

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

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authority of
The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	Ind.
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SELINGER, Greg	St. Boniface	NDP
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Please be seated. Good afternoon, everybody.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): I rise on a matter of privilege.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Assiniboia, on a matter of privilege.

Mr. Fletcher: Madam Speaker, towards the end of yesterday's sitting, a sequence of events came forward which I'd like to make you aware of.

There was a motion to adjourn debate brought forward by the government and this prevented independent MLAs like myself or the member from Maples from speaking to this bill. This apparently has to do with a ambiguous and—sort of rotation that came up with—between the House leaders in the summer, which Mohinder and I had nothing to do with—oh, pardon me, the member from The Maples and I had nothing to do with. And it doesn't—and the documentation that I have seen makes no distinction between any political parties that may exist, and now we have five independent members in this House, but, Madam Speaker, it goes further than that.

Yesterday, when the point of order—or when the government brought forward their motion, I rose on a point of order because I had highlighted the—and indicated quite clearly that I wanted to speak, and that was acknowledged by the Deputy Speaker, and then he continued on. And then I rose on a matter of privilege, and the Deputy Speaker continued on, and I quote, you can't interrupt in the middle of a question. We're in the midst of a process. Well, it's a process that—the process can't trump a matter of

privilege. A matter of privilege has to be dealt with. Now, the fact that—everything after that point should be ruled out of order. And to be specific, Madam Speaker, rule 36(1) states when a matter of privilege arises, it shall be taken into consideration immediately, except during oral questions.

Madam Speaker, this issue arises from what I will—well, quite frankly, the Manitoba Legislature is violating sections 2(b) of the Canadian Charter of Rights, 2(b), the Charter, freedom of expression, and section 3, democratic rights of constituents.

Having said that, I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Saran), that the Rules Committee be convened at an agreed time where all independent members who wish to attend and participate—be constituted to make recommendations to improve the rules of the Manitoba Legislature and standing committees and the vote from yesterday, December 5th, to adjourn debate on Bill 8 be ruled out of order as rule 36(1) states when a matter of privilege arises, it shall be taken into consideration immediately, except during oral questions.

And, Madam Speaker, this is obviously the first opportunity I have had to bring it up, since it was the last thing was—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The member has made his motion and there is to be no further dialogue after the motion has been made.

Are there any members wishing to speak to this matter of privilege?

I would indicate, then, to the—to speak to this issue where the member is raising a matter of privilege, I would indicate yesterday that what had happened at the end of the day, and the member referred to it as an ambiguous rule, I would point out to the member that debate was only being adjourned for the day; it was not being adjourned on a lasting basis. It is a very typical rule. We've had it in this House for decades, where members, many, many times, adjourn debate, and debate is adjourned for just that period of time. The member did not lose any speaking right on this bill because that bill will come forward again and the member will have ample time to speak to it.

So I would indicate, too, that the honourable member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) is reflecting on the authority of the Speaker. The member has previously raised a number of points of order and matters of privilege on the topic of the rights of independent members in the House. On October 11th, 2017, he raised two points of order on this topic, and on October 24th, 2017, he raised a matter of privilege in a similar vein. In each instance, the member claimed that independent members were not being allowed to participate fully in debates in this House. On each of those occasions I have informed the member that, following the rules and practices of this Assembly, House arrangements, such as the order of questions in question period and the rotation of speakers in debate, are matters governed by agreements between the House leaders. The current arrangements in the House are, in fact, the result of exactly that process and as such are valid and enforceable by the Speaker.

I would note for the member's reference Beauchesne's citation 77, and I quote: Freedom of speech does not mean that members have an unlimited or unrestrained right to speak on every issue. The rules of the House impose limits on the participation of members and it is the duty of the Speaker to restrain those who abuse the rules. End quote.

* (13:40)

Further, O'Brien and Bosc note on page 100 of House of Commons Procedure and Practice that, a, and I quote, "limitation on the freedom of speech of Members is provided by the authority of the Speaker under the Standing Orders to preserve order and decorum, and when necessary to order a Member to resume his or her seat if engaged in irrelevance or repetition in debate, or to name a Member for disregarding the authority of the Chair and order him or her to withdraw." End quote.

I am aware that the member is unsatisfied with the current arrangements governing question period and debates in the House. I am also aware that the member has been advised more than once that if he wishes to see any of these arrangements altered he should put his concerns in writing to the House leaders and offer an alternative proposal.

Accordingly, I am instructing the honourable member for Assiniboia to cease raising this matter in the House, either as a point of order or a matter of privilege, as he has been given ample instruction and guidance on this topic.

I would also advise the member that he should not be using points of order to ask procedural questions of the Speaker. If the member has procedural questions, he should be consulting our table officers instead of raising such matters in the House.

If the member persists in raising this topic here he will be disregarding the authority of the Chair, a circumstance on which I would be obliged to act as Speaker of this House.

And I would indicate that what the member stated was not a prima facie case of privilege.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 5—The Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Amendment Act

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Bill 5, The Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, our government is committed to greater accountability and transparency. By introducing amendments to The Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Amendment Act, our government is furthering the principles of an open government.

Bill 5 enhances identity protection for whistleblowers and strengthens the investigative powers of the Ombudsman, and I am pleased to present the bill to the House today.

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

Bill 6—The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Crown Services, that Bill 6, The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, our government is committed to improving the disclosure of public sector compensation in this province. Bill 6 improves the public's accessibility and enhances the relevancy of these reports.

The amendments also provide greater transparency by requiring the disclosure of employment contracts and severance payouts to political staff on a timely basis.

I am pleased to present this bill to the House today.

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

Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I rise today to table the statement as to all the Manitoba government entities fidelity bonds.

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): I wish to table the following reports. The University of Manitoba Annual Financial Report for 2017; the Brandon University financial report, year ended March 31st, 2017; The University of Winnipeg financial report for the year ending March 31st, 2017; the Red River College and applied arts, technology annual financial report for '16-17; financial statements for the university of St. Boniface for the same year; and the annual report for University College of the North for 2016-2017; and the Assiniboine Community College annual report for 2016-2017.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister for Sustainable Development, and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to honour the memory of all the women who have died as a result of violence in our province, our country and around the world. Today we commemorate Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women.

On this day 28 years ago, 14 young female engineering students were murdered at

l'École polytechnique in Montreal. Many of us can remember exactly where we were when we heard the horrible news that these young students had been killed and that they were targeted simply because they were women and because they were feminists. Our nation still grieves for the victims, their families, friends and communities.

Earlier this morning, I attended the annual sunrise memorial in the Rotunda here at the Manitoba Legislative Building, hosted by the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, and I thank all members of this Legislative Assembly who joined me. It was an opportunity to reflect on the tragedy of the Montreal massacre and to also remember the Manitoba women whose lives have been tragically ended by acts of violence. Sadly, this year we commemorated 10 women who died as a result of violence in our province: six from 2017 and then another four not reported by the media or due to ongoing investigations in 2016.

And sadly, as the issue of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls is never far from our minds, we recognize the heartache the families feel, the mothers, the fathers, sisters, brothers, aunties, cousins and loved ones. Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to spend some time listening to the heartbreaking testimony as the national inquiry made its stop here in Winnipeg at the Delta Hotel, and it broke my heart listening to the stories of these families. I honour the courage and the bravery of all these families.

While much has changed since that day in 1989, there is still much to be done. It is our collective responsibility as Manitobans to continue pushing ahead, and I encourage everyone to speak out and join the conversation online using the hashtags seekhelp and speakout to talk about how we can eliminate gender-based violence in all of our communities.

Madam Speaker, I would also ask that following the statements by my colleagues, that we observe a moment of silence to honour the women who lost their lives to violence 28 years ago in Montreal, and to remember and honour the 10 Manitoba women and girls, and to remember the lives of Manitoba's missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and their families.

Thank you.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Today, we remember the events taking place December 6, 1989,

28 years ago, during the Montreal massacre, where a gunman opened fire on a group of female engineering students at École polytechnique in the worst mass shooting of Canadian history.

Fourteen women were murdered when they were separated from their male classmates. They were murdered because they were women.

Since then, December 6 has become a day that recognizes all women who have lost their lives to gender-based violence and a call to action against the persistence of violence against women in our country.

Violence continues to be a daily reality for the women and children of—women and girls of Canada, and as can be witnessed in respect of the ongoing tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, where we have over 1,200. Women continue to be threatened by stalking, domestic abuse and sexual violence on a wide scale. Half of the women over 16 in our country have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence before.

Over the past weeks, we have been able to witness the actions of our communities taking place to stop the perpetuation of gender-based violence against women and girls. The annual 16 days of action against gender violence continues to have events for people to take place in and around Manitoba.

* (13:50)

Madam Speaker, I also just want to finally acknowledge the Minister for Status of Women, Beth Ulrich, who is the executive director for Manitoba Status of Women, and the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council for today's really beautiful sunrise ceremony/memorial, and I also just want to acknowledge all of the members that were in the House that attended today. It was a very special ceremony and I congratulate everybody.

Miigwech.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to speak in response to the minister's statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to respond to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, 28 years ago, Canada was forever changed because 14 women were murdered because they were women.

This morning we gathered for a sunrise ceremony, and I would like to thank the incredibly strong women for sharing.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to remember those who were murdered and their families and also to speak to the strength of women in our community.

Some of the most empowering moments since I have become an MLA have been events put on by groups like Equal Voice. Equal Voice is a group of amazing women full of passion, drive and integrity all working towards equal representation of women in all fields.

I'd like to recognize a few women, including Anita Neville, for breaking down barriers for women in politics; the member for Kewatinook (Ms. Klassen), my amazing colleague, who has gathered the strength to persevere. She truly is one of the strongest women I know, and I'm honoured to share an office with her. And lastly, our own Minister for the Status of Women. I admire the minister in her efforts for women, and she should be proud of the direction that she is taking women.

Madam Speaker, I believe that a piece of ending the violence towards women is empowering them to speak up and honouring their strength. I can't possibly name all the women inside of the Chamber today for the sake of time, but I'd like to ask for leave to include all of us women in Hansard as we are all fighting for women's rights and have a story to tell.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to include those names indicated in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Patricia Chaychuk, Hon. Eileen Clarke, Hon. Cathy Cox, Hon. Myrna Driedger, Ms. Nahanni Fontaine, Ms. Monique Grenier, Mrs. Sarah Guillemard, Ms. Judy Klassen, Ms. Cindy Lamoureux, Ms. Amanda Lathlin, Ms. Flor Marcelino, Mrs. Colleen Mayer, Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte, Mrs. Bernadette Smith, Hon. Rochelle Squires, Hon. Heather Stefanson

Madam Speaker: Is there also leave to have a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

Please rise.

