day.

(4) Early detection of breast cancer will lead to better outcomes in patients, with better odds of survival and less severe cases. Women in their 40s who have access to mammograms have a 44 per cent lower mortality rate from breast cancer than those who don't receive screening.

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered the breast cancer screening age or announced their intention to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already commenced the work of expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists into their public health-care system.

(6) Manitoba is currently behind the rest of the country and has no formal plan to increase its screening capacity or lower the breast cancer screening age; and

(7) Lowering the breast cancer screening age to 40 in Manitoba will reduce long-term costs to the health-care system because cancers that are caught earlier are typically less complicated to treat.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately put forward a plan to increase breast cancer screening capacity and lower the breast cancer screening age to 40.

This petition is signed by Lori Miller, Mario Ryden, Cheryl Foster and many, many other fine Manitobans.

### **Introduction of Guests**

**The Speaker:** Before recognizing any other members to speak, some guests have just recently joined us in the gallery. In fact, they're still joining us in the gallery.

I would want to call all members' attention to the public gallery, where we have with us 20 staff members from the Office of the Auditor General of Manitoba.

Welcome.

### **MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility**

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

The background of this petition is as follows:

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

*MLA Robert Loiselle, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

\* (14:50)

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This is signed by Brenda Moorhouse, Jim Moorhouse, Danny Smart and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

### **Breast Screening**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Due to evolving scientific evidence, the Canadian Cancer Society is now urging all provinces

and territories to lower the starting age for breast screening to 40.

(2) Based off 2023 treatment standards, it is estimated that screening women annually for breast cancer starting at age 40 will save the Canadian health-care system \$460 million annually.

(3) After non-melanoma skin cancers, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Canadian women. One in eight Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime, and one in 36 will die from it. This is 30,500 diagnoses and 5,500 deaths every year, and 84 diagnoses and 15 deaths every day.

(4) Early detection of breast cancer will lead to better outcomes in patients, with better odds of survival and less severe cases. Women in their 40s who have access to mammograms have a 44 per cent lower mortality rate from breast cancer than those who don't receive screening.

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered the breast cancer screening age, or announced their intention to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already commenced the work of expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists into their public health-care system.

(6) Manitoba is currently behind the rest of the country and has no formal plan to increase its screening capacity or lower the breast cancer screening age.

(7) Lowering the breast cancer screening age to 40 in Manitoba will reduce long-term costs to the health-care system because cancers that are caught earlier are typically less complicated to treat.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately put forward a plan to increase breast cancer screening capacity and lower the breast cancer screening age to 40.

This petition is signed by Vicky Marks, Doug Marks, Shannon Berndson and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Provincial Trunk Highway 34**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

Provincial Trunk Highway 34, PTH 34, is a two-lane provincial primary highway that runs from the

US border where it meets with North Dakota 20, or ND 20, to PTH 16 at the town of Gladstone.

PTH 34 runs north-south in the south-central region of the province. It is the main highway for the towns of Crystal City, Pilot Mound and Holland, serving as a main corridor for semi-trailers, farm equipment, daily drivers and local school bus routes.

A new bridge is currently being constructed over the Assiniboine River at the PTH 34 north of Holland in the RM of Victoria. The bridge serves as an important north-south link over the Assiniboine—where am I?—River between the Trans-Canada Highway and PTH 2.

The deterioration of PTH 34 has raised major concerns due to its narrow shoulders and numerous deep potholes that pose serious safety risks, considering farmers often need to use the highway to transport heavy equipment.

Construction of a new bridge in accordance current design codes and the RTAC standard located on PTH 34 crossing the Assiniboine River will support trade and commerce and improve public safety in the area, and also accommodate flood events in the Assiniboine River.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to address the conditions of Provincial Trunk Highway 34, making the necessary upgrades to RTAC standard and to resurface the road once the new bridge has been completed.

This petition has been signed by Tammy Thompson, Joel Goertzen, James Krywail and many other Manitobans.

Thank you.

### **Medical Assistance in Dying**

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

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance; and

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

\* (15:00)

This petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

### **Teacher Certification**

**Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Ensuring that teachers have a robust background in the subject they teach is essential for maintaining high-quality education and fostering

well-rounded learning experiences for all Manitoba students.

(2) The recent amendment to the Province of Manitoba, to the teaching certificate and qualifications regulations under The Education Administration Act, have—sorry—significantly lowered the standards for subject area expertise requiring for teacher certification.

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

(4) Specifically, the amendments removed: senior years credit requirements in an approved teachable major or minor; early/middle years credit requirements for an approved teachable major or minor; and biological—or biological science, English or French and history and/or geography.

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the teaching certificates and qualifications regulation that weaken subject area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early/middle years requirements which are essential to ensuring teachers have a strong knowledge in core subject areas.

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

This petition was signed by Isabel Sander, Graham Giesbrecht, Jake [*phonetic*] Santos and many, many other Manitobans.

**The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle):** The member for Dawson Trail.

**An Honourable Member:** Honourable Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle):** Sorry, my apology. The member for Spruce Woods.

**Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

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

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

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the teaching certificates and qualifications regulation under the Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject area expertise required for teacher certification.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the teaching certificates and qualifications regulation that weakened subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early/middle years requirements, which are in—essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas.

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

This petition has been signed by David Brinkman and many other fine Manitobans.

**The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle):** Order.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle):** Before we continue, I would like to recognize guests of the Honourable Minister of the Environment and Climate Change (MLA Schmidt), Minister Smith [*phonetic*]-Schmidt. We have the Land Guardians from the Seal River Watershed, if they could please stand.

We have Jordan Stensgard, Chaz Collier, Trevin Baker, Linda Inglis, Shakayla Antsanen, Jina Cook and Sadie Dumas.

Welcome.

### Teacher Certification

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

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

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

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the teaching certificate and qualifications regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teacher certification.

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

\* (15:10)

(4) Specifically, the amendments removed senior years credit requirements in an approved, teachable major and minor; early/middle years credit requirements in an approved, teachable major and minor; and early/middle years credit requirements for specific

subjects, including math, physical or biological science, English or French, and history and/or geography.

(5) Key stakeholders, such as parents, post-secondary educators outside the facilities of education and business partners were not consulted about these changes. The removal of subject-specific requirements undermines the educational quality in Manitoba schools by permitting teachers to enter the classroom without sufficient training in core academic areas, thereby compromising the education that Manitoba students receive.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the teaching certificates and qualifications regulation that weaken subject area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early/middle years requirements, which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas.

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

This petition is signed by many, many Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

### FortWhyte Alive

**Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The community of Fort Whyte has over 22,000 residents, and the RM of Macdonald has over 8,000 residents, many of them using McGillivray road and PTH 3 as a means of transportation or commute to and from the city of Winnipeg. PTH 3 is a major traffic corridor that services many communities, including Oak Bluff, Sanford, Brunkild, Carman, Morden, Manitou and Killarney, to name a few.

(2) Thousands of vehicles travel down McGillivray and PTH 3 each day. And with the growing industrial park in this area and connections to the Perimeter Highway, many transport vehicles, large trucks and farm equipment need to travel down these roads each day.

(3) In the last three years under the previous PC provincial government, two new sets of traffic lights were installed along this roadway. Local officials praised these initiatives, stating that it was greatly needed to help reduce traffic incidents.

*The Speaker in the Chair*

(4) FortWhyte Alive, or FWA, is located in this area, which is a reclaimed wildlife preserve, recreation area and environmental education centre in southwest Winnipeg that attracts 100,000 visitors each year. This 660-acre park is located along the migratory path of Canadian geese and is named after the surrounding community of Fort Whyte. A failure to install traffic lights poses a significant safety risk to all those who frequent this area.

(5) FortWhyte Alive has been undergoing renovations along 2505 McGillivray Boulevard across from Brady Road and is to be transformed into a new building called Buffalo Crossing, which will attract many more visitors to the area by vehicle, transit, bicycle and by foot.

