

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

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ADAMS, Danielle	Thompson	NDP
ALTOMARE, Nello	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma	Union Station	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian	Keewatinook	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	Kildonan-River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Roblin	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GORDON, Audrey	Southdale	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah, Hon.	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	Assiniboia	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya	Notre Dame	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	McPhillips	PC
MOSES, Jamie	St. Vital	NDP
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa	Woleseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REYES, Jon	Waverley	PC
SALA, Adrien	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SMITH, Andrew	Lagimodière	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Vérendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 26, 2019

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

Madam Speaker: Introduction of bills? Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Norwood St. Boniface Legion Branch 43

Mr. Andrew Smith (Lagimodière): Madam Speaker, on November 11th of this year, I had the honour of attending the annual Remembrance Day celebration organized and hosted by the Norwood St. Boniface Branch 43 of The Royal Canadian Legion. It is a somber occasion, as we remember our young men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice in order to secure freedoms that we share here in Canada today.

The Norwood St. Boniface Branch 43 of The Royal Canadian Legion received its charter in 1939, and has been proudly serving veterans in the community for the past 80 years. The mission of The Royal Canadian Legion is to serve veterans, which includes all branches of the military, as well as members of the RCMP, and their families, in order to promote remembrance and serve communities and our country.

A small group of dedicated volunteer members work year round to promote remembrance with the veterans' dinners and services of remembrance. The annual Poppy Campaign funds collected are held in trust by the branch and used for the sole purpose of assisting Canadian veterans, their families in times of need, which includes supporting emergency housing to homeless veterans.

Branch 43 also supports youth in the community with four cadet corps, by means of financial assistance

and free usage of their facilities for meetings and fundraising. They also sponsor two Boy Scout troupes and hold youth remembrance education, along with children's Christmas parties and pancake breakfasts.

The branch also supports seniors with various dances, dinners, as well as social activities like darts, cribbage, billiards, and various Legion Sport fun leagues. They also rent out their facility to the community for the—very reasonable rates and assist in funeral planning and provide spaces for services.

Norwood St. Boniface Branch 43 also supports The Military History Society of Manitoba by providing free exhibition space and storage for their collection. They also are involved in facilitating many of the charity groups in the community, such as the Ruck To Remember, an event that raised funds and donations for clothing and blankets and other small items for Winnipeg's various homeless charities.

Many volunteers from the branch also sit on a number of provincial—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to allow the member to complete his statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Smith: Many volunteers from the branch also sit on a number of provincial legion committees such as the Joint Hospital, Legion Housing and the RCL Sports Foundation.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my members—our fellow members here in the Chamber rise and recognize some people here in the gallery with me today: Branch 43 President Faye Lavack, Vice-President Laura Lucki, Third Vice-President Louellen Jeanson, and executive member Dave Montgomery.

Wayfinders Programs

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): I recently had the honour of attending the Wayfinders' 10-year anniversary celebrating October the 17th. It was a well-organized dinner event and was attended by roughly 200 people.

The Wayfinders is a program that seeks to lead youth through mentorship and various education

activities. It went from supporting 35 students in its first year to supporting 430 students this academic year.

The main goal of this organization is centred on promoting academic success. It does this by working closely with teachers, principals, students and their families. It has served over 600 students, and by the end of grade 9, 60 per cent of their participating students are on track for graduation, and the program has a 79 per cent post-secondary entrance rate.

The Wayfinders' 10-year anniversary was celebrated—a celebration on how they have grown as a community and an opportunity to reflect on their plans for the future.

The students who take part in this program come from different backgrounds. One thing that sets them apart is their willingness to learn, their dedication and their consistency. Wayfinders is committed to helping them realize and develop their talents and key life skills.

Annually, they offer serious small-group mentorship opportunities and they look forward to continue providing relationship-based mentorship.

They encourage their students to take part in their career exploration experiences, which help them obtain practical knowledge about different professions.

Wayfinders are also invested in providing culture identity, health, recreational, arts, community development-focused programs.

Wayfinders, you are doing a great job. Thank you for making a difference in many people's lives.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for The Maples.

Mr. Sandhu: Madam Speaker, I ask for it—leave to have the names of my guests added into Hansard.

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

Tyler Blashko, Zariyah Brown-Nelson, Krystina Fleming, Betiel Ghebremicael, Adrianna McKay, Matt Mousseau, Ally Roussin, Karanpal Singh

Madam Speaker: Further member statements?

Operation Red Nose

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Vérendrye): Earlier this month I had the honour of participating in the launch

of Operation Red Nose for the La Broquerie-Steinbach area.

Two of the guest speakers were Dr. Chantal Fréchette and Dr. Patrick Fredette of the Ste. Anne Hospital. They spoke on what they have seen while working at the hospital and the devastating effects of impaired driving on families.

There are still too many impaired drivers on the roads, especially during the holiday season, and anything we can do to reduce this number will lower the risk of accidents and help keep loved ones safe.

Operation Red Nose helps by taking impaired drivers off the roads on the days that they are operating. Simply call them and they will come and get you and your vehicle safely home at no charge. All they ask is for a donation for their service.

There are many Operation Red Nose operating across Manitoba. In my constituency of La Vérendrye there are two: the La Broquerie-Steinbach and the St. Malo.

* (13:40)

I would like to thank all the organizers and volunteers that make Operation Red Nose possible, especially during the busy holiday season. I would like to encourage everyone to volunteer with an Operation Red Nose in their area. And finally, if you see someone you think should not be driving, advise them about Operation Red Nose and the great service it provides.

Thank you.

Personal-Care-Home Forum

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Last Saturday, the MLA for Tyndall Park and I brought together constituents at a forum on improving care and preventing tragedies in Manitoba's personal-care homes.

We looked at what a tragedy is in such a home. Tragedies include fires, and falls where a hip is broken or head is injured. Tragedies also include when a family member is not allowed to visit their loved one in the personal-care home, or when a person dies in a home unhappy and angry about the quality of care he or she received.

We had four excellent panelists. Connie Newman, executive director of the Manitoba Association of Senior Centres, emphasized the importance of having someone who is an effective advocate for care-home residents.

Michelle Gawronsky, president of MGEU, discussed staffing levels. The care needs of residents are much greater today than 1986, when I—which I understand was the date of the last review of staffing levels in personal-care homes.

Dolores Minkus-Hofley, whose husband is in a personal-care home, talked of the need to improve staffing and training for personnel in personal-care homes.

Robert Rose Jr., son of former St. Vital MLA Bob Rose, spoke of the overuse of anti-psychotic medications for residents like his father.

The forum brought to light numerous disturbing concerns. There were also many suggestions for improvements. There is a need for a review of staffing levels and training requirements for those working in personal-care homes in our province, as was emphasized at the forum and in a recent MARCHE report.

While some personal-care homes are doing a good job, others are falling short. One suggestion for action is to better identify best practices in personal-care homes which are doing a good job and to use this to improve personal-care homes where there are shortcomings.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Merci. Miigwech.

SPEACC Youth Initiative

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): Madam Speaker, our youth are the leaders of tomorrow. Society benefits immensely when youth are given the opportunity to be active and involved, giving input on issues affecting northern communities, and Manitoba at large.

In Thompson, a youth shadow council initiative known as Student Perspectives Expressed At City Council, SPEACC, was recently developed.

The beginning of the initiative goes back to April, when 28 students—grade 12—along with other students from R.D. Parker Collegiate focused on the ongoing issues that affected their ability to get to school. They teamed up and tried to come up with ways to bring attention to city council on this.

This was a significant step in spearheading SPEACC initiative. One of the students sat on the transit ad hoc committee as a student representative on issues surrounding the transit service. This fall, students at R.D. Parker Collegiate began working with Thompson City Council towards implementing

student representation, and this November, Thompson City Council approved five student positions on council: one to sit on city council, and the rest to sit on subcommittee seats.

Five students were chosen to participate in SPEACC and have opportunities to be—contribute to parks and recreation, Communications, Public Safety, Finance and Administration and other subcommittees. They will take part for the remainder of the school year as a non-voting member who will present student and youth concerns and the—to the—viewpoints to the city.

This is a clear example of positive results in empowering our youth through involvement in the decision-making and making—government—at governmental levels.

I would like to congratulate and thank the youth for their opportunity and advocating for young people in Thompson.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson.

Ms. Adams: I ask for leave to include the names of the members of SPEACC into the Hansard.

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

Taylor Hanson-Oliveira, Drew Heskin, Jasraj Kullar, Kendra Martinussen, Karisma Vyas

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to oral questions, we have some guests in the public gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

We have a Nigerian delegation that includes chiefs, community leaders, cultural ambassadors and professors. They are accompanied by a student from Winnipeg. The delegation is in the city for ASA Day, which is an annual event that promotes culture in Canada. The delegation are guests of the honourable members for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith), Union Station (MLA Asagwara) and St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine).

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here to the Manitoba Legislature.

Nigerian Delegation: Chief Wale Adepoju, community leader; Bose Akinola, actress and cultural ambassador; Professor Emiola; Ife Filani, Winnipeg student; Musiliu Haruna-Bello, musician and cultural ambassador; Atinuke Kazeem, actress and cultural

ambassador; Rukayat Lawal, actress and cultural ambassador; Chief Jim Ogunnaike, community leader; Joel Olaniyi Oyatoye, cultural ambassador; Chief Omoniyi, community leader; Bimbo Oshin, actress and cultural ambassador; Yunisa Salami, community leader; Folake Shadare, actress and cultural ambassador.

Also in the public gallery from Carberry Collegiate we have 17 grade 9 students under the direction of Raegan Dyck, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations (Ms. Clarke).

On behalf of all honourable members here, we welcome you to the Manitoba Legislature as well.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Northern Manitoba Justice System Review

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, northern Manitobans are being held for days, weeks and in some cases even months without a bail hearing. This is simply an injustice and amounts to repeated constitutional violations on behalf of Manitobans.

As I noted yesterday, the minister's response to the issue has been less than nothing. Manitoba's Court Operations and Prosecution Service have fewer staff than they did three years ago. Rohit Gupta, a Winnipeg lawyer, told the press his clients are being, and I quote, adjourned down a black hole.

This is on the minister's watch.

Why isn't he taking this seriously and why won't he call a comprehensive review into this issue?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Certainly, a recycled question from just yesterday.

I can tell you that our government views the situation in northern Manitoba—in fact, across Justice, we take this issue very seriously. We certainly want to make sure that people all across Manitoba have timely access to justice.

We know, and the record shows, the NDP knew there was a problem. They did nothing about it.

Madam Speaker, we're moving on various fronts to make amends to what's been left undone by the NDP, including a commitment to spend \$11 million to renovate the courthouse.

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

Ms. Fontaine: I will continue to ask this question every single day until the minister actually starts doing something on behalf of northern Manitobans.

We now have hundreds of people who were receiving video conferencing for bail hearings and who are now forced to navigate a judicial system that has collapsed in the North. Immediate action is needed.

The minister can't tell me how many additional Crown prosecutors, if any, have been diverted to northern Manitoba. He won't commit to a comprehensive review.

Why won't he do anything on this issue?

Mr. Cullen: Well, Madam Speaker, we are committed to making changes there and we've made changes already. In fact, just in January—upcoming in January we're going to be increasing the number of days for bail court from two and a half, to five. Certainly, that will have a fundamental difference there as well.

The NDP chose to ignore Thompson and northern Manitoba. They did nothing at all. The—in fact, the technology was not even in place to help with bail court. There was no video technology available in Thompson. There was no Wi-Fi even available in Thompson.

Madam Speaker, we've made investments in Thompson already and there's another \$11-million investment to come.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Timely access to justice in northern Manitoba has simply collapsed under this minister's leadership and watch. One of the few tools the courts had to deal with the crushing backlog was video conferencing. But that's been eliminated now.

Madam Speaker, simply put, things have gotten worse, not better, under the minister's leadership. His capital and other vague commitments are far off in the future and are doing nothing to deal with the issue immediately.

What is he going to do about this issue, and will he commit to a comprehensive and independent review today?

* (13:50)

Mr. Cullen: Certainly the NDP ignored the issue.

I know we have a committee struck by the Chief Justice of Manitoba—the Chief Judge, pardon me. Certainly, she's working with the Crown services, judiciary, probation, sheriffs as well. There has been some solutions put on the table. Certainly we're using resources out of Winnipeg, as well, to help fill the need in northern Manitoba, and certainly there's a lot of things happening.

We are—ongoing recruitment of Crowns and clerks, ongoing training of Crowns and clerks in there, and, certainly, we have made a difference for the people of Manitoba. We realize there's more work to do to provide timely access to justice for Manitobans, but we made a commitment to do it and we will get it done.

Liquor Mart Robberies Request for Summit to Address

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Liquor Mart employees are fearful that someone will be killed or seriously injured, more so than what Randi-Lee Chase was in the recent theft last week.

It seems this government has waited until somebody got hurt before they decided to implement new security measures, and while those security measures are welcome and a small step in the right direction, it's not the ultimate solution. The root causes seem—need to be addressed.

Will the minister convene a summit including community, social services, law enforcement, unions and the Province to address liquor thefts?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Crown Services): Again, our thoughts, and I'm sure, are echoed throughout this House and the rest of Manitoba, are with Ms. Randi-Lee Chase that suffered a terrible, terrible event, along with her colleagues and customers that were in the store at that time, Madam Speaker, and I can tell you that efforts have been and will continue to be moving forward to ensure that we can provide safety for our customers and our employees.

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

Liquor Mart Employees Workplace Safety Concerns

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Thoughts and prayers, quite simply, aren't going to cut it.

We should be protected by our employer, Liquor Mart employee Randi-Lee Chase emphasized on her

video posted on social media, and she is absolutely right. The stresses and violence Liquor Mart employees are facing is unprecedented. Ten to 30 thefts are occurring on a daily basis. Employees themselves feel like they have to lock and man the doors by themselves, and the holiday season is fast approaching; employees are fearful the situation will just get dramatically worse.

What further measures is the minister taking to ensure Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries employees remain safe while they're at work?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Crown Services): Employees at the Tyndall Market Liquor Mart store went through a very serious and 'traumatic'—traumatic incident last week, and we all recognize that, for sure. Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries has and continues to ensure resources are available, Madam Speaker, to support involved—staff involved at the Tyndall store, including the availability of counselling through Employee and Family Assistance Program.

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

Mr. Lindsey: Former Liquor Mart manager, Leo Dame, retired because he couldn't handle increase in liquor thefts and lack of action.

The physical and verbal abuse employees are enduring quite simply can't go on. These are unacceptable work conditions and employees shouldn't be expected to go to work in those kinds of conditions.

The number of employees taking stress leave has been on the rise.

So what is the minister prepared to do to, first, ensure that all Liquor Mart employees are getting the resources and supports that they need to address emotional and physical trauma, and what is the minister doing to ensure workers are safe in their workplaces?

Mr. Wharton: As I mentioned in my second answer, counselling through Employee and Family Assistance Program is available, Madam Speaker—and I know this has been an evolving issue over the last several weeks and months, and MBL has put in many theft-deterrent measures and I'll just put a few on the record: special duty constables, bag checks, entry display monitors, lockable display cases, product display cards, restricted access to areas of control, bottle locks—just to name a few.