A moment of silence was observed.

Madam Speaker: Further ministerial statements?

The honourable Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade, and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with his statement.

Churchill Wild Receives Tourism Award

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Madam Speaker, last week, Manitoba's very own Churchill Wild received the Transat Sustainable Tourism Award at the 2017 Canadian Tourism Awards gala in Ottawa.

The Sustainable Tourism Award is one of 15 awards presented to the nation's premier tourism businesses and organizations each year. It is awarded to an organization that has made an outstanding contribution to the practice and promotion of sustainable tourism in Canada.

Churchill Wild, owned by Mike and Jeanne Reimer, is the only fly-in remote eco-lodge experience in the world that offers guests the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to walk on the northern tundra with one of the world's largest and most majestic carnivores: the polar bear.

Known globally as a bucket-list experience, one traveller from Germany wrote, and I quote: I have been traveling non-stop for three years around the world, had plenty of beautiful experiences and encounters, but my stay at Nanuk Polar Bear Lodge is the best trip of my life. End of quote.

Mike and Jeanne's efforts to conserve our country's unique natural assets while operating a successful, internationally recognized venture are commendable and truly appreciated. Their commitment to the principles of sustainable tourism help make it possible for not only us but for future generations to appreciate the natural wonders our province has to offer.

On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the dedication and hard work Mike and Jeanne have put into building Churchill Wild into such a successful enterprise.

Congratulations on your Canadian Tourism Award, and we wish you many more years of success.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): On behalf of the NDP caucus, I would like to congratulate all the workers, volunteers and residents of Churchill, Manitoba, for Churchill Wild's reception of the Transat Sustainable Tourism Award at the 2017 Canadian Tourism Awards.

In a time where climate change is threatening Churchill's extraordinary natural habitats more than ever, it is especially important to see industries like tourism work to protect Canada's natural wonders. The northern peoples have always been stewards of the land, and they have helped business and government leaders to recognize the importance of preserving Churchill's beauty. Churchill is one of Manitoba's northern jewels, a unique region of our nation that showcases the diversity of landscape and culture.

This award is a rare spot of brightness for the residents of Churchill, which has struggled to access food, fuel and supplies since the closing of the Hudson's Bay rail line. While OmniTRAX and the federal government bicker in the media, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) of this province has been missing in action. He has refused to take responsibility for the families and seniors in Churchill who are struggling to survive the winter.

Recognizing the economic opportunity of Churchill's tourism industry is important, but we urge the government to think beyond tourism, to stop considering northern Manitoba as just a place to visit. We want real solutions for the railway, and we want a provincial government that goes to bat for the people of Churchill instead of standing on the sidelines.

Throughout this year, the people of Churchill have demonstrated great resilience and strength in the face of adversity. It's that strength that allows the hard-working volunteers and tourism workers to continue to promote Churchill to the world. Their commitment to sustainably growing their town while respecting the environment around them should be commended.

Thank you to Churchill Wild for your dedication. Congratulations and bravo.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I ask leave to speak to the statement of the minister.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to respond to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, on behalf of the members of the Liberal caucus, I'd like to congratulate Churchill Wild and, in particular, Mike and Jeanne Reimer, winners of this year's transit-Transat Sustainable Tourism Award. The award not only recognizes the individual achievements of Churchill Wild, but it also recognizes the unique position that Churchill has as an amazing tourist destination. Churchill Wild founders, Mike and Jeanne Reimer, have created an exciting approach to adventure tourism. From using recycled construction materials when building their lodges to using solar energy to reduce their reliance on diesel, using locally foraged and harvested foods and people-powered activities, they have 'treely' earned this award with a unique and amazing experience.

I urge members of the House and their families to come and pay a visit. You won't be disappointed with the incredible food, the four cozy lodges located at the heart of polar bear country and the unforgettable adventures.

Congratulations again to Churchill Wild and also to the people of Churchill on receiving this most deserving award.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Henry Cook

Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson): Madam Speaker, the northern riding of Thompson is located on Treaty 1 land, traditional Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation-NCN-territory, homeland to the Metis people and home to myself and my constituents.

Prior to the registered trapline system in the 1940s, this area was used predominantly by traditional land user James Spence from NCN, and many of his descendants still live in the North.

Today I want to shed some light on northern pioneer, Cross Lake band member Henry Cook, who was born in Pikwitonei in 1926 and started trapping around Paint Lake at the age of 22.

Henry was a trapper in the area of the great nickel discovery in 1956, where the planned community of Thompson, named after the then-Inco chairperson John F. Thompson, was proposed in 1957 and is now located. After giving up his trapline in this area for the large-scale mining operation that was to come, Henry was instrumental in laying the groundwork for present-day Thompson. He supervised a three-man crew cutting a roadway from

Paint Lake to Mystery Lake, prospected with Hugh S. Fraser, staking claims and cutting lines around Ospawagan Lake, and worked at Inco Exploration.

* (14:00)

Henry spent much of his life working in the bush, and after working for mining and exploration companies throughout central and western Canada and the Northwest Territories, he settled back in the North, helping others by working as a rehabilitation counsellor with the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba. Henry's many contributions as a northern pioneer were recognized at the Thompson 110th year Canada Day celebrations in 1979, where he was formally recognized as Thompson's first resident.

Henry Cook passed away in 2000, leaving behind a legacy that connects past traditions to present-day northern communities, and I would like to ask all members to please join me in welcoming Henry's sons, Malcolm and Jason Cook, who are here today with us in the gallery to help honour his- their father's contributions to northern Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Morberg House

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): On August 17th, 2016, Morberg House on Provencher Boulevard opened for those that found themselves homeless. The house did not happen overnight, but took years, with the vision of Marion Willis, Francis Labossiere and Sandra Delaronde, the founders of St. Boniface Street Links. Street Links volunteers patrol to reach out to the homeless and invite them to Morberg House. The need for Street Links and Morberg House was inspired by the homeless hero, Faron Hall.

Gail Morberg, who, with her husband, founded Calm Air, funded the purchase of Morberg House. Morberg House has a long history of providing help; it was once owned by the Franciscan Sisters, a religious order dedicated to helping the poor and the vulnerable.

À Morberg House, on offre de l'orientation et de l'aide pour trouver un soutien au revenu, des emplois, du traitement de la toxicomanie, de l'aide juridique, et plus encore. La philosophie de Morberg House en est une où les résidents s'appuient les uns les autres

et où ils ont tous un mot à dire sur les services que la maison devrait fournir.

Translation

Morberg House offers counselling and assistance in finding income support, jobs, treatment for drug dependency, legal aid, and more. The philosophy of Morberg House is one whereby the residents support each other and all have a say in the services that the House should provide.

English

Street Links, along with Morberg House, provides the Housing First program to the homeless. Those programs have proven to be successful with only four of the 93 participants having returned to the streets.

If you were to talk with Marion Willis on why Morberg House is a success, she would praise the community for accepting the homeless. She will speak of the individuals and organizations that have helped, organizations like the Catholic Health Corporation and the Archdiocese of St. Boniface. They sponsored a free concert attended by some 800 people who donated over \$12,000 to Street Links. As Morberg House receives no operational funding, it is the generosity of the community that helps to provide the services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

To those with the vision, Mariette DeGagné, president of the board, and all involved at Morberg House and Street Links, thank you for all that you do. Merci. And they're up here in the audience.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Boniface.

Mr. Selinger: Seek leave to put in the Hansard all the names of the founding board members, current board members and the Street Links team.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to include those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Morberg House founding board members: Marion Willis, founder and executive director; Francis Labossière, founding member; Sandra Delaronde, founding member

Morberg House current board members: Mariette DeGagné, board chair; Leo DeGagné, board member; Sister Jo-Ann Duggan, Grey Nuns of Montreal and board member; Claudette Toupin, board member; Aline Caron, board member

Street Links team: Callan Harland, intensive case manager; Amanda, intensive case manager, mental health; Courtney O'Brien, mental health counsellor; Darcy Daniels, lived experience peer support worker; Matthew Thunder, peer support worker; Chris Mitton, lived experience support worker

Christmas Giving

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): December is the time of year our hearts turn to giving. The annual exchange of gifts at Christmastime combined with calls for peace on earth and good will to men mean that even the most Scrooge-like fists loosen a least a little at this time of year.

Manitoba has a well-deserved reputation of being a generous province. More people give to charity in our province than anywhere else in Canada.

In my constituency office, my hard-working, compassionate and capable constituency assistant, Belinda Squance, who recently celebrated a birthday and is here in the gallery—happy birthday, Belinda—well, as I was saying, Belinda and I are collecting donations of baby formula for Atticus McIlraith, along with many other MLAs in this House, and thank you for that. And also, we're collecting Handbags of Hope filled with socks and toiletries for women in need.

I also want to take a minute to tell you about the Kwiatek household in my constituency. For years, the Kwiatek family turned their Transcona home into a stunning Christmas display. But in 2015, Peter Kwiatek lost his wife Pam to cancer. And in his grief, Peter was tempted to give up on the Christmas light tradition, but one of Pam's dying wishes was to collect food for those less fortunate through Winnipeg Harvest.

So I want to invite every one of you here and every Manitoban to join us at 503 Kildare Ave. West on December 15th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in support of Winnipeg Harvest. Be sure to bring a tin for the bin.

And lastly, please remember that while Christmas is a time of joy for many, it isn't that way for everybody. Make an extra effort, especially at this time of year, to reach out to those who might be vulnerable or lonely, to those who don't feel support from family that they should. While we all might be thinking about spending time and—or spending and giving money this season, never forget that spending

time and giving of ourselves can be so much more rewarding.

So, merry Christmas, everybody, and God bless.

Ashley Weber

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I rise today to recognize Ashley Weber, a Kildonan-East Collegiate graduate and exceptional young woman who continues every day to smash any stereotypes about women in the trades. Ashley is a phenom in the art of autobody repair, and her raw talent in painting cars has taken her to competitions locally, nationally and now internationally, allowing her to shine at multiple levels.

Ashley always knew she wanted to paint cars, but her career started in earnest at Kildonan-East Collegiate while attending their autobody technician and automotive painting program. Ashley's teacher, Dan Labossiere, recognized Ashley's talent for car painting and her dedication to perfection. Although she wasn't sure about competing in provincials in grade 11, Dan and other teachers encouraged her and ensured that she was one of the school's candidates who were chosen to go to provincials in her grade 12 year in 2015.