(6) The City of Winnipeg has been slated to install a new crosswalk at the intersection of Brady Road and McGillivray Boulevard by the summer of 2024. The previous PC provincial government committed to working with the City and FortWhyte Alive to complete this intersection.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to assist the City of Winnipeg to address serious safety risks for all that frequent the FortWhyte Alive area by twinning and installing a traffic light and a crosswalk at the intersection of McGillivray Boulevard and Brady Road as it transitions into Provincial Trunk Highway No. 3.

This petition is signed by Ashley Rudik [*phonetic*], Leah Engbaek, Guy Lagimodière and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

### **Breast Screening**

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

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

Due to evolving scientific evidence, the Canadian Cancer Society, or the CCS, is now urging all provinces

and territories to lower the starting age for breast screening to 40.

(2) Based off 2023 treatment standards, it is estimated that screening women annually for breast cancer starting at age 40 will save the Canadian health-care system \$460 million annually.

(3) After non-melanoma skin cancers, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Canadian women. One in eight Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime, and one in 36 will die from it. This is 30,500 diagnoses and 5,500 deaths every year, and 84 diagnoses and 15 deaths every day.

(4) Early detection of breast cancer will lead to better outcomes in patients, with better odds of survival and less severe cases. Women in their 40s who have access to mammograms have a 44 per cent lower mortality rate from breast cancer than those who don't receive screening.

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered the breast cancer screening age, or announced their intentions to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already commenced the work of expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists into their public health-care system.

(6) Manitoba is currently behind the rest of the country and has no formal plan to increase its screening capacity or lower the breast cancer screening age; and

(7) Lowering the breast cancer screening age to 40 in Manitoba will reduce long-term costs to the health-care system because cancers that are caught early are typically less complicated to treat.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately put forward a plan to increase breast cancer screening capacity and lower the breast cancer screening age to 40.

\* (15:20)

This petition is signed by Elaine Bradley, Heather Roy and many, many other fine Manitobans.

### **Green Valley School Expansion**

**Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

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

The residents of La Vérendrye and other areas around Manitoba are extremely frustrated and concerned by the provincial government's decision to cancel the school expansion project for Green Valley School in Grunthal.

In 2021, the PC provincial government committed funding to expand Green Valley School for a new gymnasium and classrooms.

The school is so crowded that three mobile classrooms were added to alleviate overcrowding in classrooms.

(4) In order for construction to begin, the school removed all three portable classrooms, leaving Green Valley in further critical state of overcrowding.

(5) As a result of overcrowding, parents are choosing to home-school their children due to safety concerns and the challenges associated with overcrowding.

(6) The current Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning have said they are committed to investing in education.

(7) The concerns of residents of La Vérendrye and the surrounding area are being ignored by the provincial government.

(8) The lack of space in the school is affecting the quality of education and extracurricular activities for the students.

(9) The minister and Premier have a duty to respond to the educational needs of children and youth identified by rural communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to immediately bring back the three portable classrooms to help alleviate the stress and overcrowding classrooms.

(2) To urge the provincial government to reinstate the expansion project for Green Valley School.

This petition is signed by Lorne Funk, Peter Besfoder [*phonetic*], Ron Friesen and many, many other Manitobans.

### **Provincial Road 275**

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Provincial Road 275, PR 275, known as Ditch Road, intersects with PR 588, serving rural areas west of the town of Swan River, and is a heavily used traffic corridor linking Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The highway curves on entry into the town of Swan River and terminates at PTH 10A, the town's north bypass.

(2) The Swan River Valley is a highly productive agricultural area, and PR 275 is used by farmers to move heavy machinery and equipment as well as transport seed, grain and fertilizer to many farmers located within reach of the highway.

(3) It is also frequented by families, people shopping at businesses along the route and school buses to transport rural students into the town of Swan River for school.

(4) Due to only having patchwork and minor repairs, the highway has deteriorated and is covered with large potholes, posing a significant threat to vehicles and passengers.

(5) The roadway and shoulders on PR 275 are extremely narrow, leaving large ditches that have not been properly cared for, which has caused poor drainage. The Town of Swan River and the Municipality of Swan Valley West have inquired with MTI for a drainage solution over the past several years. This ditch is not graded properly and is full of bulrush, willows and cattails.

(6) The solution brought forward is to decrease maximum speed limits on the road and to undertake a full rehabilitation of the highway and to reroute the stream through what is now existing farmland, under CN rail line and the PTH 10A bypass, as well as through several hundred meters of an existing slough into the Swan River.

(7) Numerous meetings held with Swan Valley West and Town of Swan River with the provincial government have not moved forward. It was agreed in 2022 that MTI was to complete a hydraulic investigation of the capacity of the PR 275/2nd Avenue ditch. The municipalities have not seen the results of this investigation.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to address the much-needed rehabilitation of Provincial Road 275 to ensure public safety.



(2) To urge the provincial government to provide the results of the MTI investigation to the town and municipality, and provide immediate funding for the repairs to PR 275.

(3) To urge the provincial government to address drainage issues on PR 275 and create permanent solutions so that flooding can be 'avorted'—voided.

This petition has been signed by Walter Miller, Phyllis Miller and Leroy Penner as well as many, many other Manitobans.

### Breast Screening

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

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

(1) Due to evolving scientific evidence, the Canadian Cancer Society is now urging all provinces and territories to lower the starting age for breast screening to 40.

(2) Based off of 2023 treatment standards, it is estimated that screening women annually for breast cancer starting at the age 40 will save Canadian—pardon me, will save the Canadian health-care system \$460 million annually.

(3) After non-melanoma skin cancers, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Canadian women. One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime, and one in 36 will die from it. This is 30,500 diagnoses and 5,500 deaths every year, and 84 diagnoses and 15 deaths every day.

(4) Early detection of breast cancer will lead to better outcomes in patients, with better odds of survival and less severe cases. Women in their 40s who have access to mammograms have a 44 per cent lower mortality rate from breast cancer than those who don't receive screening.

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered—sorry—the breast cancer screening age, or announced their intentions to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already commenced the work of expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists into their public health-care system.

(6) Manitoba is currently behind the rest of the country and has no formal plan to increase its screening capacity or lower the breast cancer screening age.

(7) Lowering the breast cancer screening age to 40 in Manitoba will reduce long-term costs to the health-care system because cancers that are caught earlier are typically less complicated to treat.

\* (15:30)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately put forward a plan to increase breast cancer screening capacity and lower the breast cancer screening age to 40.

This petition has been signed by Marcia Lamb, Evelyn Van Mackelbergh, Kevin Coté and many, many more Manitobans.

**Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain):** Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

To the legislative of Manitoba, the background of this petition is follows:

(1) Due to evolving scientific evidence, the Canadian Cancer Society is now urging all provinces and territories to lower the starting age of breast screening to 40.

(2) Based on—based off 2023 treatment standards, it is estimated that screening women annually for breast cancer starting at age 40 will save the Canadian health-care system over \$460 million annually; and

(3) After 'non-melanoman' skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Canadian women. One in eight Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime, and one in 36 will die from it. This is a three—30,500 diagnoses and 5,500 deaths every year, and 84 diagnoses and 15 deaths every day.

(4) Early detection of breast cancer will lead to better outcomes in patients, with better odds of survival and less severe cases. Women with their—in their 40s who have access to mammograms have a 44 per cent lower mortality rate from breast cancer than those who do not receive the screening.

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered their breast cancer screenings age, or announced that their intention is to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already committed to the work of expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists into the public health-care system.

(6) Manitoba is currently behind the rest of the country and has no formal plan to increase screening capacity or lower breast cancer screening age; and

(7) Lowering the breast cancer screening age to 40 in Manitoba will reduce long-term costs to the health-care system because cancers that are caught earlier are typically less complicated to treat.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately put forward a plan to increase breast cancer screening capacity and lower the breast cancer screening to age 40.

And this has been signed by Jodi Lee, B. Maxwell and Donna Maxwell and many other Manitobans.