We're also moving forward with the controlled entrance project for this site, has been under way for

several weeks, Madam Speaker, and—at the Tyndall market, and this is just one store. Every store in the city of Winnipeg will receive the same courtesy.

Thank you.

Action on Climate Change Provincial Emission Targets

Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry): The UN released its annual Emissions Gap Report today, and the news is not good. Without drastic action our planet is headed towards warming of 3.2°C in less than 100 years, yet the Pallister government refuses to establish credible, science-based emission targets. They refuse to take action to reduce our emissions; instead, they make retroactive cuts when they—need for action is greater than ever.

The Pallister government's belt-tightening continues to target the organizations and services that help better our communities, our health and our environment.

Will the minister commit to setting the United Nations emission targets today?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Deputy Premier): I thank the member for the question.

We do know back in the dark days of the previous NDP government, Madam Speaker, that they set targets to deal with climate change and that they never met a target that they set back in those days.

We know on this side of the House our government is taking steps—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stefanson: —to clean up the mess of the previous NDP government. The minister is working diligently to do so, as the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and all my colleagues on this side of the House, to ensure that we have a cleaner, greener society here for all Manitoba families.

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

Mr. Wasyliv: The list of victims of the Pallister government's cuts grows by the day—Green Action Centre, Manitoba Eco-Network, Climate Change Connection—and it took seven months for them to be notified that their funding would be cut. Hundreds of thousands of dollars that these organizations rely upon to help Manitobans to reduce their emissions and impact is gone.

Climate Change Connection is forced to go down to two part-time staff, Green Action Centre was forced to lay off staff and make major cuts to sustainable transportation programs and Manitoba Eco-Network may be forced to shut their doors altogether.

Will the minister reverse her cuts to help reduce Manitobans' emissions today?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Acting Minister of Conservation and Climate): I know we—for the member, we did answer this question yesterday, and I'll certainly put it on the record again today for the member opposite.

The department—and I know the minister is working very hard—the department will launch a centralized grant portal with Municipal Relations and Sport, Culture and Heritage, Madam Speaker, for all organizations to apply with more outcome-based expectations and measures for funding as of April 1st, 2020.

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

Mr. Wasyliv: The minister can't hide from the facts, Madam Speaker. Manitoba is already seeing temperature increases greater than the national average, and the impacts of increased emissions, warming temperatures and unprecedented climate events leaves our society—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wasyliv: —and our environment vulnerable.

We are already seeing the devastating impacts of climate change close to home with droughts, floods and intense storms, and it's being felt in our northern communities, our environment—even more with a reduced winter-road season and a loss of habitat. And, sadly, it's our youth that will pay the price for a lack of political will and action to address climate change.

Will the minister commit to setting United Nations emission targets and reverse her cuts to help achieve those targets today?

Mr. Wharton: NGO funding is moving to a new centralized intake grant management process, Madam Speaker, for 2021 that'll provide focused opportunities to the NGOs to support Climate and Green Plan.

Madam Speaker, under—unlike the NDP government at the time, it's just—they'd go ahead and spend money where they thought they were going to—matter of fact, Madam Speaker, it was written on the

back of a napkin how they were going to save the environment.

Where the NDP failed the environment in Manitoba, Madam Speaker, we'll get it right.

Persons with Disabilities Diagnostic Assessments

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): Madam Speaker, the minister has committed to consultations on—with on disabilities program, but there are—there's one change she needs to make immediately: she needs to ensure that the most recent diagnosis assessments are used when diagnosing disabilities.

* (14:00)

At the—at current, the minister's department is using outdated diagnostic tools, leaving hundreds of Manitobans without—Manitobans without access to the supports they rightfully deserve. That's not right.

Will the minister make the change immediately?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families): Well, Madam Speaker, the member opposite is part of a political party—the NDP—that was in power in this province for 17 years. Clearly, it was not a priority for them back then, and now all of a sudden the member opposite wants to make this immediate change.

I will tell you that we are working closely with members of the disabilities community. In fact, just yesterday, in Brandon, we had a consultation meeting with members of the community to ensure that we move forward in an appropriate funding level for persons with disabilities in our province.

Members opposite saw fit to fund members of the disabilities community in the way of EIA, Madam Speaker. We want—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stefanson: —to ensure that those people are able to live their lives with dignity on an appropriate funding level. We will continue to consult with them on what that will look like.

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

Ms. Adams: Madam Speaker, to be clear, this is not my request, but former Justice and Health Minister, Jim McCrae.

Mr. McCrae serves as the minister's chair for Social Services Appeal Board. Since 2016, he has advised the minister on this issue, explaining that the

department relies on outdated diagnostic criteria. He expressed his concern as he continues to hear appeals from individuals who are requiring intensive supports, but are being—but are not being funded by the department.

Will the minister stop this three-year delay and listen to Mr. McCrae?

Mrs. Stefanson: Who we're listening to is persons with disabilities and the community. When they called during the election campaign, in a disabilities debate that we had under the Disability Vote Matters, Madam Speaker, they were calling for an alternative income program, and that's exactly what we are going to deliver for them, and that's why we are holding consultation meetings across—province.

Again, yesterday, yes, we just met in Brandon. We also met in Brandon earlier today and yesterday, and meetings continue there with the association for Manitoba municipalities—and I want to thank all of those who participated in the various meetings there.

We are listening to Manitobans and that's what we will continue to do, unlike members opposite.

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

Ms. Adams: Madam Speaker, that is the sound you hear of the minister kicking the can down the road. She should take action now, as Mr. McCrae advised.

I table copies of Mr. McCrae's advice to the minister. He explains for—that for the last three years he has urged the minister and the department to update their diagnostic assessments for disabilities; and the appeal board is, in fact, using these tools. But the department has not been; they should adopt them.

This should be resolved—years ago. The minister should do the right thing.

Will she follow Mr. McCrae's advice?

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, Madam Speaker, speaking of taking action, the members opposite had 17 years to take action on this very issue, but they chose not to.

We are listening to people within the disabilities community to ensure that we get it right for them. They had asked for an—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stefanson: —alternative income program. We are consulting with them.

And where members opposite failed, we will deliver and we'll get it right.

School Nutrition Programs Funding Support for Organizations

Ms. Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): No child should ever have to go to school hungry. Organizations like the Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba provide breakfast, snack and lunch programs to make sure our children stay engaged and succeed.

Targeted programs like nutrition and recreation programs help keep marginalized students safe and can result in increased attendance at school.

Will the minister's K-to-12 review include a plan to implement a universal nutrition program?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education): The member opposite is asking me what is in the K-to-12 review. I suppose if I answered that she would then accuse me of interference. Of course, I don't know what's in the K-to-12 review because they haven't returned the review yet.

I do know that 15,000 Manitobans did participate online and in person to provide advice on education. I have no doubt that they'll talk about some things that are important, beyond simply the education system, when it comes to learning. And I expect to see that report in February and I look forward to the great advice that Manitobans have provided us.

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

Ms. Marcelino: Every child should be given the best opportunity to succeed at school to ensure a bright future.

Sadly, the demand for food programs continues to increase. This past year, the child nutritional council of Manitoba served 30,500 students, up from 28,000 students in 2017-18. And while demand is increasing, organizations like the Child Nutrition Council are not getting the supports they need to fund schools' nutrition programs.

Their latest annual report said: Without an increase in funding for grants, the percentage of calculated food costs we are able to grant school nutrition programs has been steadily decreasing from 18 per cent in 2016-17 to just over 10 per cent in 2019—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Goertzen: This is not, of course, a new issue. Ensuring that young people go to school with appropriate nutrition has been an issue for many, many years, Madam Speaker. Our government's already taken significant action.

I was pleased to be at the opening of the new cafeteria at St. John's a few weeks ago. We have young people who are involved in preparing meals, where they can get appropriate meals at an affordable price, Madam Speaker. That was an initiative that was done together with the private sector. They had a great celebration when the cafeteria opened because we can partner with individuals.

I look forward to the K-to-12 commission reporting back and seeing what other advice it may have, Madam Speaker.

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

Ms. Marcelino: Manitoba has a highest food bank usage rate in the country, and the highest percentage of children using food banks. This alone should send a clear message to the government. Poverty is a growing issue, and nutrition programs are highly needed.

But poverty isn't on this government's radar. The word does not appear one time in the Throne Speech.

The Manitoba Teachers' Society released a report this June that ties educational outcomes directly with food security for children.

Will the minister listen to our teachers and commit to taking meaningful steps to address poverty and increase supports to these nutrition programs and organizations?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, I already outlined, in my second response, some of the action that our government has taken when it comes to nutrition. That second response would have provided more action in the time that we've been in government than was ever provided under 17 years of the NDP.

I am proud of this government for the work that it has done in reducing poverty generally, including child poverty. We have seen reports where we've seen improvement of those who are living in poverty for the first time in many years—I would say a couple of decades, Madam Speaker.

That member opposite and all the members opposite had an opportunity during the time that they were in government to do something. They did

nothing. We're taking action where they didn't, Madam Speaker.

Child and Family Services Information System Accuracy of Information and Security Concerns

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas-Kameesak): The Auditor General's recent report found that information in the Child and Family Services Information System needs to be updated. The database was not complete or accurate, and the department did not provide enough support to agencies to manage it. Yet, this inaccurate system is what the minister now uses to state the numbers of children in care and for funding.

When will the minister update the database, and will she put further resources to ensuring that it is accurate?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families): Well, I thank the member for the question, Madam Speaker, and certainly, the landscape is changing with respect to child welfare in our country.

We do know that on January 1st of 2020, the federal government is planning on proclaiming Bill C-92, Madam Speaker, which is going to significantly change the landscape of child welfare in our country.

Well, the Auditor General did a report, a snapshot in time. We've made significant changes already. In fact, we came out with our own review of some of the challenges within the foster-care system. Madam Speaker, we found commonalities between the Auditor General's report as well as our review, as well.

* (14:10)

We've already started to take action on that but again, the level—the playing field is changing, Madam Speaker. The landscape is changing, and we need to work with everyone to ensure—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Ms. Lathlin: The Southern First Nations Network of Care includes the majority of children in the child-welfare system. They recently lost access to the database due to a cyber attack. As a result, the authority says there is no access to any sort of computers and that data is currently inaccessible.

To be clear, the majority of the child-welfare information in this province is currently inaccessible.

What is the minister doing to address this serious crisis?

Mrs. Stefanson: I'll inform the House today that at the end of the work day on Friday, November 22nd, the Southern First Nations Network of Care notified our government of a security breach and virus within its computer network, and that eight of its 10 agencies had been impacted as a result of that.

I know right now that officials from the Department of Families are working with the Southern First Nations Network of Care to ensure that we deal with this in an expeditious manner.

Ms. Lathlin: This most recent incident really highlights the vulnerability of the Child and Family Services Information System, and it should be a wake-up call to the minister to take action. The Auditor General has said the database is in—is a shambles, and this recent cyber attack shows just how vulnerable the system is.

When will the minister put significant new resources to improving the system?

Ekosi.

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, Madam Speaker, our government was elected to clean up the mess of the previous NDP government and child welfare is certainly a significant part of that.

We have had discussions with the Southern First Nations Network of Care to ensure that they put together a service delivery plan, so we're waiting for that, Madam Speaker, from them. We've also offered support, IT support, on-site in the southern First Nations 'network' of care to assess the damage and assist in containing and mitigating harm.

We will continue to work with the Southern First Nations Network of Care. It's important, Madam Speaker, that we get this right and that we deal with the immediate issue at hand, and that is the compromised IT system in the southern authority. We've offered that support to them and we will continue to work in a collaborative way.

Personal-Care Homes Restrictions on Visitations

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, one of the sad stories to hit the news in recent days was about families of residents in personal-care homes in Ontario who were being prevented or severely limited in being able to see their loved ones. Similar situations are occurring here in Manitoba, with family members being prevented or severely restricted in being able to see their loved ones in a

personal-care home. There's an urgent need to address this.

Will this have to come to a court case, as in Ontario, or will the minister take action to make sure that close relatives will be able to visit their loved ones while they are in personal-care homes?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): The member for River Heights referenced a recent panel that he held and he referenced Connie Newman—that is a name that is familiar to many of us—who is the executive director of the Manitoba association for senior centres.

We thank Connie and her organization for their ongoing endorsement of our government's initiatives to reduce ambulance fees. She made other supportive comments of our government when we recently continued to provide the flu vaccine in personal-care homes at a higher dose to keep residents safe.

We thank Connie Newman and her organization for her representations, that she continues to say we're going in the right direction.

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

Improvement of Conditions

Mr. Gerrard: Typically, my question not answered.

Those who have to live in personal-care homes and their families should be able to be sure that the days residents spend there—which may include the last few days of their life—will be happy ones where they can receive good care. It is very sad, as I heard from a daughter of one resident, when the last words of a person who passed away in a personal-care home were about how awful it was to be there.

Currently, conditions in some care—personal-care homes in Manitoba are falling far short of what they should be, as we heard at our recent forum.

What actions will the Minister of Health be taking to immediately improve conditions in Manitoba's personal-care homes and to prevent tragedies from occurring?

Mr. Friesen: The minister—or the member for River Heights mentioned that another panelist he had at his event was Michelle Gawronsky. That is a name that is very familiar to those of us in the Chamber, of course. She is the president of the MGEU, Manitoba government employees union.

Recently we were pleased to see the representation votes take place under Bill 29. Manitoba had over 180 unique collective bargaining agreements, and now with those votes having taken place, while I know MGEU representation did diminish, the real winners are Manitobans, with under 40 representative unions now representing labour in the province of Manitoba.

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

Staffing and Training Review

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, again, no answer.

Michelle Gawronsky did say that there has not been a review of staffing and training in personal-care homes since 1986. The minister should undertake such a review as soon as possible.

Dr. Malcolm Doupe at the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy has published a series of indicators of the performance of Winnipeg's personal-care homes. He found some care homes are doing well, while others are performing poorly.

Madam Speaker, the minister should review what well-functioning homes are doing and use this information to improve conditions and prevent tragedies at poorly performing homes.

Will the minister do this?

Mr. Friesen: I remind all members there are measures, there are standards, there are procedures in place in all personal-care homes across Manitoba in order to keep people safe. If the member has specific information that he wants to share, I invite him to bring it forward.

We are proud of the investments that we are making in personal-care homes across Manitoba.

Safer Streets, Safer Lives Action Plan Community Law Enforcement Initiatives

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): Madam Speaker, unlike members opposite, our government understands the value of using proven initiatives to reduce crime that improve public and community safety. We know that we need to reduce the number of individuals in our justice system and address violent crime in our communities, including in northern Manitoba and Thompson.

Recently our government announced a major investment that will help ensure Manitobans in crisis get the supports they need in the city of Thompson.

Can the Minister of Justice please share the details of this investment with the House?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Our Safer Streets, Safer Lives Action Plan is investing \$16 million over four years in new community law enforcement initiatives. Our government is investing more than \$2.1 million over three years to expand StreetReach programming in Thompson and to enhance the community mobilization hub.