After winning gold provincially and then nationally at skills competitions in 2015 and '16, Ashley qualified to be a member of the WorldSkills Team Canada for 2017. Preparing for worlds, Ashley attended an international competition in Australia this past year in July, where she finished third.

After this strong finish, Ashley travelled across the world to Abu Dhabi in October, where she represented Canada in the international skills competition, competing against people from 25 other countries.

Mr. Labossiere has been with Ashley every step of the way as both her coach and mentor for both—for worlds. His investment and devotion in teaching Ashley, and all students at KEC, is truly admirable.

Ashley is currently working and attending Red River College, where she plans on completing her apprenticeship to receive her Red Seal certification. Since many young women have yet to explore a non-traditional career in trades, Ashley has been a local inspiration.

I'd like the House to recognize, today, Ashley, her proud and supportive parents and welcome her and congratulate her to the Manitoba Legislature.

Rezoning of Former Vimy Arena Site

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): I'd like to thank, again, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) of this province for the opportunity to fully represent the people of Assiniboia.

Last night, there was a very interesting town hall meeting dealing with a rehabilitation centre for the Vimy Arena site in Assiniboia. There was probably 200 people there, similar to a forum I had of—a couple weeks earlier. People are very concerned about the green space, the parkland, the recreational usage of the area.

Madam Speaker, what seems to be happening is, based on a request from the Province, the City is looking at giving the Province the land and thereby exasperating or allowing the rezoning possibility of that space. See, the people of Assiniboia are concerned about that because their families, their houses, their parents, their grandparents have grown up around that green space and they want it to stay a green space. Once gone, it's gone forever.

* (14:10)

And I'd like to commend the people of friends of Sturgeon Creek and the website, our Sturgeon Creek—or savesturgeoncreek.com for putting together a very heartfelt effort to preserve our green space. The people of Assiniboia and St. James and Winnipeg are truly wonderful, and I look forward to going down the toboggan hill sometime in that space.

Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Emergency Medical Services Grandview Station Closure

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): You know, the government here refuses to listen to the thousands and thousands of Manitobans who are telling them to stop the cuts to health care. Just a short while ago when we were in Brandon for the AMM meetings we certainly heard many people across Westman and the Parkland region raising their concern about the scheduled closures of EMS stations across that part of the province.

Now, 18 stations are slated to be closed, but some of the evidence that community members have reviewed doesn't even support the government's rationale that they've trotted out to support this plan.

The station in Grandview, for example, responded to more calls than 62 per cent of all other Prairie Mountain stations from July to September 2017, yet it's still stated to close.

Why is the government ignoring the evidence and closing EMS stations across rural Manitoba?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Well, in fact, Madam Speaker, the evidence, which was provided by the 2013 Reg Toews report, which was commissioned by the former NDP government, and the data which has been updated with the most recent data, points to the fact that there isn't predictable EMS service throughout the entire region of Westman.

Mr. Toews brought forward a well-thought-out report in terms of providing 24-7 EMS support. It has been supported by MGEU. It's been supported by the paramedics. It was even supported by the NDP when they brought forward the report.

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

Mr. Kinew: It does not appear to be supported by the people of Grandview, and when the MLA for Dauphin is showing up, it doesn't appear that he's listening. The Minister of Health does not appear to be listening when these concerns are raised, and it doesn't appear that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) is listening when people in these parts of the province say that an EMS station is an important part of the health care in their community and that health care is, indeed, one of the things which keeps their community together.

I was pleased to run into some friends from Grandview in the hallway on my way up to question period today. They are here asking for the government to listen, to listen to their demands to keep the EMS station open and to reverse course with these harmful cuts.

Now, we know that the evidence has been disproven, but with these residents and representatives of Grandview here with us today, will the minister reverse course and cancel his plans to close the station in Grandview?

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Madam Speaker, I am pleased to serve with a member of—quality of the member for Dauphin (Mr. Michaleski), who raises issues around rural Manitoba every day in our caucus to better his constituency, unlike the Leader of the Opposition,

who just does it periodically in question period when there's somebody in the gallery to speak to.

The member for Dauphin is always working to ensure that his community, that his area, that all of those in western Manitoba have a voice, Madam Speaker, when it comes to issues around health care, and he and others have said clearly there needs to be predictable, there needs to be full time, there needs to be reliable, EMS service.

I would stand with the member for Dauphin any day before I'd stand with the member of—opposite, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: They can keep patting each other on the back, and I'll keep standing up for the people of Manitoba.

What the people of Manitoba are saying is that this government needs to stop its harmful plan for cuts and begin to listen to the residents of—people of Winnipeg, who are opposing the closures of the emergency rooms, those who are going to be impacted by the cancellation of physiotherapy services and the people in Westman and Parkland regions in the province who are saying, hold off and listen to us before you shutter these EMS stations in our regions.

Now, it's—part of the concern is that this could potentially be a slippery slope. There is a concern that if EMS services are withdrawn that, potentially, emergency departments or other health services would be withdrawn thereafter.

So will the Minister of Health assuage—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —these concerns and ensure that the people of Grandview have an EMS station and stop his harmful plan for cuts?

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition should call a caucus meeting, and if he would call a caucus meeting he could speak to his colleagues in the caucus, because they would remind him that under the former government, the NDP, they shut down 20 emergency rooms in rural Manitoba.

Now, they said that they were temporary closures, of course. And when I became the minister, I asked about these closures, and they said, well, one

had been temporarily closed for 17 years, Madam Speaker—temporarily closed for 17 years.

He can stand up and pretend he's a friend of rural Manitoba, but everybody outside rural Manitoba knows that's not the truth, Madam Speaker.

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

**Federal Parental Leave Changes
Request for Support for Bill 211**

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): You know, the birth of a child, the addition of a new member to a family is a very special moment for any parent, and building that bond in those first days and weeks and months after a child is born to a family is a very special time, and, you know, for those of us who see the world in this way, it's a sacred time as well. It's a time to build a connection between a parent and a child.

And that's why we support the move to 18-month parental leave, so that people who want to take a full 18 months of maternity leave or paternity leave after they have a new child born in their family ought to be able to do so, but also ought to ensure that provincial statutes are changed so that they are guaranteed to have a job at the end of this extended EI period.

Will the minister support the immediate passage of Bill 211 so Manitoba families can take advantage of 18 months of parental leave?

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I thank the member for the question.

It's important to recognize that extending the leave does not extend any further additional financial compensation for the leave, and that's important to recognize because many parents are not able to afford that extra six months of leave and they need to get back into the workforce. But it's certainly recognized also that any parents can also speak with their employer. That issue can be dealt with between their—employee and employer. And it's also important to note that this has gone to the Labour Management Review Committee for review.

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

Mr. Kinew: The issue at hand here is choice. Ought new parents have the choice to be able to take advantage of the new 18-month employment

insurance program? And we believe, quite clearly, that yes, Manitoba families should have the choice to be able to take advantage of the full 18 months of EI benefits in Manitoba and to be ensured that there is a job waiting for them at the end of that period. It's really quite a simple choice.

I'm not sure why the minister stands against Manitoba families having that choice, but he can fully support our bill, Bill 211, right now, and get on side and ensure that—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —by the weekend that this change could be made.

The EI program changed on December 3rd. We are now on December 6th.

Will the minister stand today and commit to supporting Bill 211 so Manitoba families can enjoy the full 18 months of paternity leave and maternity leave?

Mr. Pedersen: Well, Madam Speaker, the NDP certainly wasn't thinking about families when they increased the PST. They broadened the PST and then they expanded the PST. That hurts our families the hardest, and especially it hurts low-income families. And this ND—the previous NDP government never thought about families at that time.

* (14:20)

This issue has gone to the Labour Management Review Committee, where the proper process is to always send it there first for their review.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: Does the minister support 18-month parental leave or not? That's the simple question.

They didn't refer the matter to the LRMC until we raised the issue in the House. Apparently, they were asleep at the wheel.

They have no issue with other consultations—whether it's on climate change, whether it's on health, whether it's on budget—in leaning on their preferred outcome.

So why not, in this case, clearly tell Manitoba parents whether or not you support letting them take advantage of the 18-month parental leave program? It's a simple question.

An Honourable Member: Process.

Mr. Kinew: I hear shouts of process. Well, they have completely missed this process. The change took place on December 3rd. We're now at December 6th, and still the government has not acted.

Will the government tell us today, once and for all—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —does he support Manitoba parents having access to 18 months of parental leave?

Mr. Pedersen: Manitoba families know they can count on a Progressive Conservative government for support, unlike the previous NDP, which did everything they could to attack families and family incomes across this province.

There's a process for this. It has gone to the Labour Management Review Committee, and we look forward to their report when it comes back.

Anti-Theft and Anti-Gang Programs Dissolution of Strategies

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Last month, the Winnipeg Police Service reminded Winnipeggers that they should watch out for vehicle theft during the Christmas shopping season. But Winnipeggers should also watch out for the Minister of Justice, who has recently dissolved Manitoba's anti-theft suppression strategy.

This program, started in 2005, closely monitored people who were repeatedly—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: —stealing vehicles and successfully reduced theft rates. Before the strategy, about 29 vehicles were stolen every day in Manitoba. In December 2015, that number dropped to nine.

But under this government, that number rose to 13, and now the minister dissolved the strategy.

Why has the minister abandoned a strategy that was proven to work?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): We've 'abandoned' the strategy of the previous government that didn't do what's in the best interest when it comes to crime prevention for Manitobans.

We will continue to stand up for Manitobans and implement strategies that actually yield real results, and we will focus on those, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Fontaine: In addition, the day after the Minister of Justice rolls out a bill to keep cannabis out of the hands of gangs, we learn that she's actually shut down multiple anti-gang strategies that focused on prevention and suppression to keep communities safe.

The minister dissolved the anti-gang suppression program. This summer the minister cut \$75,000 in annual funding for the Gang Action Interagency Network. This network partners with 180 organizations who can respond to youth in crisis and put resources in place to help exit gangs.

Madam Speaker, the minister should be investing in prevention supports. So why is she taking them away?

Mrs. Stefanson: I thank the member for the question.

And what we will focus on is programs that are real—yielding real results for Manitobans and to ensure that we provide safer communities for all Manitobans, Madam Speaker.