### Medical Assistance in Dying

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering

medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition.

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

This is signed by Helena Kart [*phonetic*], Kate Carerias [*phonetic*] and Helen [*phonetic*] Neufeld and many, many other Manitobans.

**The Speaker:** The honourable member for Swan River. [*interjection*]

Order, please.

### Provincial Road 275

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

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

Provincial Road 275, known as Ditch Road, intersects with PR 585, serving rural areas west of the town of Swan River, and is a heavily used travel corridor linking Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The highway curves on entry into the town of Swan River and terminates at PTH 10A, the town's north bypass.

The Swan River Valley is a highly productive agricultural area, and PR 275 is used by farmers to move heavy machinery and equipment, as well as transport seed, grain and fertilizer to many farmers located within reach of the highway.

It is also frequented by families, people shopping at businesses along the route and school buses to transport rural students into the town of Swan River for school.

Due to only having patchwork and minor repairs, the highway has 'deteriated' and is covered with large potholes, posing a significant threat to vehicles and passengers.

\* (15:40)

The roadway and shoulder of PR 275 are extremely narrow, leaving large ditches that have not been properly cared for, which has caused poor drainage.

The town of Swan River and the municipality of Swan Valley West have required with MTI for a drainage solution over the past several years. This ditch is not graded properly and is full of bulrush, willows and cattails.

The solution brought forward is to decrease maximum speed limits on the road and to undertake a full rehabilitation of the highway and to reroute the stream through what is now existing farmland, under CN rail lines and the PTH 10A bypass, as well as through several hundred metres of an existing slough into the Swan River.

Numerous meetings held with Swan Valley West and the town of Swan River with the provincial government have not moved forward. It was agreed in 2022 that MTI was to complete a hydraulic investigation of the capacity of the PR 275/2nd Avenue ditch. The municipalities have not seen the result of this investigation.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge provincial government to address the much-needed rehabilitation of Provincial Road 275 to ensure public safety.

To urge the provincial government to provide the results of MTI investigation to the town and municipality and provide immediate funding for the repairs of PR 275.

To urge provincial government to address drainage issues on PR 275 and create permanent solutions so that flooding can be avoided.

This has been signed by Dr. Cheryl Dahl, Andy Maxwell, Duane Whyte and many, many other Manitobans.

**The Speaker:** No further petitions?

Then as announced yesterday, the House will now proceed—

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**The Speaker:** As announced yesterday, the House will now proceed to debate the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

## THRONE SPEECH (First Day of Debate)

**The Speaker:** Accordingly, I will now recognize the honourable member for Tuxedo.

**MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo):** I just read moved by—*[interjection]*

Oh. I move, seconded by the member from Seine River, that the following address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, thank Your Honour for the gracious speech addressed to us at this Second Session of the 43rd Legislature of Manitoba.

### *Motion presented.*

**MLA Compton:** It is truly my honour to have the opportunity to respond first to the Throne Speech today.

Over the years that—I've learned that it's helpful to reflect and set intentions at the beginning of pretty much anything, everything; you know, a new job, a new year, a new season, even a new day.

And our government has done that with the Throne Speech yesterday, reflecting on some of the highlights that we have accomplished in our first year. In health care, we have hired over 873 net new health-care workers; 105 institutional safety officers improving health and safety for folks working in hospitals; implementing the school nutrition program; and making life more affordable by cutting the gas tax, which led to Manitoba having the lowest inflation rate across the country.

And then we've also been setting intentions for our second session. So in health care, continuing to recruit, train and retain health-care staff like nurses and doctors and health-care aides, allied health professionals, folks working in the diagnostic imaging. And there's many other initiatives coming forward. We believe in increasing the capacity and the accessibility of health care throughout all of Manitoba.

And there will be more coming for affordability, for our economy. We value the environment, safety in our communities and especially education for our children. They are our future.

But now that we've kind of talked a bit about what our government has done and what our plans are intending for the year, I must say that I'm really humbled to be part of this great team of leaders working hard every day for the people of Manitoba.

And as the newest member here, I'd like to share with the Chamber and Manitobans some of my

personal reflections and intentions for the upcoming session.

So I've been sitting with two questions in particular—maybe two and a half. And the first one being what do I bring to this Legislature and what does my presence do in this space and what do I do now that I'm here?

So the first question, what do I bring? First and foremost is gratitude. Every day that I come into this building, the people's building, I am truly grateful. And to the constituents of Tuxedo, thank you. It means so much to me that you have given me your confidence to represent you, that you've taken a chance on our government and the NDP to—and me as your representative. Thank you.

And I'm also thankful for each and every constituent that's already reached out to me. From across all the political spectrums. I'm meeting with people as often as possible, and you're sharing with me your challenges and your solutions. And I really value and admire your commitment to making our community better and making Manitoba better. So, thank you. Thank you very much.

And my nursing career. I'm grateful for it, as it has prepared me well to step into this arena. From my teachers and colleagues, as well as to mentors and also especially my patients. And I want to give a special shout-out to the St. Boniface Hospital hemodialysis unit, as I know some of my patients over the years have actually watched our question period here in real time. So if anyone's watching, thank you.

And I especially want to thank my family and friends. And I'm really thankful today, I have—and some of my family was able to make it back. You guys have been weathering through. I have family here from the province, as well as a few other provinces. So I'm going to introduce you all.

So in here, I have—oh, there's my ma—I have my mom, Adel Compton. I have my brother, Kris Compton; my sister-in-law, Cher Compton—oh, sorry, that's my cousin Ainsley. Cher is here, she's just taking, I think, a bit of a break from sitting up there for so long. And my nephew Shea Compton as well. I do have another nephew, Hayden, my brother's son.

And my brother's family have travelled all the way from Calgary to be here to support me today in my first speech, so I really want to thank you guys for your whirlwind of a trip and your support.

\* (15:50)

And I do also have my—a couple other folks I'm going to name but they—I see they've had to take a break from being in the gallery: friend Michel Leblanc; my sister-in-law Cher that I mentioned there and Hayden; and my sister Hannah Compton and her partner Kris Dumont; and my two nieces, Lyla and Kendra Dumont. They've been watching—hi, girls—from the caucus room where they have a little bit more room to move. And I also want to acknowledge another friend, Bill Carlson, who's here today.

So thank you, everyone. I really appreciate you being here and supporting me—and your patience.

But there is one person that's not here, who's a special person who I know is here in spirit. That's my father. I didn't think it was going to be this hard. My dad's name is Donald Kenneth Compton. Most people know him as Don. And he was my first debate partner.

Growing up, we were talking politics and world events at our dinner table, and I didn't realize that it wasn't normal to sit around the dinner table for probably about an hour after everyone was done eating, still talking about politics and world events with your family.

And you know, to be fair, some of our conversations would get a bit intense and you know, me raising my voice: Dad, you don't need to be yelling. And my dad would be saying: I'm not yelling, I'm debating. And so, you know, good introduction into coming into a space like this. And to be fair, I'm sure there must have been times that it was probably a bit exhausting debating with a teenager who probably thought that she knew more than he did.

But my conversations with my dad, debating with my dad, there is one particular instance that I think of often. And this was a conversation—well, I actually take forward with me almost every day, particularly when going into difficult conversations, or ones where I know there may be very strong differing opinions.

And so I was in grade 11 or 12 and I don't even remember what we were talking about, but he was on the opposite side and we were debating back and forth and I was getting exacerbated. And finally, my voice started raising, you know, when someone's just not getting your point. And I said: Why are you even debating this? I know you don't even believe in this.

And my dad just kind of shifted, and he was super calm and he looked at me and he said: Well, how else are you going to learn? How are you going to learn to have a discussion with someone who has a different

opinion than you? How do you think it's going to go if you just start yelling at them?

And there it was, my dad being a dad, teaching me a lesson. Because you see, my dad was a problem solver. Everything he did had intention. And to my dad, everything was figure-out-able. He was a visionary. He was a hard worker. He was also a lifelong learner willing to evolve his beliefs based on what he learned and experienced in life.