These programs have proven very effective in other communities. The expansion of the community mobilization hub in Thompson will enhance access to services for people at risk across the community and the StreetReach program will increase protection and safety for sexually exploited youth in northern Manitoba and reduce the likelihood of them moving or being trafficked to Winnipeg.

Madam Speaker, we look forward to working with the fine people of Thompson to make the community safer for everyone.

Lake Manitoba Outlet Delays and Consultations

Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook): Madam Speaker, yesterday the Premier (Mr. Pallister) conceded that he has failed in his leadership of the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin channel. He just couldn't get the job done, despite promising to get it done within his first term.

It turns out he likely won't complete it within the next four years either. It's a clear broken promise and a failure of leadership.

Has—why has the Premier promised what he couldn't deliver?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I appreciate the question from the member opposite. We are certainly moving forward on that particular program and that particular project. We are consulting with our friends in northern Manitoba on so many fronts in relation to that particular project.

We would hope maybe the opposition members will call their cousins in Ottawa and we can get the federal Ottawa Liberal government onside in helping move this project forward.

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

Mr. Bushie: Madam Speaker, to be clear, in 2016 the Premier stood on the shores of Lake Manitoba

and promised Manitobans that he would complete the channel within four years. He mocked consultation as a bunch of coffee parties, and that only he alone knew how to move dirt.

* (14:20)

As usual, Madam Speaker, it just wasn't true. If he committed in good faith to conduct meaningful consultation three years ago, they would be far further along than they are now.

Why does this government only deflect and blame others for their failure of leadership?

Mr. Cullen: We made a commitment to move this project forward.

We know the NDP now see urgency in it, but they didn't for 17 years, Madam Speaker. Seventeen years, they stood by the wayside, let the communities in northern Manitoba flood out. And we here are now cleaning up the mess the NDP left.

Madam Speaker, we are consulting with First Nations communities that are impacted. Obviously, there's changes in the programming in terms of the process going forward. We're forced by the federal government to make alternative plans as we move forward. But the consultation continues and we still intend to get this project built.

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

Mr. Bushie: The Premier could have long completed consultation if he had simply committed to a meaningful process from the beginning, and he can still do so. But he's looking for someone to blame for his failure of leadership.

He promised a channel within his first term and didn't deliver. He can stop the blame game and consult in good faith with communities.

Will he do so?

Mr. Cullen: Well, Madam Speaker, there's been no stronger proponent for this project than the Premier of Manitoba.

The NDP had 17 years to move this project. Nothing happened. We have almost completed the engineering design for the outlet channel—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Cullen: We've almost completed the design and the engineering component of the outlet channels.

We continue to do consultations. Negotiations between Province of Manitoba and the federal government continue.

Madam Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Pallister) has made a commitment. Our government has made a commitment. We will get the job done.

Post-Secondary Education Request for Funding Increase

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): I want to welcome the minister to his new portfolio as post-secondary education and I want to relay to him our concern over this government's decision for post-secondary institutions.

Operating grants have been frozen, operating grants have been cut, tuition increased—in fact, fastest rates in the country. It's simply not the kind of investment that we need to ensure quality learning and that we have a strong workforce in our future.

Does the minister intend to stop freezes and cuts and increase funding to our post-secondary institutions?

Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Economic Development and Training): First off, I want to congratulate the University of Manitoba for the appointment of Michael Benarroch.

Also, I want to take time to thank Dr. Barnard for his leadership in working with the provincial government, along with the universities and colleges, on making sure we have the right skill set going forward. I can tell you, I've had two meetings with him now—one as recently as Monday—and the attitude towards education is very progressive.

I assure the member opposite, universities and colleges are paying attention, and they want to be part of the change.

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

Mr. Moses: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the minister is in touch with the heads of the departments of the post-secondary institutions. However, if he consults with his own annual reports of his departments, he'll discover that the investment to college seats has declined and his government's support for apprenticeships has not been there.

It really makes no sense that this government is on one side pressuring institutions for workforce outcomes while the government is also reducing their

commitment for training and—that directly ties to employment.

Why say one thing but do the exact opposite, Madam Speaker?

Mr. Eichler: The Women's Executive Network has named two University of Manitoba researchers—the Rady faculty of health services in Canada's Most Powerful Women in 2019. And researchers Dr. Orsher [*phonetic*] and Taylor Morriveau, a Ph.D. student and valour scholar, have been appointed to this prestigious award.

The University of Manitoba's has 17 women affiliated with the institution—have been named Canada's Most Powerful Women in the top 100.

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

Mr. Moses: Madam Speaker, there's no doubt that our post-secondary institutions have had tremendous accomplishments and, in fact, they know the best way to educate and train Manitobans for today and the future.

The Pallister government's investments and, in fact, their lack of investments and their interference with our post-secondary institutions are not what's needed right now. If this minister was serious about this, he would lead by example and he would restore what has been cut to our college seats and apprenticeships and—that directly link to on-the-job training and employment.

Will he do this, or is this just another excuse and more spin?

Mr. Eichler: Madam Speaker, the member's just wrong.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Southdale.

Changes to Employment Standards Code Leave for Victims of Interpersonal Violence

Ms. Audrey Gordon (Southdale): Since taking office in 2016, our government has demonstrated a clear commitment to providing better support for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. We recently passed legislation which expanded the existing early leave-termination provisions for survivors of domestic violence and stalking.

And yesterday the Minister responsible for Status of Women announced amendments to the Employment Standards Code that will broaden the

current domestic violence leave to include survivors of interpersonal violence.

Can the minister explain what these changes will mean for survivors, and why these changes are so important?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I'd like to thank the member from Southdale for that very important question.

Our government is committed to addressing interpersonal family violence and domestic violence. And I am proud to share that just yesterday our government announced important amendments to the employment standards act.

Victims of sexual violence and stalking, regardless of the perpetrator, will now be eligible to take protective leaves of absence. The new amendments will allow victims to take 10 consecutive or intermittent days of leave per year, and up to 17 weeks per year in one continuous period. This bill will also allow employees who are a parent or caregiver to a child or dependent to take the leave if their child or dependent experiences interpersonal violence.

Six other provinces have already implemented this legislation—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

The time for oral questions has expired.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Yes, I apologize, Madam Speaker.

Is there leave to include the names of our guests in Hansard?

Madam Speaker: It—can I just seek some clarification from the member? Does the member want those names included right now in this chronological order in Hansard, or would she prefer that those names be added—*[interjection]* No.

Would you like those names attached to the previous introduction?

Ms. Fontaine: Just immediately after your introduction of them in the House.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to include those names? *[Agreed]*

PETITIONS

Personal-Care Homes

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Manitoba elders and seniors have built this province and should receive a high level of support, having earned the right to be treated with due respect, dignity, understanding and compassion as a fundamental human right.

(2) Seniors who reside in personal-care homes have more diverse and complex physical and brain health issues today than those who are in similar homes even just five years ago. Yet the staffing formula, or minimal personnel requirement, is over 20 years old.

(3) The issue of the changes to and more complex nature of care is being exacerbated by the provincial government policy of discharging people out of hospitals more quickly, leaving many residents still in need of a high level of care.

* (14:30)

(4) Manitoba does not have enough health-care aides and nurses specifically trained to care for seniors with high and complex levels of physical and mental issues such as those with dementia, coupled with multiple chronic conditions.

(5) The added complexity of care with such residents is putting additional stress on doctors and family members, as it may take six to eight weeks for a doctor to see a resident in a personal-care home.

(6) Unfortunately, the lack of quality care received by many residents is not unique, causing one person to say that: It was easier to watch my dad die in the personal-care home than to watch him live in the personal-care home.

(7) Staff are so overworked that they are forced to tell senior elders and residents in need: Go in your diaper; I can't help you; or: You will get food eventually.

Relatives are also being told that residents in care homes should not ever expect to walk again after hip or knee replacement surgery because care homes are not set up for rehabilitation.

(9) The provincial government has allowed personal-care homes to serve food that is warmed

from frozen instead of being freshly cooked, depriving seniors the taste of good food, which is one of the few real pleasures that would be able to enjoy at this time of life.

Although residents enter personal-care homes to have the best possible quality of life in their last few days, weeks, months or years, relatives repeatedly hear the words: He came here to die and she came here to die.

(11) Relatives are regularly angry, frustrated, disappointed and shocked at the care their loved ones now receive in Manitoba's personal-care homes.

(12) Administrators in personal-care homes respond to complaints by stating they need more, better-trained staff.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to increase training and staffing requirements for personal-care homes in Manitoba to ensure residents receive high-quality, nutritious food as well as compassionate care.

Signed by Dolores Blanchard, Linda Morton, Carol Wilson and many, many others.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Pursuant to rule 33(7), I'm announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Michaleski). The title of the resolution is Removing Education Tax from Property.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that, pursuant to rule 33(7), the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for Dauphin. The title of the resolution is Removing Education Tax from Property.

* * *

Mr. Goertzen: Could you please resume debate on the Throne Speech.

THRONE SPEECH (Fifth Day of Debate)

Madam Speaker: Resuming debate on the motion of the honourable member for Southdale (Ms. Gordon) and the amendment and subamendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe), who has four minutes remaining.

Is there leave for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable—[*interjection*] Oh, is there leave for the motion to stand in the name of the honourable member for Concordia?

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Is there somebody that wishes to stand and debate?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education): It's a pleasure to rise and speak to the Throne Speech this afternoon, a great day in Winnipeg, as thousands of Winnipeggers, I understand, were downtown to celebrate the victory of the Blue Bombers, first time in 29 years, and I know there's been celebrations both in this House and last week, leading up to the Grey Cup.

I had the fortune to be in Calgary to watch the game on Sunday with my wife Kim and my son Malachi. We just had a tremendous time, of course, watching our home team not only win the Grey Cup but dominate the opposition, which I think was welcomed to see. We were quite nervous about what the outcome might be, at least myself and my son, where my wife was quite confident, as she usually is, in the Blue Bombers. But I was fairly nervous, and it was great to see them from the beginning of the game to the end and completely dominate the Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

It was also great to see, I would estimate, thousands, maybe ten thousand fans, Winnipeg fans, who made the trip out to Calgary to celebrate together with the Bombers. We left McMahon Stadium probably only around 11 o'clock at night, long after the game had ended. They finally had to kick us out of the stadium, and I'm not as young as I was when the Bombers won in 1990, and I wouldn't want to say we partied like it was 1990, but certainly we had a good time. We were well received by those in Calgary.

I'd also mention, I know, because there's a lot of concern about anxiety in Canada and some of the tensions that exist in different regions of Canada, and that's—those are real, and I wouldn't want to diminish or dismiss that, but it was great to see Canadians from coast to coast to coast come together in Calgary and to celebrate, of course, the game of football, but really to celebrate Canada.

And the day before the cup at the Stampede grounds, to be able to walk around and see thousands of Canadians from all parts of our country representing their different football teams, many of which, of course, weren't playing in the Grey Cup, and to be able to see them come together as Canadians. And it was a reminder to us that even though we have differences as Canadians, at times we have far more in common than we have that separates us.

And so it was wonderful to see the unifying power of sport that often happens. Of course, that is never more true than in Winnipeg today, but I think it's true across Canada as well. So it was a great demonstration of tremendous support for our team, but really for the game and for Canada overall. And so that was a tremendous thing to see, Madam Speaker.

I wanted to say a few words about my constituency, having the opportunity now to speak to the Throne Speech and the opportunity to be re-elected as the MLA for Steinbach. Of course, I am very pleased to be the Education Minister, but I always say during the election I only run for one job, and that is to be the MLA. It's the only job that any of us are applying for when we are running for election, in any given election.

So I'm very honoured to be re-elected as the MLA for Steinbach for the fourth time—or maybe fifth time. I believe it's been a few times. I was elected in 2003, 2007, 2011, and again in 2016, so for the fourth time. And I never take for granted the support that we have within the community and the area that I represent, even though it's changed tremendously since I first started to represent it in 2003.

We've had so many new Canadians come to our country and set out in the Steinbach area, from the Philippines, of course, like many areas of Manitoba, from India, of course, historically from Germany. And I believe it's one of the most multicultural communities outside of the city of Winnipeg. And that's not always well recognized by those who don't live in the community or maybe haven't visited it for many years. There might be a certain perception of the community, but it's tremendously multicultural. I

often like to say that when I was growing up in the city of Steinbach, if I wanted to see the world, I had to get on a plane and see the world, but now the world has come to Steinbach.

And that has really been, for my family and I think for my son in particular, been a great benefit for him as he's been able to learn and to experience the world without really having to leave the community. So many of his friends in his school come from different parts of the world he's been able to learn—learn their traditions and learn about their home countries, and that's been a very great benefit for him.

His experience growing up in Steinbach, even though I'm very proud of it and very pleased to have lived and grown up in Steinbach, his experience is richer than mine was. And I suspect that generationally, the next generation will be even richer as well. So I think this is a tremendous benefit.

But I very much appreciate the support of all those in the community who offered their support to me and to my family, as they often do. I know that all of us are tremendously proud of our own constituencies; all of us would probably stand up and say that we represent the best constituency in Manitoba, though, in my case it's true, Madam Speaker, and I very much never take for granted when there are those who will offer their support, but offer their prayers, offer their personal encouragement to myself, but in particular to my wife and to my son.

My son is 13 now, and so he has grown up in politics and in political life, and in many ways he is as much of a public personality as I am in my community. And that's different for a young person to grow up in. There are far more people that know him than he knows. And that's a unique experience, not a bad experience, but a unique experience. And I'm always very appreciative of the fact that within the community people are supportive of him and are very encouraging to him and often engage with him, whether we're at the grocery store or wherever, I know that that's part of who he's becoming as a young man, as he's just turned 13 years old.

* (14:40)

My wife, Kim, is—and those of us who benefit from spouses who are very supportive of us in politics—has always been incredibly supportive in that she attends many events—not as many, perhaps, as before my son was born, but attends a tremendous amount of events with me, which, I think, is wonderful. It helps us stay connected as a family. And it

may not always be individual time or what people might qualify as quality time, but I think that that time, even at events, is very important as you stay connected together as a family. And so I've—very, very thankful for the fact that I've been able to represent a constituency where family is important, where they value the fact that we're together as a family, where they are supportive of the fact that we're together as a family, that they're understanding.

And many of the times, particularly in the last five to six years, haven't been at home as much as any of us would like. And I'm 'shul' that there are many in elected life who have that same experience where they're not home as often as they would like. And when we're not home and we're either doing our ministerial duties or MLA duties outside of our home communities, to be able to have the support of friends and neighbours and others to be able to offer that support, whether it's just our neighbour, Mr. Penner—John Penner, who always clears our driveway in the winter—I know I don't have to worry about it if I'm not home for the—that week.

And it's really quite something to know that there is somebody there who is supporting and helping your family even when you can't physically be there to do that. And so I very much appreciate that fact.