That's why we are focusing on 'cime'—crime prevention initiatives. We're focusing on restorative justice initiatives. And we're focusing on areas where we can responsibly reintegrate offenders back into society, Madam Speaker.

That is our approach to this very important issue that we believe will yield better results for Manitobans, and that's what we were elected to do.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns, on a final supplementary.

Ms. Fontaine: The minister also unilaterally dissolved her department's Spotlight unit. Spotlight is an intensive anti-gang project that supports youth at risk of gang involvement. For more than 10 years, Spotlight used a mix of intervention, prevention and suppression to help youth and their families with ties to gangs find safety. The unit included probation officers, mentors and a designated Crown attorney.

Under this government, crime continues to go up, and we know the answer is investment in prevention supports for young people. This minister has already cut restorative justice programs, and now she's putting youth at risk.

Will the minister commit to keeping Spotlight open?

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, again, Madam Speaker, I mentioned before and I'll mention again that we will continue to invest in programs that are actually yielding real results to ensure that our communities are safer, unlike members opposite, who, under their watch, the incarceration rates doubled.

We recognize the importance of restorative justice initiatives. In fact, we have increased, in the last year alone, the restorative justice diversions by 2,000, Madam Speaker. We think that that's progress. This is the responsible approach of how to deal with the crime—with crime in our communities, and we will continue to invest in programs that will help reduce crime.

Wasagamack First Nation All-Season Road Agreement

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): On February 8th, 2016, the government signed an agreement with Wasagamack First Nation as part of an all-season-road project for \$17.2 million. Isolated communities like Wasagamack First Nation need economic investment to create jobs and to thrive.

Will this government fulfill the agreement made with Wasagamack First Nation and ensure the local residents perform work on this important project?

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): I'd like to thank the member for the question and I want to assure the House that we continue to focus on the North.

We've been very, very actively working on the Churchill file, and we're very pleased that the federal government continues to step up. It—in the case of Churchill, it is a federal jurisdiction.

And as far as the road the member is discussing, it is under review, Madam Speaker, and I would recommend her to stay posted.

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

Ms. Lathlin: The agreement made with the Wasagamack First Nation was part of a commitment to build a road linking Wasagamack and St. Theresa Point First Nation. Better northern infrastructure would mean a better quality of life for our residents.

Will this government fulfill the agreement that was made with Wasagamack First Nation and make sure work on the road is done by the residents and companies from Wasagamack First Nation?

Hon. Eileen Clarke (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations): I thank the member opposite for the question and concerns brought forward.

And I'm very pleased to say that within all the departments of this government, we've been working very closely with our First Nations, and certainly employment within the projects within their area is certainly a very high priority and something that we've really been focusing on.

And I'm really proud to say that—reported to me that in regards to Shoal Lake road, the on-reserve portion that is completed, that 30 per cent indigenous were employed, 10 per cent above the requirement.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for The Pas, on a final supplementary.

Ms. Lathlin: About \$2 million has already been invested for this agreement with Wasagamack First Nation; about \$15 million remains. Fifteen million dollars could help train and employ people, creating jobs for people who need them.

An all-weather road will give the people of Wasagamack a safer route in the event of forest fires, and the promised investment will create jobs and will help community recover and grow.

Isn't Wasagamack part of the Look North strategy? Will this government commit today to honouring the agreement with 'sagamack First Nation and ensuring jobs for local residents?

Ms. Clarke: I will again speak to the fact that our government is very concerned about employment for our indigenous people, more specifically in northern Manitoba, because we do realize the challenges that they have.

And I'm also very pleased that we will be working more closely with INAC to ensure that both federal, provincial governments are on the same page, working on behalf of our indigenous communities, and Look North is definitely a strong point in that commitment.

* (14:30)

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Wolseley. [*interjection*] Order.

Red River Valley Water Supply Project Invasive Species Concerns

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Ever since water activists brought to my attention the threat of the Red River Valley Water Supply Project in North Dakota,

we have been sounding the alarm. To date, this government has said and done absolutely nothing.

In my ongoing hope that the facts will eventually matter to this government, I would like to table a page from the environmental impact statement, the assessment done on that project, showing that up to 20—over two dozen new foreign invasive species could come to Manitoba if this project is not stopped.
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): Our government is very concerned with the Red River Valley Water Supply Project as well as the Northwest Area Water Supply project, and we are opposing—we are vigorously opposing both of these projects and doing everything available to us to ensure that these projects do not go ahead.

I only wish member opposite was this concerned about water science when he—his government cut the budget by \$3.4 million and slashed 14 positions from the water science department in 2013.

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

Mr. Altemeyer: That is a noticeably different answer from the minister, the same minister who, when I asked about this project in Estimates, mistakenly said that there's no evidence that the Red River Valley Water Supply Project was even proceeding. I then tabled a document for her information entitled construction updates from the website of the Red River Valley Water Supply Project.

I would now like to table another document—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Altemeyer: —from that same web page, which indicates that no water treatment plans are yet in place to protect Manitoba's waterways from these potentially devastating foreign invasive species.

Ms. Squires: Madam Speaker, I have assured the member opposite several times that our government is very vigilant in our advocacy and opposition to these projects. We are working with the governor of North Dakota, in communication with him, expressing our concern, and we are watching, monitoring and taking all available means of action to us to ensure that these projects are stopped.

I only wish that for 17 years, when members opposite were in government, that they actually got ahead of these projects and stopped them before the work had commenced. Now that the work is proceeding, it poses significant challenges.

Where was his commitment to water in the province of Manitoba when he was in government?

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Wolseley, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Altemeyer: Well, Madam Speaker, it's answers like that which make me grateful that we have freedom of information legislation in this province.

I would like to table, for the minister's reference, a copy of a FIPPA which we received in answer to these questions. In stark contrast, direct contrast to what she just said, this government has communicated nothing at all to the government of North Dakota, nothing at all to the federal American government, nothing to the International Joint Commission.

There is an advisory note in these documents to the Premier (Mr. Pallister) dated May of this year, and an advisory note to the minister dated in January. They have known about this for almost a year. They have done nothing. The onus is on them to finally start taking action for Manitoba's waterways.
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Squires: Well, Madam Speaker, let's review the facts. Under the previous administration, Lake Winnipeg became the most threatened lake in the world, and what did they do? Nothing.

Let's also review the facts: under the previous administration, when the alarm bells were being sounded about aquatic invasive species coming into our waterways, what did they do? They did nothing. They have absolutely no credibility when it comes to protecting Manitoba waterways.

Where they failed, we're going to get it right.

Madam Speaker: Just a reminder to members that when there is a lot of noise and I have to sit and wait for it to quieten down, we're—you're burning time in question period, so you're losing time, both questions and answers. So I would urge members to be careful with the amount of heckling and the noise, because that does take away from the time for question period.

Emergency Medical Services Grandview Station Closure

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, my questions today are on front-line emergency health care in Manitoba. I welcome those who have come from Grandview and joining us in the gallery today.

In Grandview, the government is planning to close the emergency medical services station. People from Grandview and in nearby Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation have clearly shown the government's decision is based on old data and bad data.

With the many petitions that I now table, I ask the minister: Will he commit today that he will have a full review of the decision to close the Grandview EMS station before taking any measures to shut it down?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, the member will know that representatives from Grandview have had the opportunity for a briefing at the 911 centre in Brandon. He'll also know that—this was discussed last week in Brandon—the data that's being used is new data that's provided from that centre, but, more specifically, he'll know that the 2013 Toews report was about providing predictable EMS service, 24-7 service to ensure that all the residents of the Westman area get the kind of EMS service that they deserve, and that is why paramedics support the plan.

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

Victoria General Hospital ER Constituent Case Concern

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I rise now to recognize and remember the passing, on Sunday, October 22nd, of a woman living in southeast Winnipeg who suffered a medical crisis. She was taken from her home by ambulance to Grace Hospital for emergency care, where she died on arrival. It is possible she might still be alive today had the Victoria hospital emergency room, which is very close to where she lived, been still open.

Will the minister investigate this incident and tell us whether it is the only incident of its kind?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, I'm not aware specifically of the incident that the member refers to and I'm certainly not going to, on

the floor of the Legislature, speculate about a medical outcome, not knowing those circumstances, and I'm sure the member opposite, being a doctor, being a legislator, would know that this is not the appropriate place to make those kind of speculations.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Gerrard: Yes, Madam Speaker, I'm not asking the minister to speculate, just to investigate and look into the issue—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: These are serious questions and they deserve serious answers.

Why was a person living on St. Anne's Road, in southeast Winnipeg, with a known, serious heart condition and rapidly deteriorating health directed to Grace Hospital, half an hour further away than the St. Boniface Hospital? St. Boniface has the capacity to deal quickly with various serious heart conditions. Why wasn't it used?

Will this minister and his government commit to investigating and fully, publicly reporting all such incidents in the future?

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Goertzen: I would say I'm disappointed in that member. He's used the opportunity to come and speak to me personally about cases that he wanted to have looked in, and I believe that we have followed up on those, but to come to the Legislature and talk about why an ambulance was diverted from one place to another and ask me in terms of why a diversion happened, Madam Speaker, I was not on that ambulance.

* (14:40)

If there's a critical incident that happens he knows that there's a critical incident process where a review is done, Madam Speaker, and he also knows that I'm available to speak about specific things that he has concerns about, that he's raised. I've made myself available.

And I would just say, Madam Speaker, while I do like the member, I'm extremely disappointed in him.

Child and Family Services Reform First Nations Consultations

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Madam Speaker, our government has announced our intentions to

work in partnership with indigenous leaders and communities, service organizations, experts and to deliver meaningful reforms to our CFS system. Together we want to achieve better outcomes for children through community-driven prevention, funding for results, lifelong connections through reunification and permanence and fewer children and youth in care.

Can the Minister of Families update the House on this important initiative?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): I very much appreciate the passion that the member opposite has shown in terms of making outcomes for individuals, especially children in the CFS system, better. Reforming the current CFS system is a major priority for our government, and collaboration and partnership with indigenous leaders, communities, who best know the health care, as well as the safety, of our children is really fundamental to our reform plan going forward.

That's why we're so pleased to announce with the Southern Chiefs' Organization, with chief—Grand Chief Daniels, a major treaty summit to engage First Nations leaderships on meaningful reforms that deliver culturally appropriate solutions on keeping more children within their home communities and family networks.