My dad was one of my first leadership mentors. And as I get talking about leaders and leadership, that basically leads me to the second thing that I feel I bring to this Chamber, is a compassionate leadership style. Compassionate leadership is listening to, is understanding, is empathizing with and supporting others to feel valued, respected and cared for.

I'd like to think this has always been my leadership style. However, I do feel it has evolved. It has gained depth over the years with experience.

As a young person, I thought leader was in the title, was in the position, and so that's what I did. I volunteered, I was on committees. As soon as I was old enough, I was on student council, you know. I was the first grade 10 rep—no, grade 10 director in a position that in my high school, it was only grade 12s that had ever been grade 12 directors.

And I just kept moving, committee after committee, right up into the university and to nursing school, getting involved in student council, on to the national Canadian Nursing Students' Association, up to vice-president. I even had special permission in my program to do a leadership practicum.

I was kind of on a pretty clear official leadership track. And then I got sick.

You see, almost 19 years ago today I was being admitted to HSC hospital emergency. I was very sick. My doctors were so uncertain of my prognosis that when my mom wanted reassurance that it was okay for my brother and sister-in-law in Calgary, recently married that fall and planning to come back at Christmas in about a month, that that was okay, that they could wait until Christmas to come visit me, because I would still be there. And the doctor said, I recommend you have family come and visit as soon as possible. Not the most comforting or reassuring words to get from a doctor.

This event completely changed the trajectory of what I thought my life was going to be. Thankfully, this was not the first time that I had to navigate

through some pretty big pivot points in life. And so began that reflection: What does it actually mean to be a leader? Can I lead without a title? What can I do to support my colleagues and make nursing better from the floor?

And so for the past 19 years I've been exploring what it means to be a leader with no title. And what I've learned is there is significant overlap with compassionate leadership skills and being an excellent nurse, and, I would argue, an excellent helping professional.

And I've also learned about trauma, and I continue to learn about trauma. But the impacts of generational trauma, vicarious trauma, the effects of chronic exposure to violence, PTSD, complex PTSD and so on. Working to become more trauma-informed in my leadership also made me a better nurse.

And I want to share another brief story here with you around a—this conversation of what it means to be a responsible, accountable, growing person, in my opinion. So one day at work—this is nursing, this is in the hemodialysis unit—I was speaking with a co-worker, another nurse, and they were frustrated because this patient hadn't expressed a concern to them upon initial assessment, but then they shared it with the doctor when the doctor came by, and they were very frustrated, like, why didn't they tell me?

And then I asked them, I said, have you proven to them that you are a safe person to share it with? And my co-worker looked at me, confused. But we're nurses. We're one of the most trusted professions. Why wouldn't they just trust me? The stats say they should.

And, yes, the stats do show that nurses are one of the top trusted professionals. However, we also know that there are some not good nurses. There's some not good people in every realm. Thankfully, this has been very rare in my experience, coming across bad nurses. But it is true nonetheless.

And we also know that the medical system was not made to support many types of people, including Indigenous peoples, which in the hemodialysis world, in the renal health world in Manitoba, there's a very high representation of Indigenous people in kidney—in the kidney health world.

And so we also know that there's social privileges impacting the power dynamics at play. And I shared with my colleague that I approach each patient with a goal of demonstrating, of proving that I am a safe nurse. Yes, I introduce myself every time. Yes, I describe to my patient what I'm going to do before I

do it, and then while I'm doing it. Yes, I ask for permission every time I enter their personal space and/or touch their person.

\* (16:00)

It doesn't matter if it was the first time I worked with them or if it was 10 years into our working relationship; every time was the same. And over time, through my actions, I became a leader in my unit, a grounding presence that people would—when I would come in some days, they'd be like, I saw you; I know we're going to be okay.

And I don't pretend to be the most technical—know everything right off the top of my head, but they knew that I was there to work with them, and whatever problem, whatever challenge presented, we were all in it and we were going to figure it out together.

And since my by-election day, I've been asking myself: What does it mean to be a good MLA, a safe MLA? How do I wield my power? Am I sharing my power, or am I wielding my power over? Am I staying curious and keeping an open mind or not? Am I an agent of peace or chaos?

Yes, it's more work. And to take time to listen, to understand, to have difficult conversations of what isn't working and what solutions, what innovative ideas might work—that's all work. But that is the job of this government.

Systems were made for the people by the people, but we also know that these systems were—when these systems were originally created, every citizen of Manitoba was not considered a person, myself included. But together, we can make the systems better.

The previous PC government leadership style was divisive. It did not serve Manitobans; it did not serve Manitoba.

And I'm here today because the great people of Tuxedo spoke loudly with their votes on June 18, when they elected me as their MLA. They believe in the Kinew government. They believe in one Manitoba.

And then, this leads me to the final question that I've been pondering: What do I do now, now that I'm here? Well, I'm going to roll up my sleeves, wash my hands and get to work with my colleagues.

Manitobans have entrusted us to fix health care, and we intend to deliver. I know as a nurse how essential it is for people to have access to quality care when they need it. Having access to care when I needed it saved my life, literally. My experiences have

informed my career as a nurse, and they continue to guide me as an elected official.

Public health care is a fundamental Canadian freedom, and it's building blocks like having a good life in Manitoba that help us strive for that. And our government, again, is making significant progress. We've hired over—the 873 net new health-care workers, we're building capacity in hospitals and in clinics and there's free birth control for all Manitobans.

Accomplishing this all in one year gives me hope for the future for Manitoba's health care. And when we increase access to health care, we're ensuring that no Manitobans are left behind. And that's what makes us a stronger province, and that's what it means to be one Manitoba.

Thank you.

**MLA Billie Cross (Seine River):** One year ago, our NDP government promised to make life better for Manitobans, and we have made tremendous progress. I'm excited for the essential work we will continue to do as your government.

I'm really fortunate to be surrounded by so many amazing people from so many places. I want to take an opportunity to acknowledge some people that work very closely with me. I want to acknowledge my constituency assistants who work tirelessly, incredibly hard, to make sure that the needs of Seine River constituents are met.

So I would like to take an opportunity to thank Kyle McLean, Rachel Pederson, Mariah Meilleur and Michael Prokipchuk, who is no longer with our team but has joined another team in our caucus.

I just, I couldn't do the job I do without them each and every day, and they mean so much to me. Our Throne Speech demonstrated to Manitobans that they have a government who's listening and who understands the importance of taking a responsible and balanced approach to making life better for everyone.

Our government caucus reflects Manitoba's diversity, and we share the same lived experiences as our constituents. We are united by the same hopes, wishes and dreams for our own families and communities. Reflecting on my own family members and their stages of life and varied career paths, I know we are very much the average Manitoba family. And I know that this Throne Speech speaks to every Manitoba family just like mine.

My parents are seniors living on a fixed income, and they're aging in place on their own, in their home.

Life will be more affordable for them in the coming year because we are going to freeze hydro rates, and I know that they have benefited from the gas tax holiday.

Like many of us, we want to make sure we have health care when we need it, and we want to make sure that health care is close to home. So health care is going to—me—a huge priority, the No. 1 priority for our government, making sure that we fix it and that it's there when you need it.

Some of the things that we can—I can highlight that we've done over the past year: we extended hours at primary-care clinics, including the one at Concordia Hospital in east Winnipeg, where my parents live, so people can see a doctor sooner.

Our government is committed to rebuilding health care in this province so that Manitobans can receive the quality care that they need in a timely manner. We set out an ambitious goal to hire 1,000 net new health-care workers in one year, and we're proud to say that we have hired 873 net new health-care workers. That means we've hired 116 doctors, 304 nurses, 290 health-care aides and 61 residents. We are definitely going in the right direction.

To help reduce emergency wait times, we've opened several minor injury and illness clinics across our province: one at Misericordia, ACCESS Winnipeg West and downtown Brandon.

We have added new staffed hospital beds with smart, targeted investments. We are reinvested—we have reinvested funding back into building provincial capacity so that Manitobans can access health care right here in this province.