I'm very proud of this government, Madam Speaker, and our Premier (Mr. Pallister) and all the—those who are part of the caucus who are taking on some difficult challenges. I spent many years on the opposition benches—probably longer than people should spend in opposition and—but wanted to be within government and to see the—to take on some of the difficult challenges that we believe needed to be taken on. And I'm very proud of a government that has not shied away from those difficult decisions.

It would be easy to sort of operate a government on cruise control and to try to not ever ruffle any feathers and just to try to maintain government. And I would argue that the former NDP government, whether that was under Gary Doer or in the last few years under Greg Selinger, that essentially was their mantra. They simply wanted to try to continue to operate government and not rock the boat. Of course, they rocked the boat internally, but in terms of the policy within the province, I think that their expectation was to try to not do anything that would in any way cause any sort of controversy.

But the reality is, in government, that if you want to achieve things and if you want to get things done, sometimes you have to make difficult decisions. And

this has been a government that has taken on many, many difficult challenges and continues to face those challenges directly and head on, but to do so in a balanced way, so we continue to see more funding go into health care—record funding, more funding into Education, more funding into Families, into social services. That is important, but not ignoring those other challenges that simply need to be addressed, not the least of which was the deficit that continued to spiral out of control and to grow and add to our debt under the former NDP government, Madam Speaker.

There are Manitobans who continue each and every year to see that debt grow as the deficit grew and wondered how it was and if we ever could get back into a place of balance. That was certainly within my constituency one of the key issues that people would say, how are we ever going to get the finances back in order, and then how can you do it in a responsible way.

And I think that this Premier and this government has taken that task on and has been able to find that right balance, Madam Speaker—balanced in terms of investing in those areas, those social services, those departments that provide direct services to individuals to continue to provide more support there while on the other hand getting the deficit under control.

And while that—why that is important is because we need to look at those who are going to inherit this great province and to ensure that they have the economic wherewithal as a government entity to be able to invest in those things going forward. As we continued to grow the deficit and the debt, that was becoming at risk, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Greg Nesbitt, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

So there is more work to do, there is more work to ensure that financial responsibility is there, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I'm confident that this is a government that is willing to continue to take on those difficult tasks and those important tasks. And so I appreciate the opportunity to serve in this government.

Most particularly, I appreciate the opportunity to be elected as the MLA for the Steinbach constituency, and most directly, and most heartfully, I appreciate that I have such a wonderful family who has supported me along in this journey, and I look forward to seeing the other great things that this government will continue to do in this renewed mandate that have been given to them—given to us by the people of Manitoba and the province of Manitoba.

Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker, for the opportunity to put a few words on the record regarding the Throne Speech, and I look forward to all the members of this House supporting the Throne Speech and future initiatives of the government.

Ms. Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): To begin I'd like to thank the constituents of Notre Dame for electing me on September 10, 2019, to be their member of the Legislative Assembly. The election campaign was a short, intense and rewarding experience. My team and I did our best to meet and meaningfully connect with as many neighbours as we could. We covered all 32 polls at least once, some twice, and some three times.

I'm proud to say that we won each and every poll and it was a very convincing win that way. Our campaign volunteers were made up of new friends and old friends, and what most campaigns spend on Canada Post mailers to distribute campaign flyers, we spent on groceries—bigas, trays of pancit, lumpia and Costco rotisserie chickens.

We had volunteer cooks who would make giant stock pots full of sopas, sotanghon and lugaw to feed our canvassers and sign crews, most of whom would directly come after work and on weekends.

Our volunteers hand-delivered each piece of campaign literature to 20,000 folks, and to all of the volunteers and donors who came to help whenever and however they could, I thank them most sincerely. I can never repay them for their commitment to me, to the Manitoba New Democratic Party and to the neighbourhoods and constituents that I now humbly serve.

There's a Filipino saying regarding how I view this debt of gratitude: Marunong tumanaw ng utang na loob. [*Intelligent view of a debt of your inner self.*] Utang na loob roughly translates to a debt of your inner self. Basically, it refers to how you should never forget what people have done to help you along your way.

The help that volunteers offered our campaign is something so valuable that I feel this debt deep in my bones, and the only way I can endeavour to repay our campaign volunteers is by doing my utmost best each and every day to serve our community and this province for the time that I will be granted as an MLA.

After getting elected, I can confidently say that my constituency staff and I hit the ground running. The very next day after the election we opened the doors to our constituency office. Even with the

garbage still on the floor from the previous night's election win celebration, we opened the office. We opened the office right away, not because we are gluttons for punishment but because, simply, there is such a great need for our services. We are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., every Monday to Friday, and we are currently considering adding Saturday appointments, too, in the future because of the amount of constituency casework our office sees on a daily basis.

We get phone calls, emails, social media queries and plenty of daily walk-ins. What our office sees in one day of casework is what I imagine some constituency offices see in two weeks or more. I used to volunteer at the then-St. Norbert constituency office when I was a student at the University of Manitoba and the only person that would come in to see us was the Greek-Canadian actor Nia Vardalos's father because he owned the little strip mall that we were in, and he would come in to say hi, not because he needed any constituency help.

Even during this past election campaign, amidst gruelling days and nights of door-to-door and telephone canvassing, hand-delivering leaflets and putting up lawn signs, our campaign office volunteers were actually doing casework, like reviewing Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program applications, trying to link homeless folks with housing and accompanying folks to access Legal Aid and other government services.

* (14:50)

Our volunteer campaign manager, Nick Higgins, said he's never seen a campaign like it. Nick drew the line on election day, saying, no casework on E-day. But the very next day after the election, my dedicated and knowledgeable constituency staff were back to work officially serving the community.

Within two months of taking office, our constituency executive already planned and executed a successful fundraiser for the NDP. In October, constituency staff, volunteers and I also attended meth in community, train-the-trainer workshops, sponsored by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg and the Menno Simons College department of conflict resolution studies.

To this end, our staff and volunteers will be hosting a series of meth-in-community workshops for our neighbourhoods in the coming new year. This month of November, our constituency volunteers marked the beginning of our Saturday free gym at a

community high school. And every Saturday throughout this upcoming school year we offer free recreation services, including basketball clinics for kids and a rotation of volleyball, basketball, Zumba classes and chess tournaments.

This coming winter, we are also planning to use the Saturday free gym spaces for our upcoming lunch-and-learns on topics like diabetes awareness and climate change. This coming spring will mark our annual free tax prep services and our constituency's annual job fair. Both were the efforts that my mother initiated and built up over her years in office. For this year's coming job fair, we will be making a special effort to focus on youth hiring opportunities.

Also on our current to-do list is early planning for this coming Canada Day. Our constituency executive has partnered with the West Alexander Residents Association, who has applied for federal Celebrate Canada grants to be able to put on a significant Canada Day experience for families, especially kids, in our neighbourhoods.

I'm also very proud of the work that my constituency is currently doing with Strini Reddy, the former superintendent of schools of the Frontier School Division. Together, we are working on obtaining partnerships with grocers like Seafood City, Costco and No Frills in conjunction with Perimeter airlines to be able to provide free fresh fruits to kids in northern communities on a regular basis.

All of this co-ordinated activity is what I meant by my constituency team and I hitting the ground running after the election. Getting elected to be an MLA is one of the highest privileges that can be bestowed upon someone, and how I plan to give humble thanks to those who elected me and supported me is by working hard to lead by example, being responsible, being responsive to the needs of people, learning from the community and working with community to make each and every day count for the next four years.

At this time, I would like to take this opportunity to thank and highlight my constituency staff: Jean Padrinao, Rey Sangalang and Beth Campomanes.

Jean Padrinao has served as Logan CA for 10 years and has graciously agreed to stay on to help me learn the ropes. Tita Jean is a technology whiz, an expert at keeping on top of all the changes of the immigration file and how it relates to everyday applicants and their families. She's in charge of my busy calendar and has a wealth of institutional

knowledge and experience that I rely on daily. Tita Jean 'devouts'—devotes countless hours of volunteer service to the music ministry in her church and has a sense of purpose, focus and priorities that are guided by her unwavering faith in God.

Rey Sangalang currently serves our constituency office as an outreach co-ordinator. Tito Rey was a seminarian, a priest-in-training as a youth and later became an advertising and market research executive for a multinational company. This unique combination of ex-priest and retired marketing executive is actually perfect for politics because of the compassion and insight he has for constituents and his ability to strategize and capitalize on political opportunities and outcomes.

Beth Campomanes has both formal law and legal assistant training, and she currently handles a lot of complex constituency work. Ate Beth is extremely patient, intelligent and brings a joyfulness and energy to the place that reminds me of my mother—someone we all respect very much.

Because of these three extremely gifted and hard-working people, by God's grace, I will succeed as an MLA and be able to serve my constituency and this province to the best of my ability. Thank you, Tita Jean, Tito Rey and Ate Beth.

Notre Dame is a new constituency named for the Winnipeg neighbourhoods that line the Notre Dame Avenue from Isabel Street all the way to the Red River College area past King Edward Avenue. The north-south boundaries of the constituency are from the train tracks just above Logan Avenue to Sargent Avenue.

The neighbourhoods I serve include: Brooklands and Weston, where I grew up and where my family currently owns a small home; West Alexander; Centennial and the West End. There are 21 schools, including Tech-Voc High School and Daniel McIntyre.

The communities that I serve are solidly made up of the working class and the working poor. As the principal of Cecil Rhodes—my old school—put it recently during a visit, she said: We have no rich families in our school. Everyone is working to get by and some families are facing varying levels of poverty; some, even worse than what we can see.

This characterization could be used to describe major components of the larger constituency as a whole. We are still working on getting the numbers to get a more accurate view of the social and economic

makeup of this new constituency, but when I filed my nomination papers with the Elections Manitoba returning officer Janice Berens, she told me that Notre Dame is the second poorest constituency in all of Canada.

I said to Ms. Berens: Do you mean the second poorest in all of Manitoba? And she said: No, all of Canada. The first poorest is in northern Québec.

Another long-standing fact that keeps me awake some nights is the statistic on child poverty that relates to our constituency. Almost 50 per cent of kids live in poverty in the federal riding of Winnipeg Centre, and since all of Notre Dame is part of Winnipeg Centre, that means one in two of our kids do not have proper access to food, clothing and shelter.

This is a harsh reality that our families and our children have endured for far too long. This year in particular has been a very difficult year for our constituency due to the proliferation of meth use and substance abuse in our communities. There have been numerous property thefts, home invasion and violent crimes in our neighbourhoods. Stores are closing because of rampant thefts.

Schools have now taken to locking all their doors during school hours to protect students and staff from serious incidents. Prior to taking this drastic step, one junior high school had called 911 10 times in a span of one and a half months, and even had one lockdown incident.

One principal told me that the daily pickup of drug syringes in their very small playground nets about 25 needles every single morning. We have had two separate incidents, months apart, where a teacher was assaulted and a parent dropping off their child at 9 a.m. in the morning was also assaulted for their belongings. Many residents are feeling frustrated and some even fearful of what they are seeing around them.

During the run-up to the election, after I had won the NDP nomination to represent Notre Dame, I met a proud lifelong resident of Weston, Ron Kehler, a consciously non-partisan community leader who has done incredible work with organizing housing co-ops in Weston.

Over the past decade, Mr. Kehler has been a board member of the NorWest health co-op, as well as a seniors advocate. Mr. Kehler toured us in his van and showed us each community centre and each housing co-op and the history and activities and offerings of each place.

And for fun, because he knows I'm a little partial to the NDP, he brought us to an industrial area near the Logan area railway tracks where he said back when he was a boy, there used to be an opening to a short tunnel where all the railway workers from Weston and Brooklands used to go in and out to get to the railyards for work.

At the mouth of this tunnel, he said, was where Stanley Knowles would, at 5 a.m., stand and greet the workers, hand out leaflets to go to this or that community gathering later to hear speeches and, more importantly, to organize.

Maybe not coincidentally, Andrew Swan, long-serving, well-loved MLA for Minto, on the very same day, also gave me a framed picture of Stanley Knowles that hung in his constituency office for the past 16 years.

*(15:00)

Mr. Kehler's story and Andrew's precious gift to me was just a reminder that the struggle for equality, social justice, human dignity, for a living wage, for worker's rights, for women's rights, for indigenous rights, for human rights—this struggle has been going on for a long time.

I've been blessed to have many teachers and allies in this struggle, and now have many committed NDP members and now fellow caucus members that are here with me in this struggle for a better world. As part of the NDP caucus, I've been given the mandate of Status of Women critic, immigration critic and I'm also a member of the French critic.

Je suis fière de faire partie du caucus en français. Je suis actuellement des cours afin d'améliorer mes compétences en français. En tant que membre du caucus, je soutiens notre critique des affaires francophones, Adrien Sala, en assistant à de nombreuses rencontres avec la communauté francophone. Je souhaite être à l'écoute de leurs besoins et les soutenir.

Il est essentiel pour moi de montrer ma reconnaissance à l'un des peuples fondateurs du Manitoba, à son histoire, à sa culture et à ses droits légitimes et légaux. De plus, je souhaite montrer mon respect aux nombreuses communautés rurales francophones et à l'ensemble des francophones, qu'ils soient présents depuis des générations ou qu'ils viennent d'arriver dans notre jolie province.

J'aimerais remercier mes jeunes amis, Zachary Sey, 10 ans, et sa petite sœur Trinity Sey, huit ans, qui

gentiment « FaceTime » en français avec moi pendant 10 minutes chaque jour.

Translation

I am proud to be a member of the French caucus. I am currently taking classes to improve my French skills. As a member of that caucus, I support our critic for Francophone Affairs, Adrien Sala, by attending numerous meetings with the Francophone community. I want to be listening to and to support the French community.

I consider it essential to show my gratitude to one of the founding peoples of Manitoba, and to recognize its history, its culture, and its legitimate and legal rights. Furthermore, I want to show my respect to the numerous rural Francophone communities, as well as to all Francophones, whether they have been here for generations or just arrived in our lovely province.

I want to thank my young friends Zachary Sey (10) and his little sister Trinity Sey (8), who kindly FaceTime in French with me every day for 10 minutes.

English

Mr. Speaker, in my role as Status of Women critic, my family and I drove to Flin Flon and The Pas two weekends ago to join with women and their very young families who are protesting the one-year temporary closure of the maternity ward at the Flin Flon General Hospital.

Heavily pregnant women in Flin Flon are forced to travel long and sometimes treacherous distances to hospitals in The Pas or Dauphin or Winnipeg in order to give birth. Mom and baby are then discharged after as little as five hours, post-delivery, to make room for other moms about to give birth. Babies are being discharged without getting their 24-hour required blood work.

Due to this government's health-care cuts and closures, pregnant women in the North are regularly encouraged to voluntarily induce labour at 37 weeks, even though a pregnancy is considered full-term at 40 weeks. When I gave birth two years ago, my obstetrician told me that we wouldn't even consider inducing my baby until after 41 weeks. Northern women and their newborns are not receiving the care that they need. All pregnant women across this province deserve birth delivery services that are safe and close to home.