I will also be travelling to Ottawa to meet with Minister Philpott in terms of the child-welfare system, encouraging them to partner with us in terms of a meaningful reform—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

French Translation Services Government Publications

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Merci beaucoup, Madame la présidente.

C'était étonnant de voir que le gouvernement a décidé sans consultation, une autre fois, de présenter une loi sur les avis au public qui impliquent les Franco-manitobains sans avoir fait preuve d'avoir consulté le conseil consultatif.

Les avis au sujet des systèmes de santé, d'éducation, de services de garde et financiers sont importants pour les franco-manitobains, et la Gazette manitobaine n'est pas présentement traduite en français.

Est-ce que la ministre va exiger la traduction et publication de tout avis qui implique la communauté franco-manitobaine en français?

Translation

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

It was astonishing to see that the government decided, again without consultation, to introduce a bill on public notices that concern Franco-Manitobans without any evidence that they consulted the advisory council.

Notices regarding health care, education, child care and financial services are important for Franco-Manitobans, and the Manitoba Gazette is not presently translated into French.

Is the Minister going to mandate the translation and publication in French of all notices concerning the Franco-Manitoban community

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs): Merci beaucoup, Madame la présidente. On a fait plus pour la communauté franco-manitobaine dans notre première session que les NPD ont fait dans une décennie.

Translation

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We have done more for the Franco-Manitoban community in our first session than the NDP did in a decade.

English

We will stand up for the francophone community, and I'm very proud of our government's record for how we've expanded bilingual capacity in government and how we are putting more bilingual people on our board, how we are consulting with francophones and how we introduced an expanded definition of the Francophonie. We're really proud of the efforts that we are doing in terms of supporting the francophone community.

Madam Speaker: The official Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Kinew: Madame la présidente, il y a un vrai défaut au sein de ce gouvernement. Il n'écoute pas aux franco-manitobains. Pire, il ne fait pas l'effort de les écouter. Il leur donne des retranchements, des compressions budgétaires sans avoir même posé la question à la communauté.

Et il prend des décisions sans penser aux conséquences pour les manitobains et manitobaines, sans penser aux conséquences pour la communauté

franco-manitobaine, sans penser à la Francophonie ici dans la province.

Est-ce que la ministre va exiger la traduction et publication de tout avis qui implique la communauté franco-manitobaine en français?

Translation

Madam Speaker, there is a real problem within this government. It doesn't listen to Franco-Manitobans. What is worse, it doesn't even make the effort to listen to them. It gives them cutbacks, budget cuts, without even asking the community.

And it makes decisions without thinking of the consequences for Manitobans, without thinking of the consequences for the Franco-Manitoban community, without thinking of the francophone community in the province.

Is the Minister going to mandate the translation and publication in French of all notices concerning the Franco-Manitoban community?

Ms. Squires: Merci beaucoup, Madame la présidente pour la question.

Translation

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for the question.

English

I was very proud yesterday, in fact, to attend a meeting amongst many leaders in the Franco-Manitoban community, along with our Education Minister, to talk about a variety of initiatives coming out of, you know, a combined—his department and my department.

I'm very, very pleased that the Francophone Affairs Secretariat works very closely with all government departments to ensure that the Francophonie is not only well served but that it is enhanced in our province.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: Merci beaucoup, Madame la présidente.

La langue française est une des langues fondatrices de notre province. Dans les années passées, la communauté franco-manitobaine a dû lutter pour leur droit de langue minoritaire. Et puis un des droits les plus importants est d'avoir des services gouvernementaux en français, d'avoir des avis des services gouvernementaux en français aussi.

Nous savons maintenant que le gouvernement est en train de proposer un projet de loi qui va dire que tous les avis gouvernementaux vont être dans la Manitoba Gazette. Mais présentement, la Gazette n'est pas traduite en français.

Est-ce que la ministre va exiger la traduction et publication de tout avis qui implique la communauté franco-manitobaine en français? C'est simple.

Translation

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

French is one of the founding languages of our province. In the past, the Franco-Manitoban community has had to fight for its minority language rights. And one of the most important rights is to have government services in French, to have government service notices in French, as well.

We now know that the government is in the process of introducing a bill that says that all government notices will be in the Manitoba Gazette. But at the present time, the Gazette is not translated into French.

Is the Minister going to mandate the translation and publication in French of all notices concerning the Franco-Manitoban community? It's simple.

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): I'd like to thank the member opposite for the question.

And speaking about the modernization act that I introduced yesterday, it's very important that we improve access to Manitobans for information that is available, formerly only in newspapers, now in the Gazette, and it'll be available, you know, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, accessible to everyone.

And we cannot understate the importance of French language and culture in this province. I mean, they were the—the French individuals, Franco-Manitobans, were the individuals who provided so much to this province as we grew and we became a province that we are so proud of.

So I will continue to act and to support the Franco-Manitoban Cultural Centre and the Franco-Manitobans in Manitoba—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

**Inuit Art Centre
Funding Inquiry**

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): The Winnipeg Art Gallery holds the world's largest public collection of modern Inuit art in storage.

According to a government briefing note, this government told the Winnipeg Art Gallery that they would have a decision about provincial funding for the Inuit Art Centre before the end of August 2017. It's now December.

Madam Speaker, will the Inuit Art Centre be funded or not?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): Well, I'd like to thank the member opposite for that question. I believe it's the third time that he has asked that question, and again I will tell him that—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cox: —that we are very proud of the Winnipeg Art Gallery and I've had the opportunity to meet with Stephen Borys and other individuals there, and actually was there for the grand opening of the INSURGENCE/RESURGENCE art exhibition, which is one of the largest exhibitions in all of Canada.

But I would also like to remind the member opposite about how they delayed the cultural policy review. Almost 30 years, Madam Speaker, Manitobans and artists have been waiting to see the results of this review.

So where they have failed, Madam Speaker, we will certainly bring home the results.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Marcelino: If this government does not act by March 31st, \$15 million in federal and private funding already committed to the project will be lost.

Will the Inuit Art Centre be funded or not? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

I would remind members that when the Speaker is standing there is to be silence in the room.

Mrs. Cox: Thanks to the member opposite.

I think that the member opposite should really take a look at the mirror. I mean, the members right across the Chamber here are totally responsible for

the financial situation that we in Manitoba are facing here right now: doubled the debt—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cox: —\$25 billion in 10 years; almost \$1 billion going to moneylenders in eastern Manitoba. They should take a look at themselves and see who's responsible for the mess we're in here in this province.

* (14:50)

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Marcelino: I have 17 seconds, now 15.

Will the Inuit Art Centre—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Marcelino: —will the Inuit—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Marcelino: —Art Centre be funded or not?

Madam Speaker: Order, order.

These are serious questions that are being asked and members do hope for a serious response. I don't think the level of noise in the room is going to allow people to hear them properly, so I would encourage members: pay attention to the questions and answers and be courteous enough to allow the members who are asking questions and answering to be heard.

Mrs. Cox: Thank you so much, Madam Speaker, and again thanks to the member opposite.

And I would like to also put on record the fact that the members opposite increased the—added on the 8 per cent PST for all of those different museums, the art gallery, all of those organizations, for all of the insurance that they have to pay.

Also increased that 1 per cent—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cox: —added additional expenses for all of the museums, the artists, the libraries—all of those. They are responsible for those additional increases, Madam Speaker, and they should be held accountable for those.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Access to Health Care

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more are occurring across the province.

(2) These health cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

(3) The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health facilities.

This petition was signed by Judy Enns, Isabel Olafson, Mary Dushenko, and many other Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: In accordance with our rule 133(6) when petitions are read they are deemed to be received by the House.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more are occurring across the province.

(2) These health cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

(3) The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

First, to urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

Second, to urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasingly-increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the 'inefficiencies' of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health facilities.

And, Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by many Manitobans.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): I wish to present the following petition to the Manitoba Legislature.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more are occurring across the province.

(2) These health cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

(3) The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care; and

(2) to urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health facilities.

This has been signed by Zoë St. Aubin, Ryan Shand, Melanie Kyll [*phonetic*] and many other fine Manitobans.

Rural EMS Services

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The provincial government announced a plan to close 18 EMS stations in Manitoba.

The recommendation for the closures was based on a report titled Manitoba EMS System Report, issued in March 2013, that used data from 2011 that is no longer relevant.

The standard for care for EMS services in Manitoba is a 30-minute response time for 90 per cent of the population, 90 per cent of the time.

The information entitled information pack for rural Manitobans—municipalities stated in 2012 that the 30-minute standard was reached 95.81 per cent of the time, 95.52 per cent in 2015-2016.

The statistics show that, by moving to the proposed system, Manitobans will be receiving worse care.

The proposed plan includes the closure of the Grandview EMS station and the building of two new stand-alone EMS stations in Cowan and Gilbert Plains with no provision of a cost estimate.

There is a vacant Manitoba Hydro building in Grandview that was previously used to store large equipment which could allow for the deployment of ambulances.

In addition to the 39-bed personal-care home in Grandview, the hospital is fully staffed with 18 beds, three full-time doctors, two nurse practitioners and a full complement of support staff, including 24-hour diagnostic services.

The Grandview EMS station employs four full-time primary-care or intermediate-care paramedics who routinely provide community education, primary- and/or intermediate-care support to emergency medical responders and other paramedicine services to assist the staff of Grandview hospital.

* (15:00)

The Grandview EMS services 1,500 people within the municipal boundary, Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation, the southern half of the Duck Mountain Provincial Park and other outlying areas, including the communities of Gilbert Plains and Ashville.

The Grandview ambulance responded to 680 calls in 2014, 571 calls in 2015 and 673 calls in 2016.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living to provide an additional 12 primary-care or intermediate-care paramedics to facilitate 24-7 coverage at the Grandview ambulance station.

To urge the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living to provide a second ambulance vehicle at the Grandview station to allow for deployment to designated geo-positions.

(3) To urge that the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living make use of the vacant Manitoba Hydro building as a garage for the two ambulance vehicles.

(4) To urge that the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living install a computer-based system in the ambulance vehicles to facilitate geo-positioning in dynamic and flexible deployment to an area covered in the proposed plan in this region.

Signed by Pierre Coulombe, Joey Coulombe, Jasmine Ironstand and many, many others.

Access to Health Care

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more are occurring across the province.

(2) These health cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

(3) The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health facilities.

This petition was signed by Kathy Nicholson, Diana [*phonetic*]-Dana Orr, Karen Cannell-Jamieson and many, many more Manitobans.

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, EMS stations, urgent-care centres and more are occurring across the province.