Our government is making it easier for nurses to return to Manitoba's health-care system by collaboratively updating nursing colleges' regulations. We are keeping new doctors working in Manitoba with the New to Practice Program, pairing new doctors with mentors and support networks.

Last year, on March 26, wear—Purple Day, the Health Sciences Centre Foundation, along with our Minister for Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, announced a new adult epilepsy monitoring unit. This work would not have been possible without Seine River residents Pat and Phil Trottier, their family and the executive 'direcsor' of epilepsy seizure association of Manitoba, Sara Bettess. Thanks to Pat and Phil's dedication, from being on the association's board to advocating for their son Tom, Winnipeg now has services for adults with epilepsy.

After the former government shut down the specialized unit in 2020, Pat and her husband Phil rallied support through their friends, family and then-opposition NDP members to present a petition the former government. I am proud to say that our government reopened that unit, and that Pat and Phil's son Tom is getting the care that he needs right here in Manitoba.

We have made significant progress this past year in rebuilding health care in Manitoba, and rebuilding the trust with those that work on the front lines, but we know our work is far from finished.

My oldest daughter is a high school teacher in west Winnipeg and a mother to a happy and healthy eight-month-old baby boy named Zane and is expecting her second child next March. As teachers, my daughter and I understand that every child deserves to receive a quality education that will help them live a long, healthy and productive life.

\* (16:10)

Our government is working hard to strengthen Manitoba's education system. We hired more than 630 teachers across the province this year, allowing for smaller class sizes and providing students more support in the classroom. We built—we banned cell-phones in the classroom so that students can focus better while they're at school, a welcome ban for many teachers and parents across this province.

Every child in this province deserves to have the resources available to them to be successful and grow up healthy. Last year, I recognized Parc La Salle School for its community-based supports and programming. Parc La Salle is a K-to-4 school in St. Norbert that serves a diverse student population.

Initially, I'd heard rumours of Parc La Salle's incredible Parc's Pantry program that originally served food hampers to nine families a month. Since it began in 2021, the program now offers services to the surrounding community for a pantry pickup event once a month, providing essential supports to over 40 families in our community. This pantry is available to families on an emergency basis at any time, and some rely on weekly access to meet ongoing needs.

Alongside the pantry program, Parc La Salle also offers a breakfast and snack program. They partner with local organizations and condominium complexes in St. Norbert to ensure a consistent food supply. This is why we launched a universally accessible school nutrition program, because no child should ever go hungry in Manitoba. Not only does the nutrition program provide children with nutritious meals and

snacks, but it is also helping make life more affordable for Manitobans.

As a grandmother, I know the difficulty facing parents in finding affordable health care—child care. My daughter was on a wait-list since before her son was even born and only recently found a space for him. Our government has committed to opening 3,500 new child-care spaces across this province at schools, universities and hospitals. And we have kept our promise and will be bringing in \$10-a-day child care starting in December.

No Manitoban should ever have to worry whether they can afford to put food on the table, pay for child care, pay their hydro bill, pay their rent or their mortgage. We are working so hard to improve education, to make life more affordable and to rebuild health care in this province so that every Manitoban can live healthy and prosperous lives.

My husband and youngest daughter are small-business owners in the downtown area, and they are feeling the benefits of our retail crime and violent crime initiatives. The increased police presence has been a welcome and proactive deterrent. They feel safer doing business downtown and so do their customers.

Like other small-business owners that I heard from yesterday, they are looking forward to the changes we are making to stop anti-competitive contracts that have forced Manitobans to tighten their belts just to put food on the table. These anti-competitive contracts made it—make it harder for small businesses like ours to do business and to succeed. Small businesses are the heart and the soul of our economy and of our neighbourhoods.

Earlier this year, my son started a good union job that will ensure that his family has the freedom to live a good life right here in Manitoba. He is comforted in knowing that he will not have to worry that someone will replace him while negotiations are taking place with his employer and that his health and safety as a worker is a priority for our government.

My family is just like yours. We understand that our province faces many challenges. We are united with other Manitobans, and we will not let those challenges divide us from our neighbours and from our communities. My family understands that, in a democratic society, we have responsibilities that go along with those freedoms that we enjoy and that it is a collective responsibility, as Manitobans, to remember

that we are all entitled and equally deserving of the same opportunities and liberties.

I am so proud to be given the responsibility to lead the constituency of Seine River. I commit to being an upstander, and I'm—and will make sure that I use my voice each and every day to rid Manitoba of anti-democratic behaviours that choose to exclude human beings because they simply do not conform to someone else's world view.

We need to respect one another. We need to respect our world views. And we need to respect who we are as human beings. We have a shared future. We are all good people. We are all one people in Manitoba. We are one Manitoba.

As an MLA, I take great pride in the work that I do in my constituency. I take great pride in my constituents, because they are such good people. I work hard each and every day to make sure that I am representing them in the very best light.

Recently, I have been accused of being a bully in this place. And there's just simply no room for bullies. I'm a teacher. I've never seen myself as a bully. I don't want to be a bully. I don't intend to be a bully. I've never spoken in a way that I thought I was being a bully. But if I have, I apologize for that. But I will never stop standing up for Manitobans and stop standing up for doing what's right.

My parents raised me that if you don't have something nice to say, you simply shouldn't say it. And in this day and age with social media and our access to quick text messages or quick chats or quick words that we put on our social media pages, we have to take real responsibility for the words that we put out there. We have to understand that our words have meaning. Our words hurt people; our words uplift people. Our words are words that people hang on because we are the leaders that they have chosen to be in this place.

I don't think there's one Manitoban that if you walked up to them and asked them if they wanted this to be a place of hate or a place where people can't live a good life or have the opportunities to make things better for themselves or just simply to be happy. Nobody wants anyone else to be in a state where they are not meeting their needs on a daily basis. I know everyone in this Chamber would agree with me, regardless of what side we are sitting on.

But I do know that, as a government, you can always count on us. We will always put our best foot forward. We are one Manitoba.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.



**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition):** It gives me great pleasure to stand today and put a few words on the record as Leader of the Official Opposition of a strong, focused caucus ready to continue holding this government to account—especially on the Throne Speech, which, Honourable Speaker, seems to be an exercise in NDP wishful thinking.

But first, Honourable Speaker, I'd like to start off by, of course, welcoming yourself and members to this great building again for the second session of the 43rd parliament here in Manitoba. Of course, Assembly staff, which includes, of course, the clerks; the table officers; our pages, who have joined us as well, and some of which are going to be joining us throughout the next few months, as well; and of course the new interns on both sides of the Chamber.

Of course it's a—it is an absolute privilege to work in the Manitoba Legislative Building. And if you have an opportunity to visit other legislative buildings, not only in Canada and in other provinces of course, but in the United States, I would say that we have the ability to come to work each and every day in probably the most beautiful legislature that I have ever seen. And, of course, the majority of it is built—made up of Tyndall stone, the now provincial stone that we have within this great place.

Of course, I want to thank our caucus members and their families and the colleagues on the other side of the Chamber, as well—on all sides. We have to take the opportunity—I've shared this earlier today—take the opportunity to thank our families, our partners, for supporting us through difficult times. Because to put your name on a ballot definitely—it takes a team effort; it takes a home-team effort. And, you know, you need everybody willing to do this job, because it isn't just the person who is the elected MLA; it is their family, whether that's kids or grandkids or partners or anything, Honourable Speaker. And, of course, it's due to their love and patience.

\* (16:20)

I was going to start off—specifically of course, I'm debating the Throne Speech that was delivered yesterday, but I did want to share a few words and I wanted to do something different than what has happened in the past. And so, coming today to do the response to the throne, I had done, of course, some homework. As a teacher myself, it does take some time to go and reflect and to do some reading and some studying of what other leaders have done in previous years when they're responding to a Throne Speech.