On the immigration file, my first round of visits with folks who work in immigrant settlement services have asked me to advocate for changes to reinstate

Manitoba Health card access to newcomers, to—and to international students. They have asked me to advocate for more resources to combat fraud in the MPNP system, and they have asked to address the funding cuts to adult education and to affordable housing supports.

We know that new immigrants generate a net economic growth of about \$300 million per year to this province, and that new immigrants from the nominee program are largely responsible for the population increases we experience in Manitoba. Despite the economic and population advantages that we bring to this province, the Throne Speech was completely silent on this fact, and makes no priority of helping newcomers succeed further and contributing to our province through increasing funding for adult education, child-care and housing.

This government has made no new housing commitments, and has in fact sold off 300-plus units to the private sector.

In closing, I would like to give special thanks to my family, friends and my beloved parents, Orli and Flor, and especially to my husband Joel. Thank you for all your support and love. Merci.

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge that we are on Treaty 1 territory, home to the Metis. I'd also like to acknowledge that I reside in Treaty 5 territory, and my constituency rely—lines within the traditional land of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation, War Lake Cree Nation, Fox Lake Cree Nation and York Factory Cree Nation.

I would like to thank the voters of Churchill, Fox Lake, Gillam, Pikwitonei, War Lake, Illford, York Landing, Split Lake, Nelson House, Thompson, Wabowden and Thicket Portage for electing me as a representative in the Legislature.

I am proud to come from the North. I am proud to have many strong women leaders in my region, like Councillor Jackie Walker and vice-Chief Cheryl Moore Hunter [*phonetic*] from Nisichawayasihk, Chief Betsy Kennedy from War Lake, who is the longest serving female chief in Manitoba, and Member of Parliament Niki Ashton.

I'd like to congratulate my fellow MLAs on their election, and I look forward to being a strong voice in my constituency. As members of the Legislative Assembly, we are leaders, and our role is to be the voice of our constituents and ensure our constituents'

interests are being brought forward in the House and considered in every piece of legislation we debate.

I want to thank everyone who got me here today. My victory was made possible by many people coming together for a common goal and bringing back representation for the North. In particular, I'd like to thank my campaign manager, Blair Hudson, who worked tirelessly to ensure we had a winning campaign. Words cannot describe how much I appreciate Blair and thank him for all of his dedication and hard work.

I'd like to thank my voter contact person, Jody Levy, who was always a cheery face in the campaign office.

I'd like to thank the team that travelled with me: Ross Martin, Pam Christler-Martin, Dana, Ellen Dale, Rod Murphy, John Heath and Jim Brandt. I'd also like to give a special thanks to my son, Nicholas Morris, who travelled by train with us to Churchill.

They allowed me to speak to people in every community in the constituency. It was really important to me that we went to all the communities to listen, to hear from them what the local issues are.

My sign guy, Wayne Leveque, was crucial in ensuring all of our signs went up every day. I'd also like to thank everybody else who made this possible. I'd like to thank my family, my husband William Morris, who encourages and in-believes in me, my two sons who inspire and drive me to help make Manitoba the best province it can be. I want all children to be able to be their best selves.

I'd also like to thank leaders in the communities for their support, especially city councillor and deputy mayor, Les Ellsworth, for all the door knocking, advice and support.

I'd also like to thank former MLA Steve Ashton for his encouragement and faith in me. It means a lot. He has showed me the importance of visiting, staying connected to the communities and listening.

I'd also like to thank MP Niki Ashton for her support and encouragement. She has-showing the importance of staying true to who you are.

I'd like to share my story and what motivates me to do the work and activism. My mother was a single mother of two small children when my brother was a year and a half, and I was three years old. She wanted to provide my brother and I with a good life but didn't know where to start, so she went back to school and started upgrading her education. She was able to do

this while on assistance, and there were—that's where the seeds of activism started for her. She saw how her privilege made it easier to access programs and how support workers would bend over backwards to make sure she had access to all of the supports available.

This did not sit right with her, so she found—as she found out about the programs, she made sure other people knew about them and helped them gain access to the program, whether it be through informing or helping them fill out the paperwork to gain access. My mom saw again how her privilege helped her in the family court system. Once again, support workers made sure my family had access to all programs.

Seeing how the system worked really upset her and drove her to do something about it. The inequities helped her decide to go into law with a focus on public practice to make sure everybody had equitable access to the system.

Her activism didn't stop there. She fought hard for LGBTQ2S, women, immigrants and indigenous rights. As we are doing her activist—as she was doing her activism, my brother and I were there learning why these fights are important. I was shown from a strong—I was shown from an early age that if something isn't right and people aren't being treated fairly just because of who they are, you have a duty to stand up and help fight to change it. These early lessons shaped who I was and have become—helped me become the adult and the parent I am today.

* (15:10)

As I started my work as an adult, I knew I wanted to do something where I can make a difference in people's lives, and I knew I wanted to help fight the injustices that happen every day. I found that work with my Member of Parliament, Niki Ashton. I am proud to have worked with her for 10 years. Working with the member for—the Member of Parliament for 10 years, I saw first-hand how services and funding cuts can make a difference in people's lives. I did casework outreach and I've seen first-hand what lives are like up in the North.

I am a northerner, an activist and a proud socialist. Being from the North has shown me the importance of fighting not just for yourself but for your neighbours. Because when one succeeds, we all succeed. I believe that the leadership has to be grounded in the reality of the communities you represent. If you know you—if you know what your community needs, you are going to be important on your own basis. Meeting with community members

directly, I know that—what the community actually needs, and that is why I am committed to going to communities in between elections.

I am a mother of two wonderful boys who are full of life. And being a working mother has shown me the need for quality affordable child care. Child care is important to society because we can't talk jobs, training and education or the economy without a focus on child care. Countries that put a priority on quality affordable child care have some of the best outcomes for children and the families. They have the highest participation of women in the workforce and have the highest standard of living.

I am proud to come from a province that has been a leader on the child care. And, in fact, some provinces like BC are looking to Manitoba to set their child-care policies. I am worried that these—that this will change under the current government since they have frozen funding levels to 2016 and there is no indication that that is going to change. What this government does not understand is for every dollar spent on child care is not a dollar spent in the local economy.

My oldest is turning 11 and I am so happy he had access to an all-day kindergarten program at the school district of Mystery Lake offered, but they had to cut the program because of the cuts to education made by this government. My son and other children who started kindergarten in 2013 are the only ones who have been—benefited from the 20-kid cap.

I want to see all children have access to the best education so they have the skills they need to be the best they can be. The PC government ignored teachers and ignored research that says kids benefit from small class size, and removed this. I saw first-hand the importance of small class size. I believe that the government should be looking to what is in the best interest of children and listening to teachers on the ground and the importance of small class size. Leaders in educational field say that small class size make a difference.

Being an activist is also part of who I am. I was shown from an early age that, if you can make a difference, you have to, because when everybody helps out, communities and organizations can be the best that they can be. Because of that, I have joined different boards in my communities, including the Thompson YWCA, doing advocacy work and focusing on women's issues, and I've also joined the Thompson Ski Club, where I take my children every Sunday—Sunday afternoons in the winter.

I'm a proud socialist. I believe that governments need to be leaders. I believe no one should be punished for being poor. I believe housing, food, health care and education are human rights and should be treated as such. For example, ensuring Manitobans have access to quality Pharmacare means that they do not have to choose between medication and rent. This will save time and money in the—both in the emergency rooms, and it'll save lives.

Government sets the tone with the relationships with indigenous people as well. Government should be modelling what true, meaningful reconciliation means by recognizing both indigenous and Metis inherent rights.

As the MLA for Thompson, I will advocate for our region. We need governments to care about northerners, not just corporations that exploit our land and our people.

We need to invest in infrastructure and improve highways 6, 290 and 391. The cuts to public transportation need to be reversed. That has meant that smaller communities had to make hard choices when it came to public transportation.

We need investments in education, including capital money for new schools in northern Manitoba. In the community of Gillam, they've been having a portable for the last 40 years. In my home community of Thompson, the school—local elementary school Wapanohk is looking at adding on its second portable.

Schools in the North are aging and funding is needs—for much-needed renovation. I promise to continue to stand up for investments in other Northern priorities as they become evident.

Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): With us this afternoon in the Speaker's Gallery, on—sorry, on the loge to my left is the—is Nancy Allum [*phonetic*], the former member for St. Vital.

On behalf of the honourable members, I welcome you here today.

* * *

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Very pleased to speak to the Throne Speech today. And I guess at the beginning, I'd like to just congratulate the Blue Bombers for their big victory in the Grey Cup. It's been, I'm told, 29 years since the last time that we won the Grey Cup, and I think I've been a season ticket

holder since about that time. And it's hard to believe that that amount of time has gone by. We keep hoping for results each and every year. I know the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) is also a season ticket holder, as well. I do see him at the games regularly.

And so we're—it was a very big surprise, I guess. And I think there was a big celebration today at The Forks. I did see some other MLAs down there having a very good time. And I think we—city should enjoy this. The province should enjoy this while we can, because these things don't happen every day. There'll be a big expectation now. I can hear some of the fans tonight on the radio talking about how this is going to happen again next year, and I know that sometimes these things don't work out.

Now, you know, at the beginning, I'd like to say that I remember the last Throne Speech last fall—November 2018. And the government at that time included in the Throne Speech the words that they were going to bring in protections against unsolicited, high-pressure sales tax—tactics used by direct sellers. This is what they announced last year.

And this is the government that, you know, likes to talk about promises made and promises kept—*[interjection]* I see—somehow, they've got to update that chart because they're missing one. On direct sellers, they seem to have forgotten about that one completely.

And, you know it is a case where there are some people that have been seriously taken advantage of by direct sellers. In the last couple of years alone, we've had—I believe it is Alberta and Ontario ban direct sellers completely—or, certainly ban their activities as it relates to the type of activities that some of the direct sellers here—Utilebill—are doing here in Winnipeg. And guess what's happened? In the last year since they made the promise in the Throne Speech, we've gone through the whole year, the election cycle, we've gone through another Throne Speech—not a mention at all about direct sellers.

So yesterday I asked the new minister—now, what they did was they took consumer affairs and moved it from Justice over to Finance. Now, the Finance Minister probably doesn't even know it's there.

So yesterday, I decided to remind him about that. And he clearly, in my mind, doesn't know it's there because he's done absolutely nothing, and the government has done absolutely nothing under the previous minister and this minister so far, to

compensate people who have been taken advantage in the scam.

* (15:20)

Now, I have a case in Elmwood constituency which is very similar to the one that I asked him about yesterday. Now, yesterday I asked him about a Winnipeg resident whose case was written up by the CBC last year, where a direct seller called Utilebill promised to pay over—was promising to pay \$37,000. These guys sold a furnace, a HEPA filter, a water filter, an electronic air cleaner, for a total of \$37,000 to a gentleman when experts have said that the cost of these items should not be more than \$10,000, including equipment and installation.

Now, the case of my constituent, it's the same company, Utilebill, who sold my constituent a series of items not in the \$37,000 range, but, you know, sufficient that the—that my constituents are very upset about this, and all of these people are looking for a compensation.

Now, where is the compensation going to come from? Well, in the case of direct sellers, direct sellers have to register with the Province, with the government, and they have to obtain a bond. And, when they get the bond, the reason they get the bond is that if they do things like this and take advantage of people that there will be compensation made to the people as a result of calling in the bond.

And I guess what my question was to the minister is what has happened with regard to the bond at this point, and I've not been able to get any clear answers from this government about that. I mean, they have—there's certainly a limitation under the bond, so if they wait too long, they'll probably miss the opportunity to obtain the funds and then the question is how do they go about reimbursing the people who have been taken advantage of and what are the—what kind of deadlines or dates are they using in these cases. Now, the new cases that keep coming forward, are they going to be included, you know?

So we don't know what it is that they are—how they are using the bonding opportunities they have here. We don't know whether they plan to follow Ontario and Alberta and ban the practice. Like, we just got silence over there, and I don't whether this is just confusion on their part or they just—this issue somehow doesn't seem to merit their attention.

We would like to know what in the world is going on with this government. Like, why make a promise that you have no intention of keeping, right, make a

big issue about promises made, promises kept? You put it in the Throne Speech. Like, usually when a government goes to the, you know, goes that far, they really think this is a big issue. You know things don't get in the Throne Speech unless there is a paramount issue involved here and that they intend to do something, so how can they get away with a just like-like-like flavour of the day? Oh, well, let's do the-let's draft up the Throne Speech. Well, what are we going to put in it? Well, let's compensate some direct sellers. And that gets them by the Throne Speech each day last fall, and then they just forget about it-move on.

And, meanwhile, the victims are out there. Having taken advantage, they're marauding through the city here and across the province selling inflated appliances. I mean, \$37,000? What in the world is going on when you can be sold \$37,000 for a \$10,000 worth of equipment?

Like, where is this government? They're supposed to be protecting the consumers, and they actually came out of their little-like a snail, out of their shell-they come out of their shell; they look around; oh, there's a problem. Let's solve it. Let's put it in the Throne Speech. Let's pretend we're going to do something, and then do absolutely nothing. You would have been better off just, like, leaving it alone. Stay on the shelf; don't come out; just ignore it; hope it will go away.

Well, it's not going to go away because there's more and more people that are contacting us now complaining about this company.

So I'm going to keep asking, you know, the minister, maybe they'll move it, you know, a little pea,; they'll move it around to another minister, you know, in the next few months, and somebody else will get to do nothing about it.

So, you know, once again, I think we have to recognize that the government is, you know, intact halfway through its mandate. And I say that meaning that there's-they're halfway through. They've had their three years and then it'll be maybe another three years tops, maybe extra if the Premier (Mr. Pallister) gets scared and doesn't want to come out and call another three-year election. But, you know, the point is that they have, you know, they've taken some chances in their first three years, and it's just amazing to me that they're still standing, because what they did to the people of Winnipeg and Manitoba by closing those three ERs is absolutely unbelievable-unbelievable that they could have gotten away with that.

And, you know, we were talking about Concordia yesterday. And, you know, this is, like, the third version of Concordia Hospital, but it was started by Mennonite community way back, you know, back in the early 1900s. And it initially was set up-the first hospital was in the West End, actually, and the second one was on-in around Scotia Street, around in there. And then the big one, you know, opened up where-by the Louise Bridge.

And then, of course, it was moved in 1974 by Ed Schreyer into its current location where it's been all this time. So it is particularly galling, I'm sure, to all those strong supporters from the community who've supported the Conservatives all these years to have their entire legacy just wiped out by this government that decided that they don't want to have emergency services in northeast Winnipeg that takes care of the entire area all the way to Transcona, north of the city.

When this was set up in the '70s, you know, Ed Schreyer set up two hospitals, the Concordia and Seven Oaks. As a matter of fact, if the truth be known, I'm told that those two floors that are part of Seven Oaks right now actually were supposed to be extra floors on Concordia, but Ed decided in his wisdom to lop off a couple floors and move them over into the North End, which was very smart, I think, and in a time when, you know, it was understood that communities needed hospitals. You know, how can you possibly take the population and double it and then somehow say, oh, well, we need less hospitals, right?