These health cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health-care facilities.

Signed by Rosemarie Mason, Mei Zhang, Leanne Beaudry [*phonetic*] and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you.

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more are occurring across the province.

(2) These health cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

(3) The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system

that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health facilities.

Signed by many, many Manitobans.

Thank you.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I would like to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more are occurring across the province.

(2) The health-care cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

(3) The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

* (15:10)

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients,

such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health facilities.

And this petition, Madam Speaker, has been signed by Rhonda Everett, Natowa De Krezel [*phonetic*], Myers De Krezel [*phonetic*], and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to the petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more are occurring across the province.

(2) These health cuts will dramatically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

Madam Speaker: I would urge the member to continue.

Mr. Maloway: Madam Speaker, (3) the provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba health facilities.

And this petition is signed by Karen Meaud, Martha McMillan, Wilda Krueger, and many fine Manitobans.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): And I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more are occurring across the province.

(2) These health cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

(3) The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with the front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients.

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care; and,

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan, increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health facilities.

Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Direct cuts to front-line health-care services, including the closure of emergency departments, intensive-care units, an urgent-care centre and more, are occurring across the province.

(2) Health cuts will drastically reduce the ability of Manitobans to access timely, quality health-care services.

(3) The provincial government made these decisions unilaterally, failing to consult with front-line health-care professionals who provide direct care to patients; and

(4) The provincial government has had its main focus on the bottom line and failed to present a clear and detailed plan for the public health-care system that will actually improve and optimize patient care for Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to reverse the cuts and closures that negatively impact patients' ability to access timely, quality health care.

(2) To urge the provincial government to make real investments in Manitoba's public health-care system that will provide a direct benefit to patients, such as: increasing access to primary care, the development of a provincial health human resource plan and increasing publicly funded personal-care homes across Manitoba and increasing the efficiencies of diagnostic testing in Manitoba's health facilities.

Signed by Shelley Shaw, Karen Popoff and Melanie Allard.

Miigwech.

Madam Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Speaker's Statement

Madam Speaker: And I have a statement for the House. Order.

I'm advising the House that I have received a letter from the Official Opposition House Leader (Ms. Fontaine) regarding the official opposition's first selected bill for this session.

As a reminder to the House, rule 24 permits each recognized party to select up to three private members' bills per session to proceed to a second reading vote. Rule 24 also requires written notice to be provided to the Speaker regarding the date and time of the vote. This notice must be provided no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled end of the fall sitting.

Accordingly, Bill 211, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act, has been selected for a second reading vote tomorrow, Thursday, December 7th, 2017, at 10:55 a.m.

* (15:20)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you please call the following government bills in order, beginning with Bill 10, The Boards, Committees, Councils and Commissions Streamlining Act; followed by No. 9, The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the House will consider bills 10 and 9 this afternoon.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 10—The Boards, Committees, Councils and Commissions Streamlining Act (Various Acts Amended or Repealed)

Madam Speaker: Moving, then, to the first bill that has been called, Bill 10, The Boards, Committees, Councils and Commissions Streamlining Act (Various Acts Amended or Repealed).

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I move, seconded by the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler), that Bill 10, The Boards, Committees, Councils and Commissions Streamlining Act (Various Acts Amended or Repealed), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Pedersen: Madam Speaker, many boards and commissions in this province haven't been reviewed in decades, so our government is taking a step-by-step approach to review boards and commissions to ensure they are meeting the needs of Manitobans.

What we found was red tape and duplication hold our province back, and we are working to ensure that projects vital to all Manitobans proceed in a timely manner, and this is one of those things that we are reviewing is the boards and commissions in order to ensure that we don't have duplication, ensure that red tape is not a factor in their completing of their work that they do on these agencies.

So our government is working to ensure that all agencies, boards and commissions have similar board sizes so that there is consistency across all

boards, agencies, commissions and committees. Our government has promised to be open and transparent, and that means engaging and listening to all Manitobans instead of just hand-picked advisory boards like the NDP have done for the past 17 years.

The NDP set up advisory councils with no long-term mandate, no direction, meaning government lack a proper role for many advisory councils. We found that many advisory boards created by the NDP provided Manitobans with little or no value for money and provided no concrete advice to government.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Teamwork is an important fundamental for our government, and we've found that smaller boards and councils make better decisions as they are more engaged and more focused.

We will ensure these organizations are reflective of Manitoba's diverse population. In fact, our government has the most diverse board membership in this province's history.

We are an open and transparent government, and we are committed to work—to the work of ensuring all Manitobans of a voice at the table. Our government was proud to bring in Bill 22, which ensured transparency by ensuring government listens to all Manitobans with a 45-day publication for new regulations. This legislation follows down that same path, ensuring all Manitobans are heard, rather than just a select few, as was the case under the NDP. This legislation ensures that transition plans are in place for effective board members.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, good governments make difficult decisions necessary to ensure the protection of sustainable, quality services for their citizens. During a decade of debt, decay and decline, the NDP never made a difficult decision. Our government has begun the hard work required to repair the damage, correct the course and move towards balance in a sustainable manner.

We are focused on fixing the finances, repairing our services and rebuilding the economy.

The NDP, when they were in government, just made politically motivated quick fixes that resulted in unsustainable spending growth and the massive debt, which we are—as all Manitobans are faced with now.

So Bill 10, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in total, Bill 10 impacts 25 agencies, boards and commissions, or

ABCs, as they're known as, and it eliminates at least 170 board appointments made by government. In total, 14 boards are merged or eliminated with 10 seeing modifications to their membership composition. Data compiled for this legislation is for the year 2015-2016, the last year of the former NDP government. This legislation will result in an annual cost savings of over \$150,000 in per diems and staff time.

It's important to note our government has appointed more women, more bilingual people, more visible minorities and more persons with disabilities than the NDP did in their years in office. This is important for board composition and to reflect Manitoba's views.

Our government is also working to ensure that advisory committees set up by ministers serve an immediate purpose and can be disbanded when the work is completed. There is no reason for advisory committees that do nothing to exist forever, such as in the instance that we found in some of these boards that the previous government had instituted.

What we found from leaders in the non-profit and private sectors is large boards have less engaged members, which leads to less consistency in the work that is being completed. Industry best practices indicate optimal board sizes range from seven to 11 members.

A study done by Bain & Company entitled—the study is entitled *Decide & Deliver: Five Steps to Breakthrough Performance in Your Organization*. This book—or this study said that for every person being added after that—after 11 members decreased decision-making ability by 10 per cent. A 17-member board has virtually no decision-making ability applying this formula.

Leaders in board management have said that boards should have a maximum of 11 members, ensuring there is greater focus on key issues and quicker decision making with better dynamics. And we know that with smaller boards that people are—the board members are more likely to speak up, make sure their voices are heard, and that is the intent of this legislation, and that is what this legislation strives for.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank the many Manitobans who have served on various boards, committees, commissions, over the years. We know that many of them don't serve for the financial reward, they're paid a per diem, and this is—

they take time out of their busy lives to be on here and bring their expertise forward. And we thank those Manitobans that have done that. And we certainly thank those Manitobans that continue to—I'll say volunteer for these boards, because although they get paid a per diem, this is—they do take time away from their work, from their families, sometimes travelling great distances to be on these boards. So we certainly appreciate their effort.

These members that serve on these boards are helping our government in our quest to have Manitoba the most improved province in all of Canada. So we look forward to speedy passage of this bill and we'll—so that we can get on with this. The board members that are serving right now continue—will continue to serve until their terms expire, and we certainly thank them for their involvement. And we look forward to, as I said, to speedy passage of this bill. It's quality legislation that should be passed right away.

Thank you.

* (15:30)

Questions

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A question period up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member of the following sequence: First question by the official opposition critic or designate; subsequent questions asked by each independent member; remaining questions asked by any opposition members; and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to say just quickly before I ask the minister the first question, if he's hoping for speedy passage, he wouldn't—shouldn't hold his breath on doing that.

We know that he's eliminated any countless number of boards in this bill. He's reduced the size of many others. Outside of KPMG, who else did he talk to before he came up with this bill?

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): And one of our—I referenced already there was a study done by Bain & Company and the study is called *Decide & Deliver: Five Steps to Breakthrough Performance in Your Organization*. That's one of the reference points that we've used.

We also talked to many community leaders who have experience on boards and plus all of us have

had the experience on boards just from personal experience, also knowing how to make the most effective board so that we can get the best results.

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): And I'd like to thank the minister for the bill.

I'd like to table a brochure from the friends of Sturgeon Creek. They want to save Sturgeon Creek from rezoning a specific site for parkland.

I wonder, is there anything in the bill that would cause rezoning or the reallocation of land to be easier or harder in this bill?

Mr. Pedersen: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am familiar with where Sturgeon Creek is and I'm assuming that this, when he's talking about zoning and planning, that would be a city issue, a City of Winnipeg issue, so that this only covers provincial boards and commissions and would not be relevant to planning in—within the city of Winnipeg.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I don't know about this study that he says some big company did, whether they did it specifically for him or just one that he found somewhere on the Internet.

I have experience with some of these committees that are being cut, as a matter of fact. The minister's Advisory Committee on Workplace Health and Safety, I participated in a subset of that committee for about 20 years.

And can the minister explain who he talked to before he decided to very specifically cut that committee?

Mr. Pedersen: Well, as I explained to the member before, and I'll explain again, that although this—the workplace safety and health council is being disbanded, there is another function of this advisory council is it—as required to meet—or is required to, every five years, to review the entire act, and right now there is a current review going on which we look forward to hearing from and—but within this legislation, the legislative requirement to appoint a committee to review the act every five years remains in there so that it will be—this advisory council will be ongoing—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable minister's time is up.

Mr. Lindsey: I'm not sure that the minister is aware that the standing committee for the review of the operational mines committee, which came out of the standing committee, reviewed that regulation

constantly because technology changes, particularly in heavy industry like mining.

And could the minister, perhaps, talk to us about how many regulatory changes were made in between the five-year review period for that specific regulation?

Mr. Pedersen: Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if he's speaking about workplace safety, that continues to be objective of everyone.

The member talks about this, but there's still—this is still covered und The Workers Compensation Act, and so that there will be ongoing consultations with this as we move forward.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I note that under the abolishment of the advisory committee for The Advanced Education Administration Act, that the duties of this advisory committee was to advise the minister on the direction and priorities for the system and the ability of the system to meet and respond to needs of students and Manitoba's labour market.