And so I took a look back to 2022, and we had the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew). He was the leader of the NDP back then and today's Premier. And he started off his speech in 2022, the response to the throne, by basically saying that he was honoured to rise in this esteemed Chamber once again to speak to the government's Throne Speech. And I'm quoting. This is from 2022. But he says: Before I do, I want to talk a bit about the MLAs who moved and seconded the reply in address to the throne.

He goes on to say a motion was moved by the member for X and another member—seconded by another member, and then he goes on to say how the government puts up who they think are their up-and-comers to speak first and second. And so this represents what the PCs see as their future, and that's what the Premier said, who is now the Premier, back then in opposition.

But he doesn't just go there. He starts off, you know, sounding like it's going to be a nice gesture, but then he gets into some kind of rant about belittling the mover and the seconder to the Throne Speech, which is telling because of all the allegations that we have heard, serious allegations, towards this Premier. And so when he talks about the Throne Speech, I don't know. There's some things there, Honourable Speaker, that I think Manitobans should be questioning.

So what I'm going to do differently than what the Premier (Mr. Kinew) did when he was an opposition leader, I'm going to say thank you and congratulations to the MLA for Tuxedo. I listened to her speech. It was heartfelt. She talked about her experience in the nursing profession and how she was going to bring those skills forward as the MLA for Tuxedo, and I applaud her for doing that.

Then also, of course, we just heard from the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) bring forward their speech, and I want to say congratulations to the MLA for Seine River for being chosen to second the second Throne Speech of the new Kinew government, and also congratulate them on their position of caucus whip.

And so to all members on all sides of the House, we know that this takes a lot of effort and at times, thicker skin, but I often say, Honourable Speaker, that if your skin gets so thick that things that are said out in the public or on social media or various different things like that start to not hurt, then that's almost time to quit and give it up. Because if that starts to happen, then what ends up happening is then you've changed as an individual, as a person, and I think that's sort of

some of the qualities that brings us here in the first place, our own qualities as an individual.

And so I think I am going to echo a couple words of the member for Seine River (MLA Cross): Treat others as you want to be treated. I do have to disagree with the member for Seine River about the whole—that she—that they think that their Premier (Mr. Kinew) thinks that this is an all Manitoba for a one Manitoba, because we've seen evidence of that, that there's very divisive comments that come from their leader and has been saying things for years and years and years.

Well, let's talk about some last year's highlights, Honourable Speaker, and I believe I've got just a little bit of time so we're going to get into some topics.

So first, let's talk about some good news about the NDP. So they have kept a lot of PC, Progressive Conservative policy from previous governments. You have to give them some credit, Honourable Speaker. They're not creating anything new. They're giving some credit to the Progressive Conservatives, but what they are doing, they're repackaging some of it and trying to spin it as if it's their own.

Such as, they held on to the lowering the taxes and building our economy. So Canadian Press headline, March 10, 2024, and I quote, Manitoba's NDP government is advertising tax cuts passed by the Tories. You can't make this stuff up, Honourable Speaker. That's \$1,400 savings for a two-person family in Manitoba, just under \$700 for single individuals. Huge savings.

The NDP spent about \$200,000 to take credit for tax savings they voted against in Budget 2023. Again, you can't make this stuff up, Honourable Speaker. They're really doing this. As reported in the Winnipeg Free Press, November 18, the eve of this new Throne Speech, south Perimeter Highway upgrades and twinning Trans-Canada to Ontario border launched by the previous PC government, and now supported by the current NDP government.

Well, Honourable Speaker, let me just check this out. Because that east side of the Trans-Canada Highway which they're going to twin to the Ontario border just so happens to fall in you-know-who's constituency. Yes, the MLA for Lac du Bonnet, so my constituency.

And so the Premier's going out announcing this in the Throne Speech, where it's already been announced. Now, don't get me wrong, waited a year to try to hope

that Manitobans are forgetting, but here, May 19, 2023, Manitoba government announces next steps for twinning Trans-Canada Highway from Falcon Lake to Manitoba-Ontario border.

This is after we worked closely with the federal government to upgrade the No. 1 Highway, and as we see from border to border, the No. 1 Highway is been refurbished and getting a lot of work done. So I look forward—again, the Premier often says how he's going to invite me to various ribbon cuttings and things in my constituency—I look forward to that work continuing.

And matter of fact, Honourable Speaker, the premier, the former MLA for Tuxedo, and my good friend who was the minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, the MLA for Turtle Mountain, was there as well to make that announcement.

But again, in this Throne Speech, you know, it's—I guess basically the Throne Speech could have a title. It could be just recycled and reused announcements. But the nice thing is, again, they're talking about various things that we have already done.

As reported by the Free Press, and I quote, construction crews have been working non-stop to complete the \$151-million phase 1 upgrade to the interchange at St. Mary's Road.

And I quote again: Planning is also under way for a new interchange at St. Anne's Road to upgrade it to freeway standards, meaning no stoplights for intersecting traffic or railways, and work continues on the section near McGillivray Boulevard. End quote.

Great. So the NDP are continuing on with PC initiatives. These are very important projects, Honourable Speaker, not only to Winnipeg but to Manitoba's economy, and we're glad to see them being continued. And so we thank everyone for their patience during the construction series.

Now some bad news. We've got some NDP cuts, Honourable Speaker. Seriously, who knew? Winnipeg Free Press headline, go figure, November 18. I quote: Left-wing austerity turns out to be worse. End quote.

\* (16:30)

First NDP budget included a \$100-million tax cut to Interlake flood protection; \$57-million cut to highways budget. But then the Winnipeg Free Press headline, April 9, I quote: Reduced budget for Manitoba highways is not a cut, the minister. I don't know. We

know that math is hard for the NDP; we just didn't quite know it was this difficult. Less money definitely equals a cut.

Honourable Speaker, \$50-million cut to emergency expenditures. As reported by CBC News, May 13: Premier (Mr. Kinew) says provincial budget is just a placeholder. I don't know. Just a placeholder—economics; I'm not sure—that's not even economics 101. It's made up or something's going on there. It's that fiction—it's that fiction that he was—been told he can't write about anymore, but he continues to put it on the line each and every day.

Honourable Speaker, \$6-million cut to our new parks infrastructure. Well, you know that the minister and myself have had a couple discussions and a little bit of debate, but again, as the minister is the de facto mayor of the Whiteshell Provincial Park and all parks, for that fact. I look forward to working with her to make sure that the Whiteshell, Falcon and West Hawk parks are kept up and maintained and that the infrastructure continues to hopefully improve. I don't know how that's going to happen with their \$6-million cuts.

But on top of that, Honourable Speaker, the former minister for Municipal Relations cut \$4 million to the community Green Team funding. I don't know. We, you know, we—on one hand, the Kinew government talks about job security for our youth and believing in our youth. In the other hand, they go ahead and do this to communities that rely on our youth, rely on good paying jobs for our youth to get them through, you know, whether they're going to post-secondary and they need a few months of work, so they get hired on with The Green Team. Well, not this year. Unfortunately, they cut that, and so hopefully they will see fit to reinstating the full funding to The Green Team's grants in the upcoming 2025 budget.

So, Honourable Speaker, many, many more cuts. So we saw also a \$12-million cut to the community development grant assistance, cutting programs like the Building Sustainable Communities in half. They eliminated the arts, culture, sport in community program. Which, I don't know, the Premier often talks how he gets outside the Perimeter, but obviously when he gets outside of the Perimeter, I'm not sure if he's stopping for a Starbucks or something—oh, wait, not stopping for a Starbucks in his own constituency; that closed. But, you know, gets outside of the Perimeter, maybe he needs to be talking to some of these community organizations representing these smaller communities that relied on these grants and programs. But it's unfortunate that the Kinew government comes in

and they're cutting these programs. They inherited a quarter-billion-dollar surplus.

And then, because of their \$3-billion promise over the 2023 election, they went ahead and then overspent. They ballooned it to a deficit of almost \$2-billion, Honourable Speaker, in a non-pandemic year. These are—this is like—numbers like the Selinger government. But at least the Selinger government had something called, like, flooding going on in 2011 and 2014. It's unfortunate.