And to use your-the so-called expert-I mean, they-what they do is you-look, anybody can go and take a statistical report and say, well, yes, Calgary is bigger and it has fewer hospitals, but you've got to look at more than that. You have to look at what the road system is like. You know, Calgary doesn't have the Louise Bridge, which is about to fall in the river because this government refuses to do anything about it.

An Honourable Member: You put your signs up again?

Mr. Maloway: You know, the city-you know, they want to talk about my signs, and you know something, I-you know, they just can't-[*interjection*]

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

Mr. Maloway: -stop talking about these signs. And the reality is that we have more signs that have big, 'horkin' NDP on them than we have that don't have

them, right? Like, why don't you take a drive—
[interjection]

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

Mr. Maloway: —rather than looking—you know, googling CBC—[interjection]

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): I'd just ask the member to respect the member in debate.

The honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

Mr. Maloway: But you know what they do, they just simply google CBC and see, oh, they did a story on Louise Bridge. And they see a sign there that is—that doesn't have NDP on it, and all of a sudden none of my signs have NDP. Well, drive around. But you don't drive around.

Ever since Gary Filmon's days, the press always made a big joke about the fact that they'd get on the press bus in the morning and then say, well, where are we going. Well, they were going out to Bronx, right, on Henderson Highway. And so the press would figure, well, we should be there in about 10 minutes, right? Half hour later, they're on the Perimeter Highway. Why are they going on the Perimeter Highway? Because they don't want to drive down Henderson Highway, as simple as that.

An Honourable Member: Why are you yelling?

* (15:30)

Mr. Maloway: And that is—well, I get all riled up when they like to talk about these signs, which is just totally untrue. We had, like—now, this time around was a little different, we had 1,300 little yellow signs. So it kind of confused them a little bit, but they still didn't want to drive down Henderson Highway.

They were complaining about how it was cutting off the vision, the traffic, right? There was—they had their own, you know, Tory hacks out there making a fuss about, oh, your sign's too big. Your sign's too big. Take it down, right? And when you moved it a bit, they wanted them all down, until then they started putting up signs.

You know Lawrence Toet? Lawrence Toet started putting up big signs with his picture on there. All of a sudden everything was fine. You know, it was okay to have those big Conservative signs up there, but put up a whole bunch of these little yellow ones, oh, my God, the whole world is coming to an end.

But anyway, I'm used to getting this kind of reaction from these folks and only wish the Premier (Mr. Pallister) was here because when we talk about the Louise Bridge, the City just finished its consultations on Saturday.

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

The member shouldn't be referring to the absence of the—of a member from this House.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): And while I'm up here, I'd just like to ask for a little better decorum and let the member finish his statement.

Thank you.

Mr. Maloway: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. And my reference to the Premier is that in the past he likes to talk about this issue and he likes to talk about the Louise Bridge. And I like to talk about the Louise Bridge too. So let's talk about the Louise Bridge.

The City of Winnipeg had its final consultations this weekend. And I went there, and I got to say, these are my first consultations in some 30 years that I've actually been happy, because they 'drow'—they drew the proposed bridge exactly where it should go—well, very close to where it should go, but it's close enough.

And so I'm starting to believe, once again, that it's possible, before this thing collapses into the river, that we're actually going to get it rebuilt. It's the second—you know, Elmwood constituency has the two oldest bridges in Winnipeg, 100-year-old bridges. Louise is not even the oldest bridge. The Redwood Bridge is the oldest. And, you know, I have two of them. I don't see any of this in Charleswood. I don't see anything in south Winnipeg: all brand-new structures out there. And this bridge literally has been so close to getting built.

When Sam Katz was the mayor and Thomas Steen was the councillor, you know, all of a sudden things started to happen, and we thought it was—it went from, it's low priority, it just scooted right up. It was, like, No. 6 or—well, it went, like, from No. 10 to No. 6 overnight; thought, my goodness, it's going to get done.

Well, it didn't get done. Now it's kind of slipped back again. And so now it's being included in the new proposed transit corridor and, you know, that too is being massaged a little bit. So things are looking—you

know, if that plan gets approved in June, the final plan, then I have some hope that it might get done.

But the end of the day, nothing is going to get done until this government commits to it and the federal government commits to it. And I just want to encourage this government to actually, you know, proceed with this issue, because this whole—this bridge, you know, deals with, daily, like, 50,000 cars go through there.

Now, the new plan, obviously, is not going to replace a two-lane bridge. We're talking about two lanes in 2019, one each way; that's all it's got. So we're talking about a six-lane bridge now: four for cars and two for buses. So this is a big improvement.

And even, you know, the engineering people will tell you that this thing has got bad—the old bridge has bad engineering reports. Literally nobody knows whether it's going to last very much longer. Now, I don't want to be accused, you know, of having the darn bridge closed down, you know, because of engineering issues, right? So I'd like to see the thing stay open and handle the traffic that it's handling, but, you know, it doesn't give you a lot of confidence when last spring, I went over there and the CBC guy was there. There was, like, big holes in it, right? Like, you could actually walk right through; like, on the walkway, you could step right through.

And when I drive under there in my boat in the summertime, they've got pieces of plywood. I've even put pictures of this in my leaflets that go out. This thing has gotten all kinds of pieces of plywood screwed up under the side of it, right? Like, you know, when the—if and when it ever falls apart—right—like, the boaters are going to get hit as well as the people that are driving over this thing, right?

So, you know—well, the member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield) wants about—talk about time, and I know he's made his speech already. So clearly he doesn't—he's not worried about himself getting up to make a speech. *[interjection]* Well, I already talked about the bridge. We just want the thing built. The whole northeast wants it built.

And I wanted to say you cannot, you know, make all these assertions about how many hospital ERs are required unless you consider all the traffic and the bridges and stuff like that. You can't compare, you know, Calgary's situation to Winnipeg. And that's why I'm, you know, highly critical of the Peachey report being hundred per cent applicable to the situation here in Winnipeg.

Anyway, Mr. Vice—or, Speaker—Deputy Speaker, I want to thank you very much for the time.

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): The member's time has expired.

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): First, I want to say thank you to all the people who helped me get here today.

I'll first start by thanking a very important person in my life. I couldn't really ask for a better partner and wife in my wife, Shannon, who's here today. She is not only supporting our family during the long hours of campaigning, but on many a occasion she's actually come out door knocking with us as well, including actually on our anniversary this summer. She has taken more—on more than her fair share of caring for our two children.

Shannon is both a talented musician and music educator. After earning her master's degree in music performance, she played for two seasons at the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. Then, finding her passion in music education, she went back to school and got her education degree. And she's currently an incredible elementary music teacher.

I'm not only grateful that she's chosen to support me in this way, but I'm so grateful that she does it with such grace. Thank you for being my partner in life's adventure and for being the rock of our household. And she's here. If I asked the members to maybe provide a little round of applause for my wife as well.

Thank you to my parents, Merle and Garnet Moses, who are also here today, and my in-laws, Joan and Fraser Linklater. They have all supported me for as long as I can remember. They have been my biggest backers inside and outside of politics.

My father is a retired civil engineer who's worked for both the provincial and federal governments. My mother is a retired health-care service provider. Joan and Fraser Linklater are both retired musicians and music educators who spent the better part of the last two decades teaching students at the University of Manitoba. I thank them all sincerely for helping me become the person that I am today. So thank you.

I really do consider myself lucky to have a family to support me and a family that has such a diverse and cultural background. They've chosen to live around the globe, my family. They're many races and—they're black, they're white; I have family members who are from indigenous backgrounds who live in North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia. This

multiculturalism is part of who I am, and a part—and I am proud to see that this multiculturalism is also finally becoming evident—more evident in this Chamber as well.

* (15:40)

I want to thank, as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as was announced earlier, we have former MLA Ms. Nancy Allan here today with us. And I want to thank her. The first time I met Nancy, I was impressed with her energy and the way she captured a room of people. She was able to engage so many people and bring them together.

As I got to know Nancy more, I quickly learned that some of her best qualities are how formidable and fierce she is. She is wonderfully competitive in the best way. Nancy was able to use all of these skills to work hard and find ways to benefit our community of St. Vital.

Ultimately, her passion for the people around her and her—for her community are what made her a great MLA. I'm so grateful to count her as a friend and to count Nancy as one of my mentors, and I truly hope that I can emulate her dedication to St. Vital. So, thank you.

I do want to take some time to thank other volunteers that I have had on my campaign. These people are dedicated, have dedicated hours and hours of their time to my successful campaign. I'll thank Mike Moroz, my campaign manager; Monica Girouard, our official agent; Devon Kelly, co-ordinating our volunteers.

And there are so many volunteers, but just to name a few briefly, I'll just make a list of names here that I want to thank: Brian, Chris, Ellen, Neil, Nathalie, Ryan, Riley, Amber, Ross, Accalia, Andrew, Liz, Frank, Irene, Grant, Clair, Kevin, Joan, Andrew, plus Sara and Matt helping us co-ordinate our E-Day.

So just a snippet of a few of the volunteers who really made our election success possible.

There's so many volunteers and, unfortunately, I'm not able to name all of them. The people in this Chamber today know that it takes a small army to really be successful in a campaign. Those are just a few of the people in my small army, and I do want to voice my 'succeer'—sincere and heartfelt thanks to each and every one of them.

I also want to thank the central office and the central campaign staff and volunteers there that

worked day and night to help each candidate out, including myself. I want to say thank you to our leader, Wab Kinew, who came out and helped—our leader—[*interjection*]

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order. We have to refer to members in this House by their constituency, and not by their name.

Mr. Moses: I apologize, and I'd like to thank, in my speech, the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew), who came door knocking with me in St. Vital to find out first-hand about the issues of—that the people of St. Vital face. And I remember him joining me and knocking doors along Kingston Crescent.

That evening, I went into a house and visited a neighbour that—a house that was backing onto the Red River, and chatted with them about the issues that they were facing. We spoke about the best ways that we can simply fix our health-care issues facing three emergency room closures in the city of Winnipeg. We spoke about the options that we would present to fix the crisis.

A front door was closed in the house and I could see through the window that Wab—that our—Leader of the Official Opposition was approaching, and what I did was I opened the door for him to enter the home so that we could, together, discuss, and—discuss the issues about health care and about how to simply fix our environment for today, make some progress today, but also fix it for our future generations.

This time was so important to the couple that we were both able to take time out and speak to them directly about the issues that the couple ended their conversation by saying, you know, they weren't sure before, but now we've spoken about the issues, and that we could count on their vote.

Now we were walking away from the home and down the front steps to have Nancy Allan, one of—some others of our volunteers chatting with their next door neighbour, who happily proclaimed out that they were excited to take one of our lawn signs, and at that moment that same couple that we spoke to opened back up their front door and said, hey, we want a lawn sign, too, for our front lawn.

And it was simply a great moment to see people really buy into our plan for fixing health care, for working and improving our education system and making sure that our environment was clean for future generations.

I also want to say thank you to those who made financial contributions to our campaign. From the smallest to the largest amount, every single donation mattered, and it helped to push us over the top. I thank those people who took lawn signs, who helped us out in any way they could, small or large. Even those who supported us online; those people were the wind in our sails. They were the motivation for us pushing hard right to the end of every single day.

To the voters of St. Vital, I say thank you. Thank you to those who opened the doors to us to talk to me, talk to my volunteers. Thank you for sharing your issues and your concerns with me. Thank you for sharing your hopes and aspirations with me as well.

I remember, in fact, one man who opened the door for me while canvassing, and before I could say a word, he said, just hold on for a minute. He ran down to his home, down in the basement and brought his two kids up—brought his daughter and his son up to hear what I had to say and what our—my plan was for St. Vital and for the future of Manitoba.

Now, I was very fortunate; I feel honoured that the man's daughter, who had just turned 18 earlier this year, decided that she was going to cast her first-ever vote for me. I'm so happy that that father was teaching his children about the importance of voting and having your voice heard—having it heard through an election process. But not only that, I am humbled when I consider that I earned the vote of that 18-year-old girl—earned her first-ever vote.

And I heard, frankly, from dozens of constituents that had either just become voting age or had just become citizens and who were casting their first-ever vote for me. I'm honoured to have reached—to have received each and every one of those, and I will work hard every day because of it.

But, most importantly, I honestly thank the residents of St. Vital for their votes and for placing their trust in me in representing them in the Legislature for the next four years.

St. Vital, it really is a beautiful place to live. If you haven't been there, you should definitely come visit or even move to St. Vital. When I think about St. Vital, I think about St. Vital Park, I think about its gorgeous, well-known duck pond and its award-winning, fully accessible toboggan slide. I think about the St. Vital Museum and fire hall that has maintained a wonderful history of our community. I think about the community centres, such as Windsor, Norberry-Glenlee that have provided countless

activities, services, recreation to the neighbourhood. I think about the great schools, whose teachers work hard every day to educate young people. I think about the people who live on Morley Street, Moore Avenue, as well as those who live on Kingston Crescent and Victoria Crescent. I want to work hard together as a community to build solutions that will make all of our lives better in St. Vital. It truly is a fantastic place to live.

You know, families young and old live in St. Vital, and I have spoken to many seniors who often share their concerns regarding affordability. Affordability really is a big issue, especially the rising cost of housing.

With many seniors in St. Vital living in apartment blocks, rent increases are not so slowly pricing people out of where they live. Another issue facing seniors is the costs of health-care services, including prescriptions, that forces many seniors to make difficult and often impossible decisions between medication and food or shelter.

Additionally, another big issue is the cost of—rising cost of public transportation. So many people around our city and province face these tough decisions, and especially seniors are faced with a difficulty of getting around our city, and I think they deserve a better quality of life, especially in their golden years.

Now, I was born and raised right here in Winnipeg to my parents, who immigrated from Trinidad and Tobago, and among the reasons they chose to live here are the opportunities here for furthering education, quality health-care services and good options for work that are available to us in Manitoba.

Those are the reasons that I wanted to get into politics myself; the same way my parents provided better living conditions for their children, I want to make Manitoba a better place for my two children. Though—through their words and actions, my parents taught me about faith, service to the community and how to respect people around us.

I am proud to carry those qualities into the Chamber today, and I thank my parents for that. They not only raised me and my siblings to support their family, but supported my family here and their family back at home. And they succeeded because of the hope that the challenges of today would become the experiences and life lessons of tomorrow.

* (15:50)

I learned that education is the key to creating a better future, not only for yourself, but for those around you, too. Education allows people to prepare themselves to have a better future. It is the roots by which the tree of our society is anchored. Unfortunately, through this government's actions, and again restated in the Throne Speech, it has been starving our education system.

There are less educational supports, more pressure put on teachers with larger classroom sizes, and it is beyond time that we stop treating students and teachers as simply cogs in a machine to churn out more employees for our economy, but rather as unique individuals who need to be nurtured through our education system so that they can become the best people possible.

This can be accomplished by working together to 'correaux'—correct some of the issues that may prevent students from learning, such as poverty, homelessness, mental health issues and addiction.

I fear this government's educational review will be used a tool to reduce and cut educational supports. And I urge this government to use this review as an opportunity to truly put the best interests of Manitobans—Manitoban students first.