Is the government no longer interested in advice on the direction and priorities for the system and in the ability of the system to respond to the needs of students and Manitoba's labour market?

Mr. Pedersen: Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to start with, it was the former government who disbanded COPSE—C-O-P-S-E, for the good folks at Hansard—and when this advisory committee was proposed by the current—by the previous government, there was never any members appointed to it—oh, pardon me, I'm wrong on that. There's a—there is—they actually had four meetings, but there was never any recommendations. No recommendations to government since it was established in 2014.

Mr. Allum: Well, gee, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the minister might have his facts just a—wrong there, and I'll clarify when I get a chance to speak on the bill.

One of the things this bill does it eliminates the Restorative Justice Advisory Council. Now, we heard the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson) get up and tell us today how important restorative justice is to her. I hope it truly is, but how will the minister ensure that restorative justice experts are consulted without a restorative justice advisory committee?

Mr. Pedersen: This committee was formed by the NDP in The Restorative Justice Act of 2015. In the previous government's time in office, this committee only met once and did not provide any

recommendations to government. So I don't know what he's bragging about. He's formed committees and they've done absolutely nothing.

Mr. Lindsey: I hate to keep harping on the same issue, but clearly, once upon a time, when we had a minister of Labour, he understood these issues.

The Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen) clearly does not understand that reviewing workplace health and safety regulations, particularly after an accident has happened, will, lots of times, prevent the next accident from happening. And certainly, as technology changed, we changed the mining regulation and then went on to make changes to some other regulations.

So can the minister, again, explain to me, other than this study that—don't know what it is, where it came from—did he actually talk to anybody—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mr. Pedersen: Well, unlike the NDP, we're not at a race to create more regulations. What we're after is safe work, and that's in—speaking of safe work, that's what SAFE Work committee does. They work with all sectors of our industries in order to make sure that we prevent injuries at all times and when there is an injury happening, that we—it is reviewed and make sure that those don't happen again.

Mr. Allum: My chair is—it's crazy. You know, I have to say—it really is.

For a government that is trying to save money by eliminating a number of provincial boards, and that alone will require considerable debate this afternoon, could the minister comment on why they continue to 'outsort' consultants to do their advisory work? Why does he pay people to do it instead of listening to the people of Manitoba?

* (15:40)

Mr. Pedersen: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the purpose of this is not about saving money, although there is some small savings of money in here. This—the purpose of this bill is to have more—to avoid duplication and to have more effective boards. And I don't know why the member would be against having more effective boards so that we can hear from Manitobans and get good direction from these boards and commissions.

Mr. Fletcher: Again, I appreciate what the minister is trying to do. Further to my previous question, the—

when the Province owns lands in the city boundaries, it is the City that is responsible for that land, and it is—they fall outside the city bylaws. So I am asking the minister when there is provincially owned land within the City of Winnipeg city limits on medical facilities or dentists' offices or whatever, will this bill affect—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mr. Pedersen: There seems to be a bit of a contradiction in the member's question. When he said—he was talking about provincial lands and the City of Winnipeg has jurisdiction, but they don't have planning rights. I would certainly seek some clarification from him on just what, exactly, he's asking.

Mr. Fletcher: Okay. The issue is this: If the Province of Manitoba owns land within the city limits, it is the Province that has the ability to regulate and monitor that facility within the limits. In Assiniboia, there is an issue where there's a proposal for a very laudable goal of a drug rehabilitation facility, but it would have to be owned by the Province. People are concerned about the resources available to monitor the success of this facility. It's outside the City of Winnipeg jurisdiction if the land is—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is up.

Mr. Pedersen: I am familiar, as many are, with this treatment facility that the member's speaking about, but I would suggest it would be—he should be taking this up, perhaps, with the Minister of Families (Mr. Fielding) in terms of the operation. He's talking about reviewing of the operation. The City is still working with the adjacent landowners in there. But, as to the review of it and the purpose of it and how that will work, he should probably be—have a conversation with the Minister of Families on that.

Mr. Lindsey: Can the minister tell us—he's done away with the Milk Prices Review Commission. Can he tell us what steps he'll make to ensure that the price of milk now doesn't go up without that commission reviewing it?

Mr. Pedersen: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Milk Prices Review Commission met one to two times per year and whereas the Manitoba Farm Products Marketing Council meets nine to 12 times per year. And so we thought it would be better if—because there is more current information there that the Milk

Prices Review Commission is not necessary now. This review of milk prices will be handled by the Manitoba Farm Products Marketing Council, which has a better understanding of all factors in terms of the pricing and marketing of farm products.

Mr. Allum: You know, this government has clearly not prioritized senior care. Could the minister explain why informal and unpaid caregivers are not receiving adequate monetary and emotional support from this government?

Mr. Pedersen: Well, making accusations is nothing new for this government. Our government will continue to work with all Manitobans, whether it's seniors, whether it's our accessibility community. The accessibility for Manitoba council is being reduced from 12 members to nine members, and, as I spoke in my opening comments, it makes for a much more effective board and works better and will bring forth good recommendations, going forward.

Mr. Allum: I'm sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think we need a little bit better answer than that, so I'm going to read it again for the minister, and then he can tell us.

It says, this government has clearly not prioritized senior care. Could the minister explain why informal and unpaid caregivers are not receiving adequate monetary and emotional support from the government?

Mr. Pedersen: We can have a conversation about that anytime. We're talking about Bill 10 right now, and that's not part of the council's—but I should say that our Health Minister works every day for the betterment of our seniors and people in need across Manitoba every—each and every day.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time for question period has expired. Time for debate.

Debate

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): You know, I really thought that after yesterday's debate on cutting public information to Manitobans that we'd really reached a new low here in the Legislature. [*interjection*] But, then, here we have Bill 10 comes along, and as my friend from Concordia just said, how low can you go?

Who thinks up this kind of legislative agenda, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It's mystifying to us that this is the kind of thing that we're having to debate over and over. I know, and I said this yesterday, so I won't go into depth, but I know members of the backbench

didn't go knocking on doors saying how they were going to eliminate a whole bunch of boards and commissions and, frankly, silence the voices of Manitobans with government. I know that they didn't do that. So we'll leave it at that.

But what's really hard to imagine is that a government would actually sink to these depths to silence the voices of Manitobans. Bill 10 is a veritable hit list of silencing that is quite beyond the pale, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's going to take a few seconds because I know members don't often, at least on the government's side, read the legislation.

I think it's worth it to go through this hit list that has been introduced by the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade in this session. So the Advanced Education Advisory Committee, eliminated; the Advisory Council on Workforce Development is eliminated; the Agri-Food and Rural Development council is eliminated; the Building Standards Board, eliminated; eliminate the Caregiver Advisory Committee; Certified Occupations Board is eliminated; The Cooperative Promotion Trust Act is repealed and the Cooperative Promotion Board eliminated; The Manitoba Council on Aging Act is repealed; and the Manitoba Council on Aging is eliminated; The Endangered Species and Ecosystems Act and The Ecological Reserves Act are amended so that a single committee provides advice in relation to both acts; they just chop it in half, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, The Forest Health Protection Act is amended to eliminate the Heritage Tree Review Committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is this? What kind of legislative gong show are we having to deal with in this House where the government sets out to take a bunch of boards and commissions that represent the voices of real Manitobans, of working Manitobans, of real families and the real people in this province and with a stroke of a pen, it's gone.

* (15:50)

Do you hear—and is there anything in this act that says it'll—there'll be replacements for any of these things? Is there anything in this act to say, oh, we're going to change things around; we're going to rename and we're going to have a whole bunch of more voices represented by agencies, boards and commissions in this province? No, it's just with a single slice, just eliminates them and adds nothing else. Elimination, period, full stop.

Well, this is a little too much and a little too rich for us, I have to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The bill represents a real, real attempt to silence the people of Manitoba a day after they wanted to be sure that the government and government information is shrouded in secrecy. This is quite something and really beyond comprehension when you really begin to think about the depths to which this government will go to turn off the people of Manitoba and stop listening, and that's exactly what's happening.

Minister of Health? He's not listening. Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen), when we asked him, who did he talk to? Who did he talk to? Did he talk to any members of these boards and commissions that have all been eliminated that I just enumerated? Did he say one? No. You know what he did? He referred to us to a textbook from some industry hack that talks about how board governance should operate theoretically. But he admitted, he conceded, right in this House in front of all members here in the Chamber today and including his own back bench who have to go knock on the doors of real Manitobans, he conceded that he hadn't talked to a single soul about the elimination of any of the boards and commissions identified in this bill. That's a little rich for us, and it's a little too much.

You know, I have to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when a government sinks to this level of hiding information, of shrouding it in secrecy, then also silencing the real voices of the people of Manitoba, that's too much. And, of course, it's why we won't support this bill or the bill we debated yesterday. We want to be sure that Manitobans have access to real and vital information, and we want to be sure that their voice is heard in the corridors of power, in the corridors of the Legislature, in the corridors of the Legislative building, every single day. And this government, with one stroke of the pen, says, nope, and silence, and it's over.

And I have to say, it's unbelievable that we're even—debating this kind of thing. What might have been better, really, if the government wanted to go down this path, was to have a full and complete consultation, not only with the affected bodies but with others in order to ensure that the voices of Manitobans were heard with respect to the very agencies, boards and commissions that represent them. Is that too much to ask? *[interjection]* Apparently, it is. I say that rhetorically, but my friend from Flin Flon gave the right answer. He said,

yes, it is too much to ask, because this is a government that simply won't do it and they simply will not listen.

And that's happening with health care. It's happening with the Minister of Families (Mr. Fielding) in relation to child care. It's happening in relation to the Minister of Education. It goes on and on and on. Every opportunity, every time we turn around, we find some other voice silenced. And it's beyond what any government should be doing. This is a government that goes out and says, oh, yes, we're online, consulting with folks all the time. We've seen no evidence of that. Have we seen one report about any of the—any of this so-called consultation that they've done, one written word that helps to identify what the people of Manitoba allegedly said in these so-called consultations? We sure haven't. Not one piece of information, not one data set. Not one example of what they've heard from the people of Manitoba. So they can throw out numbers—5,000, 10,000, whatever number it is that they've been talking about—but until we see a shred of evidence, we don't believe it. And we want to see it.