And what did they do—you know, we talked about flooding; we talked, you know, about water. So they also cut \$20 million to the Manitoba Water Services Board, which supports construction of municipal water and wastewater projects. How do municipalities intend to grow if they don't have a valid partner in the provincial government that's going to help with some of these programs, Honourable Speaker?

We asked some of these questions today in question period, and I'd say PCs won the day. Why? Because we stood up and asked some very serious questions, and the new—and the Kinew government and their ministers stood up and gave nonsensical answers. I don't know. I'm just thinking, Honourable Speaker, that I think that they're just not doing their homework.

And I encourage them, because I know a lot of them are teachers over on that side. Some of my former colleagues, and some of them even say that they're good teachers.

**An Honourable Member:** Fantastic teachers.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Yes. I have no doubt. I've got a lot of time for teachers, of course.

It's unfortunate, though, that those teachers over there, who—some of them are similar vintage to myself, Honourable Speaker. *[interjection]* I don't know. It almost sounds like the member for—

**An Honourable Member:** Kildonan-River East.

**Mr. Ewasko:** —Kildonan-River East wants to get up and speak, but they will have their time, Honourable Speaker, so it's okay.

So what I was going to say was that a lot of the teachers across the way and on our side of the Chamber, as well, had to go through a certain level—a certain amount of credits at our post-secondary institutions to have as teachables.

I don't know if the Premier (Mr. Kinew) decided to listen to any of the teachers over there or not. It

seems like the acting Education Minister took it upon themselves to get rid of that requirement, which—I don't think there's a whole lot of people out there in the public that are very happy. I know there's—a lot of parents and guardians are not happy with that.

I know that there's a lot of teachers like myself, and I'm—oh, I'm seeing some nodding of some heads over there. They're agreeing with me, too, on the NDP side, but they're just not finding their voice, Honourable Speaker, because I think—and I want to get back to the Throne Speech, because there's lots of stuff I have to say, and it looks like I'm running out of time for today. But, you know, it looks like I've got some unlimited time, so it's okay.

So when we talk about finding their voice on the government side, we've seen what's happened when a member in the NDP caucus disagrees with the Premier. We see some serious allegations of assault, toxic environment and bullying to the point where that member actually got expelled from their caucus.

And you know what, Honourable Speaker, you know what we're doing on our side of the House—the PC-team side of the House? We're actually making room for that member to have an office as opposed to what's happened in the past when there's been a member that has left a caucus. It's been the obligation of the team that actually kicked the person out of their caucus to create an office space. But no, what we're doing is we're actually giving the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv) one of our offices.

So, Honourable Speaker, it's just mind-boggling. And you know what, we'll let the hundreds of Manitobans watching this afternoon take a look back into Hansard and watch the video on YouTube about the matter of privilege that is under advisement. So I'm not going to speak about that. But that was outlaid—laid out yesterday from the member for Springfield-Ritchot (Mr. Schuler) on YouTube, if you care to check that out.

So biggest surprise on the NDP cuts was, of course, the one near and dear to my heart and near and dear to many of the members opposite—was the cuts to education, Honourable Speaker. We've already talked about the cuts to criteria that teachers need to do, but we're talking a hundred-million-dollar cut to school capital.

Under our government, school divisions in the province saw the largest increase to school divisions in over 40 years.

**An Honourable Member:** Some might say astronomical.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Some might say astronomical.

And, Honourable Speaker—so what did school divisions get from the NDP government full of some teachers, educators? They get a hundred-million-dollar cut to their capital, which delays school expansions and upgrades across this province, which is only going to cost the Province more to build later. Unless, of course, you're the Premier, the MLA for Fort Rouge, who thinks that by delaying projects, it's actually going to cost less, but I will wait and see.

\* (16:40)

We will wait and see. Because he has reannounced the Progressive Conservative announcement on PCHs. Whoa. Hold it. I apologize, Honourable Speaker. I added an S there. He's reannounced the building of the Lac du Bonnet personal-care home, which, again, is near and dear to my heart. He's reannounced that, and they're saying, you're welcome. Well, okay, you know what, hey, thank you, I guess. Thank you for reannouncing the Progressive Conservatives' plan to build a personal-care home. But here's what the Premier put on the record, and we will wait; time will tell.

So the budget for the 90-bed personal-care home in Lac du Bonnet prior to the NDP's cut of it and then reannouncing, was somewhere between 70 to 80 million dollars, knowing that if it waited 'til 2024, with the new building codes, et cetera, would only increase prices. But you know what the Premier's done? He's gone and doubled down. He's put it on the record multiple times that that personal-care home's only going to cost \$66.4 million. You know what? We'll wait and see. But at the same time, I'm encouraged and thrilled that he's also put it on the record that I'm going to be invited to the ribbon cutting of the Lac du Bonnet personal-care home. So that's good, and I can hardly wait for the day.

So, you know what the thing is though, Honourable Speaker? We just got to make sure that the—that a shovel or a skid steer or a high hoe, or something, gets working. He's promised before the end of this year. He announced it back in February. He reannounced it back in February. We would've had quite a bit of it done already if he would've just let it keep going. And we could've both still attended the ribbon cutting, but I look forward to that.

So what else did he cut to education? Well, nine schools with daycares, a new classroom and child-care spaces for families in Winnipeg, Brandon, West St. Paul, Neepawa and Ste. Anne that should be under construction right now and finished in 2027. And I know that the Education Minister and the Acting Education Minister are both listening attentively to this speech, and so we'll look forward to hearing what their plans actually are.

And I—and you know what, Honourable Speaker, even more so? I think parents and guardians, school trustees, school boards, Manitobans, are waiting to hear those plans as well because we're not hearing much in the Throne Speech, except for, of course, a child-care centre in the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) own constituency. I'm not sure if they're going to put it in the same spot as the Starbucks that's closed down, but we look forward to that as well because the space, I believe, is available. I haven't driven by lately, but.

So we have trustees, parents, department officials that put a whole lot of time and work into planning of those new schools with the department. I have to give a big shout-out to the Manitoba Department of Education and the staff that work within there, and some staff that is—was either forced to leave or whatever else under this NDP government. But they put a lot of time and effort into making sure that we were getting those schools and additional schools. Keep in mind that there's 14 other schools that, again, the acting minister stands up on a daily basis and tries to pat themselves on the back, but technically, those are all PC initiatives as well.

So today, acting NDP Education Minister belittles those department officials', trustees' and parents' efforts and they say that the plans—she says that the plans were drawn on the backs of napkins. Now, Honourable Speaker, I'm not here to burn any bridges because I also know that the Acting Education Minister, who is not actually a teacher by profession—and I know that some of the people who are sitting—waiting to be potentially Education Minister, good teachers in their own right.

You know, I don't want this to burn any bridges with the Acting Education Minister because, as I said, she's the de facto mayor of the provincial parks, and I wouldn't want them to take any retribution out to the good people who don't only live in the Lac du Bonnet constituency, but live all across this great province of ours who use the parks as a seasonal home, of course.

Well, we know in Education there's been some stuff in the news and there's been the odd video that's gone viral, which is pretty cool, but not cool for the reasoning. We know that the new Deputy Minister of Education, unfortunately, was going around the province—and I have to give him credit—being truthful with Manitobans and saying, and I quote, that education was not among the top five priorities of this government. End quote.

And you know what, Honourable Speaker? The new Throne Speech does not inspire confidence. Education has not been moved up the NDP priority list.

More bad news: NDP taxes in the Throne Speech. While advertising PC tax cuts and running a victory lap claiming credit, the NDP was distracting Manitobans from significant NDP tax increases, clawing back any savings.

So they raised education property taxes by the tune of \$150 million while allowing some school divisions to raise school taxes by as much as 17 per cent to make up for the hundred-million-dollar shortfall that they've cut to education.

**An Honourable Member:** There's only one taxpayer.

**Mr. Ewasko:** There's only one taxpayer, Honourable Speaker.

All property owners will be paying more taxes under this NDP's new property tax. Oh, and I see one of the teachers that—thinking it's not. Okay. I'm just—I'm marking this down in my head, so we'll have a chat once we see the taxes go up like crazy.