As I grew up, I was inspired by my older siblings to play sports, and I played just about every sport I could: basketball, football, volleyball, track and field. And, while I enjoyed every moment, I learned lessons. I learned lessons about teamwork, putting the team in front ahead of your own interests. I learned lessons about focusing on the moment, that things in the past are fixed or set, though lessons to be learned; that things in the future are to be planned for, but can't be acted on yet; but is only the moment now when we can actually make a difference, and make some positive contributions.

I continued to play sports at the University of Manitoba as a Bisons football athlete. And I learned—as I learned from my parents, education was key, I used sport to further my education and graduated with a degree from the University of Manitoba.

And now, as critic for Economic Development and Training, I am very concerned about the government's use of that term, simply training. The post-secondary education institutions in our province are more than training. They are places of higher learning, places for Manitobans to cultivate ideas, educate themselves for their lives, and not just for their

careers, develop research to help the greater community both locally and abroad.

It's important to ensure that our post-secondary institutions will allow their students to thrive and be successful, and not just be pigeonholed into only training students towards mandated outcomes. We need to ensure our post-secondary institutions become more affordable for all Manitobans, but especially for those who aren't able to 'inford' it.

Additionally, we need to make a conscious effort in our post-secondary institutions to promote diversity, because 'devosity' in our colleges and universities become diversity in all levels of our workforce.

After I graduated from U of M, I chose to stay and work right here in Manitoba, turning down offers in other provinces. I worked for several companies, but most notably I worked for the Canadian Wheat Board. And I—during my time there, I saw the staff work hard, day-in, day-out, for the farmers of western Canada.

And, when the Harper Conservatives removed the monopoly from the Canadian Wheat Board, it effectively meant that hundreds of workers right here in Winnipeg were going to lose their jobs. My Conservative MP at the time agreed that—agreed with those changes, even though it meant that dozens of people in her riding were facing job loss.

The NDP were there standing up for workers and Prairie farmers, and I thought if one politician can make a decision that would affect so many people negatively, why couldn't I be part of supporting a party that would make a positive impact? Today I am proud to be supporting a party that puts the people of Manitoba first. I choose to put my name behind a party that has demonstrated that it values the individual cultural backgrounds of people, and I am an example of this.

As the first black man elected as an elected member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, I truly am honoured to represent the community of people that haven't had this type of representation before. Like other minority groups, black people have, and continue to, face discrimination and prejudice. However, this past election proves that there is hope. There is hope for black people and people of minority groups that there is a brighter future, a future where there are more opportunities for people of colour; a future where there is hope that Manitoba can become a more fair, a more equal, a more just society for all Manitobans.

So I stand here today as a Canadian, as a black man, as the son of immigrants from Trinidad and Tobago, as a husband and as a father and as the MLA for St. Vital, and it's given me the hope that, truly, all things are possible. Hope has fuelled my life, and it was hope that helped me overcome so many challenges and find success. It is that hope that I want to pass on to every young person—every person, old or young—that it is true that a brighter tomorrow is within your reach, that your challenges can be met and that your dreams can become a reality, because, in the national motto of Trinidad and Tobago: Together We Aspire, Together We Achieve.

Thank you.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I'm pleased to get up in the House today, my first—almost first opportunity to get up in the House of this new legislative session to put a couple of words on the record in respect of this Premier's (Mr. Pallister) last Throne Speech.

First, I want to begin by just acknowledging the amazing constituents of St. Johns who, once again, elected me, and decidedly elected me as well. I'm very proud of that. I'm proud to have gone door to door and have not only folks certainly know who I am and be encouraging of the work that I've been trying to do as the St. Johns MLA, but also the children. And I'm very, very proud of that, that even kids in St. Johns were encouraging their parents to vote for me because I went to their school, and that's something that I'm very proud of and very appreciative of.

I want to acknowledge all of the volunteers that worked on the St. Johns campaign. We were a small but mighty team. In particular, I want to acknowledge Ben Capili. So Ben Capili was my constituency assistant and he is probably one of the most loyal, most brilliant folks that I've ever had an opportunity to work so closely with. He was my trusted confidante and he has gone on. He is travelling now. He's in California. He's going to be going to the Philippines. He wanted to take a little time off to go and—he's actually a photographer and so he's going around to go take photographs of movements that are occurring across the globe.

So, to Ben, I say, *miigwech*, and know that he is loved and I—he is obviously quite missed.

I want to take a couple of minutes just to acknowledge our caucus and, in particular, our new caucus members. You know, you will recall this, Deputy Speaker, that at one point, your boss got up in

this House and talked about having the most diverse caucus in the history of Canada. *[interjection]* Everybody remembers that, yes. And every time we say that, members opposite get so excited, but they don't understand the definition of diversity, because if you looked at that caucus you would never put the word diversity to the PC caucus. Not in a million years would you ever do that.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Some Honourable Members: Shame.

Ms. Fontaine: And so I'm proud that this NDP caucus represents Manitobans—and the members can chatter on and say shame all they want. It's not my fault that they don't understand what diversity is and that they don't demand better and more from their boss. That's not my fault.

What I'm excited about is that our caucus, when you look on this side of the House, this represents Manitobans and this is what this House should look like. This is what every single politician in this House should look like. *[interjection]*

* (16:00)

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

Ms. Fontaine: It should look like the Manitoban population.

Besides—and I want to congratulate the member for Southdale (Ms. Gordon). I think that it is a very historical moment for all of us. To have the member for Southdale, the member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara) and the member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses) elected is something we can all be proud of.

I'm certainly proud that our caucus has supported and elected the first-ever black, queer, non-gender-conforming politician across Canada. That's something that we are incredibly proud of, and something that we should all be proud of in this House. So I do congratulate each of the new members.

I'm proud of this caucus that we represent Manitobans. We represent Manitobans not only in the way that we look, but in our experiences, in our language, in our gender, in our ethno-cultural analysis and world view of the world that we bring into this Chamber. I'm proud, and I say *miigwech* to each and every one of my caucus members that ran and got elected. I am proud to sit in this Chamber with them.

You know, when we talk about the Throne Speech—which, incidentally, you will know, Deputy

Speaker, none of your colleagues want to get up in the House and talk about. I think that that is certainly a testament to none of your colleagues have any confidence in what their boss brought forward, the direction that their boss wants to go for in respect of Manitoba.

It is telling that nobody wants to get up from the other side of the House and talk about your Throne Speech. This is your Throne Speech.

If it was my Throne Speech, you could be darn sure that I would be using every single second of my 20 minutes to talk about how proud I am of this Throne Speech but actually, as you know, Deputy Speaker, none of your members are getting up today. They're not getting up tomorrow or when we finish. I think that that's telling. I think that it's telling, that Manitobans should know about that.

So why do none of your members want to get up? Here's why none of your members want to get up. In the Throne Speech, did the Throne Speech talk about—in any substantial way about the meth crisis? No. Did the Throne Speech, in any substantial way, talk about reproductive health, like abortion or birthing services in Flin Flon? No. Did the Throne Speech talk in any substantial way or even mention the word poverty? Absolutely not.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Ms. Fontaine: They clearly didn't read their own Throne Speech because they're talking that—they're saying yes, yes, yes. Poverty wasn't even mentioned once. They didn't read the Throne Speech. Maybe that's why they're not getting up because they're like, oh, no, I didn't read the Throne Speech. How can I get up and actually talk about the Throne Speech?

Did they talk about social housing? No. No, they did not. Why? Because this government, this Pallister government, their boss has seen fit to actually sell social housing. When we are in the midst of very low social housing stocks, what does this government do? It sells social housing. It makes absolutely no sense.

Did the Throne Speech talk in any substantial manner about the environment? No. That's why they don't want to get up. Or interestingly enough, did the Throne Speech talk in any substantial, honest, courageous way about the sexual harassment of women in the workplace? Absolutely not. *[interjection]*

And I know that—and I don't know, I think he's from Radisson—is chattering on and chirping about

whatever he wants to chirp about, but the bottom line is that this government repeatedly gets up and talks about a no-door–no-wrong-door policy. That's absolutely wrong.

And, in fact, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) said that it should be changed to a no-open-door because any time there is complaints that come forward, it's just a free-for-all and everybody gets to stay in this Chamber and get re-elected.

And then the rest of us have to sit here every single day and look at individuals that we know have sexually harassed women and have actually forced women to leave their job. But we're all required to sit in this very Chamber with those very individuals. *[interjection]*

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

Ms. Fontaine: Maybe that's why none of the members want to get up in the House and speak to the Throne Speech. I don't know, maybe they don't want to talk about that.

It's important to talk about these issues in a very open and transparent way, so I'm surprised that this government and all of your colleagues who keep touting about this no-wrong-door aren't wanting to get up in the House and talk about the sexual harassment of women in the workplace. But they don't want to.

What I want to do today, Deputy Speaker, as you know—what was mentioned in the Throne Speech? What was mentioned? The Premier's (Mr. Pallister) fixation on dismantling democracy in Manitoba. Once again, that was a priority, or is a priority of your boss, the Premier, when he talks about that he is going to get rid of the rest of the 25 per cent rebate that candidates get in order to run in this Manitoba Legislature.

That is the priority of the Premier—to dismantle, even though he tries to come across, you know, across Canada as if he is trying to bring all of Canada together all of a sudden. We're not sure why he's doing that.

You know, we—there's rumours, there's innuendo that he wants to be the new leader for the federal PC Conservatives. Maybe that's true. Who knows? There's rumours that he wants to retire early, forcing us to have another early election in three years or two-and-a-half. Who knows what he's doing to do?

Who know what the Premier's going to do? But here's what the Premier's done since he took office—

because let's just face it, he hates democracy. He hates that there are people that we should be encouraging and supporting to ensure that we have an equitable Legislature in this province.

Here's what he's done. He passed Bill 240, which was The Elections Amendment Act.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Ms. Fontaine: Good for you. Let—I want Hansard—I want everybody that's reading Hansard, at some point, to know that at this very moment, at 3:49 on November 26th, the members of the PC caucus were clapping that their boss is seeking to dismantle democracy in Manitoba. They should be so proud of themselves.

What's the other bill that we saw? Well, as you know, Deputy Speaker, we saw Bill 16, which was embedded in BITSAs, and then we saw Bill 9, The Elections Financing Amendment Act. We saw Bill 26, the elections financing act again, which that act, as you recall, was an increase from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

So what they've done—what your boss, what your colleagues have done—is ensure that dismantling of democracy here in Manitoba, that those that need the support the most to be able to sit in this Chamber and represent communities that are still not represented, they have ensured—your boss has ensured—that they will not be able to sit here.

But what they've done is—what your boss has done is made sure that all of his rich friends can donate \$5,000 to particular candidates that they like and ensure that—or hopefully seek to ensure, from his perspective—that they get in once again.

What is interesting, and you may or may not know this, is that constituents in St. Johns know what the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) doing. Every door that I went to, every single door that I went to, they would say your Premier—the Premier does not care about Manitoba.

I had—and I want to share this story and he asked me to share this story when we got back into the House. He was so, you know, he was having such a difficult time sharing this story that about—I think it was about eight or nine months ago now—his siblings were visiting his mom who was in the Victoria hospital.

They all happened to be in the Victoria hospital visiting their mom, and their sister, while at the Victoria hospital, had a stroke. She would—she could

not be admitted at the Victoria hospital. They brought her by a non-emergency vehicle to the—to St. Boniface Hospital, where she was turned away from St. Boniface Hospital and told to go to the Health Sciences Centre.

Again, she was transported, again, in a non-emergency vehicle. By the time she got to the Health Sciences Centre, she died.

* (16:10)

Now, I know you all want to pretend that the changes that you have made in respect of the health-care system you have—what's the saying—you're brainwashed into believing that those are good results, or those were needed decisions that had to be made.

People lost their lives. That's not the first person that I heard. That's not the first constituent. I heard from another constituent who's lived in his house for 50 years. Him and his wife have lived there for 50 years. He spoke about his friend who could no longer go to Seven Oaks and happened to just be going to RONA or Home Depot in St. James. He had a heart attack while he was out there. The ambulance was called. The ambulance drove past the Grace Hospital to the Health Sciences Centre, through traffic. By the time he got to the Health Sciences Centre he died.

So, just in saint—and those are just a couple of stories that I have time to share with you. Under your watch, under the Premier's watch, under this Premier's watch, I know just two individuals—two families that have lost their lives because of the changes that were made to the health-care system, and I don't see any of the members clapping now, because how can you clap for that? How can you clap knowing that Manitobans are being diverted to different hospitals and, in the process, are losing their lives?

That brother was so upset—so upset, and he wanted to—I promised him—he said promise me that you will tell this story in the House. My sister was in the hospital when she had a stroke—in the hospital, and she died, and that may not mean anything to anybody opposite in this Chamber, but it certainly means something to her family and to her young children that she left.

So, you know, when you—when the members opposite, Deputy Speaker, do not get up to speak to their Throne Speech to the—your boss's Throne Speech, it is shameful, because the decisions—and I've said this before when—before we broke and we had a—the Premier decided to break the election law and call an early election, I repeatedly said that every single

member opposite is complicit in what is going on in Manitoba. Every single member opposite is complicit that people are dying from addictions. Every single member is—opposite is complicit that people are homeless right now because of the social housing stock that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) has seen fit to sell off. Every single member in this House opposite is complicit.

When we do not talk about the sexual harassment of women in this House and we have individuals that sit in this House and are elected to this Chamber, every single member opposite is in—complicit in a woman being forced to lose her job. In this House—complicit.

And so I want, and I've said this repeatedly every time I have an opportunity to get up in the House and speak, I want Manitobans—I don't know when they're going to read Hansard; I don't know when they're going to read this particular Throne Speech debate, but I want them to know that on November 26th, 4:13 p.m., 2019 every single member from the PC caucus is complicit in what we see on our streets.

And while I hear them again just chattering about and, again, just dismissing what Manitobans are going through, I want Manitobans to know that they're also doing that, and they take pride in the decisions that have been made that people have lost their lives. They take pride that poverty was not mentioned once in the Throne Speech. They take pride that there are children, as my colleague, the member for Notre Dame (Ms. Marcelino) spoke about in her Throne Speech debate, about the poverty that children are going to school hungry. Every single member opposite is complicit in that.

I only have a couple of minutes left. I know members opposite want me to go on for longer. Unfortunately, I can only go on for 20 minutes. I do want to say this; I want to kind of close with this: There have been several community forums in the last several weeks. The member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith), the member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara), the member for The Maples (Mr. Sandhu), the member for Burrows (Mr. Brar), the member for Notre Dame—all of us have attended these community gatherings. The member for Union Station and myself and the member for Maples just on Sunday were at another community gathering with the African community, talking about what's going on in the city.

Here's maybe something you may or may not know, Deputy Speaker. All of these community

gatherings, not one single member of the PC caucus has been there. Not one minister, not the Premier, not any of the chirping backbenchers, not one single person has gone to any single community justice forum to sit down with community and to hear directly from community about what is going, what is needed, their expertise. Not one single one.