But, on top of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if, in fact, they've done this kind of consultation, then we also need to know what it is that Manitobans have said to them. Did they agree that emergency wards should be eliminated? I doubt it. Did Manitobans go advise the government to raise tuition on students and freeze funding to universities and colleges? Do you think that's what they recommended? I doubt it. If they did, we'd like to see evidence of that. And if they—if, in fact, there was some kind of consultation and there were recommendations made by the people of Manitoba, then the third element of that equation has to be did the government listen. And we don't know. We don't know just what the nature of this consultations were actually done. We don't know what was said and what was recommended, nor do we know, finally and completely, if the government even listened. You put all those three things together: that's strike one; that's strike two; that's strike three; and, in baseball, when that happens to you, you're out. And that's what's going to happen.

Now, yesterday in question period, my friend from Concordia asked the minister very directly and very completely about the Advisory Committee on Advanced Education, and the Minister of Education got up and he looks across—he tends to look across at the two of us each and every day—and he gets up and he gives this highfalutin answer about it, and, at the end of it, he says: Why doesn't the member from

Concordia turn to his left and ask the former minister why that committee never met?

Well, I have to tell you, on that—on that—alone, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was completely and utterly inaccurate. And it took the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen) to just concede right now that they did, in fact, meet four times.

But then—then—this is a really interesting part—the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade gets up and he says: Well, they may have met four times, so the Minister of Education was actually inaccurate—*[interjection]*

An Honourable Member: Yes, that's a nice way of putting it.

Mr. Allum: —yes, yesterday, and that's the nicest way I can think of to say it, the most parliamentary thing I can say it. He actually—the Minister of Education owes me a personal apology on that, and I'm expecting to get one when we leave the Chamber today, because he looked over at me and he looked directly at me. He called me out in the House and he said they never met.

In fact, they did meet, and the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade just said—*[interjection]*—four times, and now—and now—the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade has the temerity to say that that was nothing more than a coffee party. How dare he?

The only person who wasn't invited to that event—those meetings, I have to say, was him. Yes, because nobody's welcome who doesn't want to make a productive contribution to the well-being of our education system here in Manitoba.

But, in addition to that, and maybe—maybe—it was the member from Lac du Bonnet who apprised the minister of what actually did happen with that committee and the work that was done, because I know that he took an interest in these things in the same way that the Minister of Education seems to ignore, or—or—the Minister of Education's getting very bad advice from the people advising him.

I would suggest that he ask some questions when he's getting some advice, so that he doesn't get up every day and make statements which simply are inaccurate—lacking in veracity, not close to being the reality.

But, in addition to that, then the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade has the temerity to get up and said, oh, okay, they did meet. They did get

together, so I'm still waiting for the sorry, by the way. I'm still waiting for that sorry. It's an example of the distorted way in which the government talks about how our government operated and how we conducted ourselves.

It is such a distortion of the public record. Yes, I take offence to it every day. What we do not do is rise to the bait from these kind of guys, but when I do hear that they didn't provide any recommendations, I think, well, the Minister of Education must be asleep at the switch, because I have to tell you that not only did that group meet four times in committee, they also, as a large committee, as a full group—which, by the way, is probably worth remembering that that committee was composed of all the provinces' post-secondary institutions, leaders in the K-to-12 system, and adult education faculty and students, business, labour, and communities were all at the table, because what we were trying to do was build a co-ordinated education system that spoke to the full continuum of education from early childhood education right through to post-secondary education. So that when a student's done, they've not only received an affordable and quality education, but they're well trained to go get a job and then continue to live and raise their families right here in Manitoba.

That was our vision. I defy the Minister of Education to tell us what his vision is other than raising tuition on students, freezing grants to our post-secondary institution partners and blowing the post-secondary 'educystem'—education system to smithereens.

* (16:00)

But he said—but he said—the minister just said in answer to one of our questions, well, they didn't give any recommendation.

Well, that couldn't be further from the truth, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In fact, those—that committee resolved itself into subcommittees and developed together Manitoba's Post-Secondary Education Strategy: A Partnership for Excellence and Student Success.

Now I know that comes as a surprise to the Minister of Education, who's not been paying attention. He certainly hasn't looked at the files to see what we were doing and the good work that was being done across the board among our educational partners, but also including other representatives so that there was a full and complete and

comprehensive discussion at the table. They resolved themselves into subcommittees. They developed Manitoba's Post-Secondary Education Strategy that I think was delivered in June 2015.

So that tells us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, in fact, there was—not only did the committee meet, not only did they get together in their fullness and have a complete and utter dialogue, but it tells us that they also got down to work and then produced a very important post-secondary education strategy, a partnership for excellence and student success. And so, to help the minister along, I want to table these—this—these copies of the Manitoba Post-Secondary Education Strategy, because we've taken it upon ourselves in this caucus that we're going to do our best to educate the Minister of Education who seems not to know what's going on.

Now to say that this is acceptable, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it simply isn't. And so, when you look at this bill and you look at the reasons given by the government as to why this bill should receive our support, we know, in fact, that they are distorting the public record. They are not accurate on what's being conveyed in their answers to very good questions that we've asked. And they are not prepared to listen to the people of Manitoba; they are focused on one thing and one thing only and that's the bottom line and nothing else matters, and all their objective is—is to make life harder for Manitobans.

We're not going to stand for that. We're going to continue to fight back. We're going to continue to stand with the people of Manitoba and ensure their voice is heard every single day. That's what the Leader of the Opposition does in his job. He's been out talking with Manitobans meeting real people, having real conversations about the real issues affecting Manitoba and what separates him, apart from actually talking to real people from the government side, is that he also listens, as does every member of our caucus.

My friend goes up to the North. He represents Flin Flon, but he has to cover so much territory. He's listening to the people in the North. My sister from The Pas, also representing a huge geographical swath of Manitoba, she's up listening to the people in the North. And, when we ask questions based on our conversations with real people involved in real issues who have real advice to give to the government, we listen. We convey it over to the other side, and what do we get? No answers, no plan and no interest in governing on behalf of the people of Manitoba, just a

simple and complete obsession with the NDP, the four-term government that we were, and cannot concentrate on spending a second governing on behalf of the people of Manitoba. And this is exactly what this bill reflects: the government's decision to just ignore the voices of the people of Manitoba.

An Honourable Member: I've heard enough.

Mr. Allum: Now my friend from Lac du Bonnet, who I have high regard for, says he's heard enough. That can only mean that he's convinced now that the direction of the government in turning off the voices of the people of Manitoba, I now know that he's conceding that that's wrong, that he doesn't support that, that he doesn't want to be a part of that, and he's going to make sure that he stands up, exercises the sovereignty of his seat and holds the Premier (Mr. Pallister) accountable for the actions he's taking; hold the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen) accountable for this deplorable bill; hold the Minister of Education accountable for distorting the public record; hold the Minister of Crowns especially accountable for distorting the public record.

And in—and I know that my friend from Lac du Bonnet will go from one member to another, working with his colleagues, to hold the front bench of the Conservative government accountable for silencing the people of Manitoba, that's clearly reflected in Bill 10, The Boards, Committees, Councils and Commissions Streamlining Act, if there was ever a more Orwellian way of speaking about the decision to eliminate—it looks like at least 10, if not more, agencies and then a whole bunch of others that were slashed, hacked and cut, chopped, as my friend from River Heights says, chopped. That's what's happened in this bill.

But, you know, I also had the opportunity, and it was a great privilege for me at the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to serve as minister of Justice and Attorney General. And I see that one of the things this bill does is to eliminate the Restorative Justice Advisory Council. Now, if we're serious about addressing the issues that confront our justice system, we wouldn't say to the experts in Restorative Justice Advisory Council, we don't care about your advice. We wouldn't say to them, we don't care what you have to say. We wouldn't say to them that we're not interested in hearing what your ideas are. We would want to embrace what they're saying, what their advice is, what their expertise demonstrates, in order

to ensure that we have a restorative justice system in Manitoba that really works.

And so the minister gets up and he gives some number of times that they only met. Well, surely the goal—the goal—is not every time you come across something that maybe hasn't met as regularly as they think it should have, then the obligation of the minister in charge is to set more meetings and meet more often, not just cut it. Well, that's crazy talk. That doesn't make any sense to us.

The Caregiver Advisory Committee, in an era when we're going through such enormous demographic change, where people from the '60s generation and the '50s are now moving into their seniors years, that we—and we have it—sorry? [*interjection*] Yes, well, I include myself in that category. Who would think to eliminate the Caregiver Advisory Committee? That doesn't make any sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It confounds logic and rationality. If there's a problem in terms of having enough meetings, then set more meeting dates. Get people involved. Listen to what they have to say. Engage with them. And instead, what they do is they put their hands in their pockets, they shrug their shoulders and say, you know, the best that we can do is let's just wipe it out, and that takes the problem away.

That's no way to govern, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's no way to ensure that you have ongoing trust with the people of Manitoba. It's no way to ensure that we get the very best kind of government that we can get. Even if this government has some significant drawbacks, the least they can do is listen to the people of Manitoba. I'm not sure why the government has taken this direction. I'm not sure why they would move in this direction. I'm not sure why the backbench of the Conservative caucus would allow this to happen. Do you intend—did they intend, ever, to exercise any restraint over the front benches of the government, or are they so desperate to find themselves in the front bench that they're willing to be compliant to a Premier (Mr. Pallister) who really does not care what the people of Manitoba have to say and has no interest in listening to them?

* (16:10)

I have to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this side of the House wants to engage with Manitobans. We want to listen to what they have to say. We want to ensure that every voice counts, that every voice matters. We're going to continue to do that by

making sure we're out in our constituencies, making sure that we're out in government-held constituencies, making sure at every opportunity that avails itself that we're listening to the people of Manitoba. We won't be supporting Bill 10. We believe in listening to people; not simply cutting them out and silencing the voices of Manitobans.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the member for—Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen), that debate on Bill 10 be now adjourned.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It has been moved by the minister of—Government House Leader, seconded by the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade, that the debate be now adjourned. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Agreed and—did I hear a no? I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Deputy Speaker: So all those in favour of the debate—of the 'journ', please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the Nays—the Yeas have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The government—Opposition House Leader.

The member from Fort Garry-Riverview, sorry.

Mr. Allum: Could you please summon the members for a recorded vote?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A recorded has been requested. Call in the members.

* (16:50)

Madam Speaker in the Chair

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is the motion to adjourn the debate of second reading of Bill 10.

Division

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

Yeas

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Nays

Allum, Altemeyer, Fletcher, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamoureux, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Selinger, Wiebe.

Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Yeas 36, Nays 13.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

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