Manitobans who own a family cottage or a second home will be paying twice as much school tax when the NDP eliminate rebates entirely in 2025. The NDP have also raised taxes on small businesses by \$2.5 million by eliminating sales tax commissions.

Now, we're not talking about a whole lot of money, but it still takes little effort, still takes person power—see what I did there? Person power, to make sure that they're bringing in the PST, they're putting it into a spreadsheet or some form of QuickBooks or something like that, whatever, and then giving it to the provincial government, saying, here's the money we've collected on your behalf.

And what has this NDP government done? They've gone and they've nickelled and dimed—I see the Finance Minister sitting there nodding his head too.

Right? I don't know if he's proud. I don't think he's proud of that. I really don't. But I think he had to be the messenger, unfortunately.

They took away that little bit of commission that those businesses were able to hold back for doing all that paperwork. It's unfortunate, but this is nothing new with you-know-who, the MLA for Fort Rouge and the Kinew government. This move has been strongly criticized by the CFIB, which is Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which says this was done without consultation with businesses.

But yet, that's another thing. With this Throne Speech, which is the second one of the Kinew government, besides a lot of the recycled and trying to take credit for PC initiatives, they then also doubled down on seven or eight additional committees.

So you'd think in seven and a half years of being in opposition, and when it was their turn to be in government—which again, keep in mind, Honourable Speaker, we lost government. They did not win it. And I think the level of arrogance continues to shine through on the NDP benches, and we are going to make sure that, come the end of April 2025, we are going to elect as a leader of our Progressive Conservative team not only the next leader of our team, but the next premier for the election of 2027, or if not earlier.

So what else has the NDP done? The short-sightedness. The NDP has also raised income taxes by at least \$14 million by eliminating the basic personal exemption. So keep in mind, the Progressive Conservatives increased the basic personal exemption by roughly \$6,000, which means that you Manitobans, each and every Manitoban, roughly about \$70, \$75 every couple weeks in your pocket.

The NDP weren't overly happy with that, so what they're doing is, they're taking away that basic personal exemption on anyone making \$200,000 or more. They're going to penalize those people who are making more money.

\*(16:50)

**An Honourable Member:** Doctors.

**Mr. Ewasko:** So—thank you. I've got some of my wonderful colleagues there helping me out here a little bit as well.

So we're trying to recruit and retain doctors. Well, I don't know too many doctors that make under \$200,000, so why would the Finance Minister, unless he's—you know, like I said, I'm pretty sure that he's just delivering the message for his Premier (Mr. Kinew). But you never know. Hopefully, he can stand up and have a voice in that Cabinet. It's unbelievable that they would punish those people for, again, like I said, 70, 75 dollars every couple weeks. This is unprecedented in Canada.

Well, the NDP have refused to answer questions about how many Manitobans are affected by this tax grab and how much the government will actually be collecting. But again, it seems like this Finance Minister is taking a lesson from one of his former mentors in Greg Selinger's government where they had two sets of books, one that they'd show and then one that they'd be creating in some kind of pencil or invisible ink, Honourable Speaker—

**An Honourable Member:** On the back of a napkin.

**Mr. Ewasko:** On the back of a napkin. Exactly.

So we know, Honourable Speaker, that there's lots of things to say and just so few minutes to talk. But we talk about that the NDP are not as advertised; I think Manitobans are starting to realize that. I think the first year is a little bit of honeymoon set-up was happening there. And so we take a look to see that Manitobans are waking up to the fact that this NDP government, again, is more—and specifically, this Premier—is more showman than statesman, because we've seen that today as well, some behaviours unbecoming of a premier. And we've already talked in the past, but this will continue to come up about the toxic environment in the NDP caucus, the dysfunctional environment and the serious allegations of assaults.

More Manitobans are asking themselves whether they are better off than they were a year ago under the strong, stable leadership of the Progressive Conservatives. Crime is rampant; hospital wait times are growing longer; unemployment has risen to almost 6 per cent—6 per cent—and what does this Premier say? Nothing to see here. He's looking in those—what did the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle) say—rose-coloured glasses. He's looking in those rose-coloured glasses.

Families are putting food back on the shelf at the grocery store because meat and vegetable prices are shooting through the roof, Honourable Speaker. This is not a laughing matter, as some members across the way are giggling.

Our team continues to advocate for those Manitobans. And what does this Premier continue to do, and we will continue to point it out. The Premier continues to pick winners and losers, Honourable Speaker. We see this on a day-to-day basis, and we will continue—the strong Progressive Conservative team will continue to point that out to Manitobans because Manitobans are waking up to the fact that, again, this NDP government are not as advertised.

So, again, as Leader of the Official Opposition, it's been an honour to lead this team and provide my response to the Throne Speech. Our responsibility of members of the Assembly is to leave the next generation of Manitoba families and businesses better off tomorrow than they are today. On this side of the House, we intend to hold the NDP government accountable for their decisions and the way they intend to leave our next generation. *[interjection]* And, again, I hear a level of arrogance coming from the government side.

What we saw from the NDP in the 2023 election—what we heard again from them yesterday in the Throne Speech is more new and creative ways in which the NDP plan to raise taxes, drive up government spending and inflation and make life more unaffordable for Manitobans. And the NDP, however, continues to dodge, deflect and deny accountability and they refuse to answer any of the serious questions Manitobans have of their government.

We know that it's the same old Greg Selinger tax and spend policies, because Greg Selinger was the mentor to this Premier (Mr. Kinew), the MLA for Fort Rouge. Which, unfortunately, as we saw many videos around that 2016 election, there was a—big pats on the back from the then-premier prior to the 2016 election.

And I think, unfortunately, shortly thereafter, it wasn't pats on the back that he was feeling. It was pats on the back, but it was a little bit of a knife in the back. And is unfortunate—it was unfortunate. That was unbecoming of the star candidate in the—for the NDP in the 2016 election.

We know that the NDP has a very aggressive spending plan and during the election they promised more than \$3 billion in new spending with, again, no plan to pay for it. Now is nothing new with the NDP governments.

In 2011, when I was first elected by the great people of the Lac du Bonnet constituency, we heard the NDP go door to door that they weren't going to

raise the PST, not by anything, because that was going to be—that was ridiculous.

Well, what did we see? We saw in 2012 they expanded the PST and then raised the PST by a point.

I see the Finance Minister, he's nodding his head, because he knows that's what happened. And so I'm hoping that this Finance Minister isn't going to be doing the same and doing the doublespeak with Manitobans.

But we've seen that their promises are going to be coming to roost and I think that it's going to fall on the backs of not only Manitobans today, but it's going to be definite tax burden, debt burden for generations to come, if, again, Manitobans—and we're going to work on this to make sure Manitobans are wide awake and seeing what type of effects this NDP government are going to do, not only to them, but to their kids and grandkids for generations to come.

So with that, Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Roblin,

That the motion be amended by adding at the end of the following words—sorry, I am reading it verbatim, but I'll have to start again.

I move, seconded by the MLA for Roblin,

That the motion be amended by adding the following words—*[interjection]* Okay, we'll be okay. Third time's a charm, Honourable Speaker.

Moved by myself, I move, seconded by the MLA for Roblin,

*THAT the motion be amended by adding at the end the following words:—there we go.*

But this House regrets that the provincial government has failed to follow through on its commitments to the people of Manitoba, demonstrating a lack of credibility, integrity and competence in basic governance, and has thus neglected the needs of Manitobans.

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

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

\* (17:00)

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

It has been moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Ewasko), seconded by the honourable member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook),

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

But this House regrets that the provincial government has failed to follow through on its commitments to the people of Manitoba, demonstrating a lack of credibility, integrity and competence in basic

governance, and has thus neglected the needs of Manitobans.

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

The motion is in order.

So when this matter is again before the House, the debate remains open.

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



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 20, 2024

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