Every single community forum that I go to, I specifically look, like, oh today are we going to see a member of the PC caucus? And sure enough, never one single PC caucus. Where are they? They're always at banquets, and they're always doing this and that. And that's great. That's great. We're at those banquets too. We're at those banquets too. But where are the PC caucus members—*[interjection]*

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

Ms. Fontaine: —at community forums? Where are they to hear from community—*[interjection]*

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

Ms. Fontaine: —about what is going on? *[interjection]*

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

Ms. Fontaine: I know that the members are probably feeling really uncomfortable because they're being called out on not going to community forums. But that's what they get paid for. We're getting paid to serve the community. We're getting paid to listen to the community. I don't know what they're getting paid to do. But they should be listening to the community.

And I hope that anybody that goes back and reads Hansard knows none of them show up. They don't show up in community, and they certainly don't show up here.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas-Kameesak): It's an absolute honour to stand here once again as the MLA for The Pas, which we are now known as The Pas-Kameesak. If everyone wants to know, kameesak is the Cree word for big, referring to we now encompass Lake Winnipeg.

And with that change, due to the electoral boundaries, I'd like to say that my constituency has become even more diverse. Eleven new communities were added to my constituency, and I had the honour and privilege to visit each community, which includes Grand Rapids, Easterville, Dauphin River, Lake St. Martin, Little Saskatchewan, Pinaymootang, Peguis, Fisher River Cree Nation, Jackhead,

Matheson Island and Pine Dock. Might I add, they're all indigenous communities, right?

So, during the election time, I'd like to first of all congratulate and thank from the bottom of my heart probably the hardest working campaign manager in Manitoba and probably all of Canada, where he's actually sought after in other provinces for him to lead our NDP campaigns. His name is Gordon Landriault. He's hard to miss because he's always wearing a neon orange hat or jacket. So that's how we can differentiate him from our crowd.

Gordon Landriault has been involved with the unions since the beginning of time. He's also a former miner. He also worked for my late father, Oscar Lathlin, former MLA for The Pas. He's also worked on Frank Whitehead's campaign, former MLA for The Pas as well, and Niki Ashton and numerous others. And I'd like to say that Niki Ashton lovingly refers to Gord as Papa Gord.

And I also want to acknowledge my daughters. In this Chamber, I'd like to toot my own horn—according to the member of Elmer–Elmwood, this is the best place to toot your own horn. So let me talk about my daughters. My daughters, Elyse Lathlin and Natanis Pascal. Elyse is 16 and Natanis is 15. They both came on the campaign trail with me.

And I'd like to suggest to every member in this House here, take your children out on the campaign trail. Go canvassing, go door knocking, go to public events with your children. With this experience that my—both teenagers have had, and I'd like to remind my colleagues here, I have shared, personally, stories where my teenagers had been medevac'd out from The Pas to Winnipeg or to Brandon because of self-harm issues, depression. And with this experience, it really helped them overcome these issues and gave them that confidence and that courage that is needed, especially with the era that we're in now with our youth.

* (16:20)

So with my two daughters, we went canvassing, door knocking, avoiding dog bites as well, might I add; I've been bitten five times on this campaign trail alone. So I just wanted to say that this experience has really opened up my daughters, where they became more confident. And there was this one time after the campaign was done, my daughter faced a stressful moment, and she said to me—she goes, Mom, if I can go door to door and ask for political support, then I can do anything.

So, with that, I just wanted to acknowledge that because of this experience, my daughter, Elyse Lathlin, is now a member of the junior chief and council for Opaskwayak Cree Nation, so that makes three generations in our political family. *[interjection]* Thank you. And my other daughter, Natanis, received three excellent awards for marks in the 90s in three subjects in her high school. So I'll like to congratulate her on that as well. *[interjection]* Thank you.

So I wanted to elaborate more on what our member for St. Vital (Mr. Moses) was saying. When I went to Fisher River and Peguis, I met up with a lot of youth. And they actually referred to that they have never voted before. And those were the best conversations that one can have, with people who haven't voted before. And they were actually surprised that they actually met up with a politician, or even an MLA, in the Interlake area to actually talk about issues that are important to our communities.

Now, the one thing I really like to talk about is health care. This government says delivering health-care services sooner. Not even. Not even. Not even if you're living in The Pas, because in Flin Flon we don't even have a doctor to deliver babies, right? I went to that demonstration march in Flin Flon, along with my pal here, from—member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) and member for Notre Dame (Ms. Marcelino), yes.

So I'd like to acknowledge this young lady here and her family. I think it took them 12 hours to—from Winnipeg to Flin Flon. I would've turned back at Ashern, but, no, she kept on going with children in tow. And she looked absolutely exhausted when she arrived in Flin Flon, right when the—our conference—our meeting was almost done.

So we heard awful stories about this woman who didn't even know she had gestational diabetes because of the lack of health care, especially with women who are pregnant. She just found out on the way on the ambulance ride to The Pas she has gestational diabetes. That's unacceptable. We deserve better than that. And also, too, it's no surprise that The Pas, our New Year's baby was from Flin Flon.

Also, too, just listening to our women having to leave their communities to deliver their children reminds me of what our First Nations go through. See, this is a norm for us First Nations women who have to leave our community in order to deliver our babies. For example, in Cross Lake, Cross Lake has an opportunity to have a hospital. Cross Lake chief at the time, Chief Cathy Merrick, said it'd be wonderful to

have a birth certificate that will actually say Cross Lake instead of Winnipeg or Thompson, right?

So I just wanted to say that Flin Flon is exactly experiencing what our First Nations have become accustomed to and conditioned to, to deliver babies without their husbands or family around them.

And I also wanted to talk about something that really hit our home in a tragic, tragic way: privatized Lifeflight. I happened to be talking to someone whose brother who just suffered a heart attack that morning in The Pas, was taken to the hospital at 10:30 in the morning, and it wasn't until 10:30 at night that a plane was finally available to transfer our patient to Winnipeg in order to get the medicine started in his system after one suffers a heart attack.

You know what, Deputy Speaker? At 10:30 at night, I heard that plane, that same very plane who finally arrived, fly over my house as I was getting interviewed by CBC.

An Honourable Member: Unacceptable.

Ms. Lathlin: Yes.

So the Premier (Mr. Pallister) was in The Pas filming a commercial. I heard he was going to be in town, and I was across the river attending the funeral of the late Gordon Jebb, who passed away after his heart attack, where there was no Lifeflight to take him to Winnipeg.

After the funeral was done, drove across the river, walked up to his little part—crashed his party, no pun intended, and I asked him, we deserve answers. What happened on that day? Why did it take 12 hours for a plane to arrive in The Pas and take our patient back to Winnipeg? There was a bed waiting for him at the Health Sciences Centre, but no plane.

So, after a brief talk with him, the Premier promised me answers as to—and the family—as to what happened to that day, on that day. We still don't have answers, and that's truly, truly—disrespectful to us northerners and especially to this family who wanted an inquiry into his death.

So, in regards to education, I was one of the participants in the K-to-12 review. They came to The Pas in March, and I was just pleased that we had many, many, many teachers attending that important gathering regarding our children's education.

And I just wanted to share that the largest circle, there was like maybe 12 'circers'—12 circles—pertaining to each subject, like to poverty, mental

health, recruitment and retention of teachers. And guess what? The largest circle was regarding mental health. That's the one I stayed put in because I had a lot of personal experience in regards to our children, in regards to mental health.

I could tell I've shared many, many times here that we do not have psychiatric assessments for our children in northern and rural Manitoba. So what do we do? We ship them off in a plane or a bus or a car, whoever can afford that, to Winnipeg or Brandon.

So we're furthering their stress on their mental health. We're asking them to leave your family, leave your community, leave your friends, and go somewhere in a hospital and get assessed for only 10 minutes. Only 10 minutes. That's all we get, our children. To leave our communities and only talk to a psychiatrist for only 10 minutes. That is unacceptable. We need those services in the North, so we can adequately address our mental health issues. And guess what? [*interjection*] Thank you.

Suicide crisis, that is a product because of our lack of mental health resources for our children. Also, to—in regards to lack of services in the North, this was something I learned new and which I want to address with my colleagues and work with the members opposites. Did you know that rape kits are not done for youth in northern and rural Manitoba?

Once again, they have to leave their community without showering, without changing their clothes after their attack. They have to leave to Winnipeg to get this rape kit done at the Health Sciences Centre. Again, that is absolutely unacceptable for our children. So that needs to be changed, and again I want to work with my colleagues and members opposite to make sure that services is provided for our children. And that's coming from a personal experience.

And, in regards to, as well, I wanted to talk about CFS. As the Families critic with CFS, I personally know the hardships, the heartache, the nightmare that families have to face when children are apprehended by the system. Deputy Speaker, this system is just another form of residential schools taking of our children. Okay?

I find that when parents and children are separated, even if just one—it's like it's more reactive, right? And when children, or mothers, or parents, or grandparents, aunts and uncles are separated, it doesn't make sense to me that these families are asked to heal while separated. Mom, take parenting class. Kids, good luck. All right?

When we did a committee on process regarding customary care for the CFS act, the question I asked: Shouldn't it be part of this policy where once children and parents are separated, compulsory counselling should be provided to these families? It's already hard enough that when families are separated, addictions go up, depression goes up, suicide goes up.

Deputy Speaker, a couple weeks ago we just buried a young mother whose children were apprehended from her for many, many years. Whatever she did was not good enough. Counselling, addictions counselling, even tried to find a home. She never got her children back. And guess what? She took her own life two weeks ago.

* (16:30)

So that has to be changed. The whole culture of this whole CFS system has to be changed. The culture has to be changed itself. All parents and all grandparents, aunts and uncles should not be painted with that same brush that social workers, the system sees us as, that we're all bad, irresponsible, awful people.

So, with that, I just want to encourage the Minister of Families (Mrs. Stefanson) that we need more resources, more counselling. We don't need—what is this review going to consist of? To us, when I hear review, it means cuts. 'Already' we are already seeing it in the west region, CFS agency there, where there were—the words were—I forgot what the words—like find funding or retain funding.

Well, those two words were scary because this organization is mandated by this very government to meet the obligations for our children and families, but yet they—services such as wraparound services for our youth have been cut; front-line service—front-line training for our workers has been cut, as well—two crucial areas for this system, in order to at least respect our families in any way.

So, by removing those wraparound services for our youth, it's going to erase any chance a child has to have a future after aging out of the system.

So—also, too, with northern issues, once again the word tourism. Tourism—that's all I hear. That's all this government sees us as. They come into our area, sit down and have these little coffee meetings they call consultations. And they arrive as tourists, because that's all I hear: North, tourism; North, tourism. In this Throne Speech here, not once when we talk about the North, not once do we talk about getting rid of our—a lot of our water boil advisories. If you look on the

webpage, like, majority of those communities are in my constituency. Water boil advisories—we're in 2019, you know, we should get it together and actually have drinkable water for all Manitobans.

For example, in my own community of Cormorant, they were without drinking water for four months. I talked to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations (Ms. Clarke), she said, yes, I knew about it. I got an update every two days.

Okay, well, if you knew about it, why didn't you do—why didn't you declare it a state of emergency? So for four months our folks couldn't even wash clothes, couldn't even drink water, couldn't even bathe their children—children were missing school. Halloween, they said they didn't want to get their children painted up for Halloween because they had no water to wash off the make-up afterwards. Just shameful, shameful.

So now Cormorant has their water back after the minister's office was given a couple of emails and 'texas' and calls. Finally, they got their water back. And I just want to comment the—our civil servant who works in that department went and beyond his duty to make sure that Cormorant got its water pump back. By the way, it was destroyed by arson by a couple of youths.

So, with tourism, again, northern Manitoba should not only be included with tourism. These folks across have to remember that. We have to think about access to health-care services—Flin Flon and The Pas. We were promised a clinic in The Pas which would have better served us northern Manitobans, including my family, because the ER is being clogged up as a walk-in clinic. And guess what? The walk-in clinic upstairs is only open six days a month. So the ER is clogged up with people who just want to see a doctor.

An Honourable Member: What's a walk-in clinic?

Ms. Lathlin: Yes, no kidding. It's like Chase the Ace that we have down there. You know, you're lucky if you get in.

And also, too, education. You know, access to education is a crucial issue in northern Manitoba, suicide crisis and, again, like I mentioned, access to mental health resources.

It was interesting to see here—only one sentence, though—Operation Return Home will be concluded for the people of Lake St. Martin First Nation, who have been separated from their traditional lands long enough.

During my campaign, it was quite eerie, Deputy Speaker, when I went into Lake St. Martin, seeing their old place—all that was left is just the foundations of the home. It was like a ghost town. That's where they were there for many, many years, and then a flood happened and then they were here in Winnipeg. I heard first-hand stories about children—schools—education being messed up, suicide, depression, addictions developed, and then now going into a new community and having to adjust that, and then with the power outage as well. So enough is enough. Our First Nations community deserve more than that.

So, in conclusion, I have to agree that the programs and services in northern Manitoba need to be developed, improved, and preserved. Northern Manitobans, including myself, are frustrated with this government's cuts to any program and services. All Manitobans deserve access to quality services and programming to give them the best quality of life possible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am here for the next four years. I want to stay for the next four years, not three years, and fulfill my obligation as an MLA, as an elected representative in this Chamber. It is an absolute honour to voice my concerns, to voice my love for my community, my members. It's an absolute honour to be here again, and I'm getting verklempt, but we should all be here and be proud and honour why we're here, and take this job seriously by perhaps speaking to your own Speech from the Throne.

Thank you.

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Well, first of all, I just want to thank my constituent—my constituents of Point Douglas for once again electing me. Not only electing me, but actually I won in every single poll in my constituency.

And that should send a message to this government that this government isn't taking care of people in the North End. They won't vote for them because they don't care about people who are in poverty; they don't care about people who need housing; they don't care about safety in communities. The bottom line for this government is money. They put money over people continually. We've seen that.

We're now at 41 deaths in this province, and what has this government done? Nothing. They've cut funding to municipalities so they're not able to have the full policing compliment that they should need.

I just finished meeting with Medicine Bear Counselling Service that actually supports missing

and murdered indigenous women and girls and two-spirited people, and they, you know, shared that some of the officers that were in Project Devote that actually supported families, were pulled off of Project Devote to go work with the Winnipeg police because they've underfunded the Winnipeg police. And they have, you know, no other recourse but to take policing from other areas to support safety in the community. Does this government care? No. You know, people continue to die under the watch of this government.

And, you know, I'm surprised—actually, I'm not surprised—that not, the MLAs on that side can't even get up to support their own Throne Speech budget. Really? This is coming from your government and you can't even get up and talk about it? Just shows Manitobans that you don't care about this budget. You don't support it, but of course you have someone who tells you time and time what you're going to do, when you're going to do it, and you're voiceless, which is unfortunate because you represent all of Manitobans, which includes the constituency of Point Douglas which are suffering at the hands of this government.

They've sold off housing; they've put the management into other people's hands. So now it's happening with people who are living in social housing. They're getting evicted. They get one warning.

So, I'll give you an example. One of my constituents called me and said, you know, I forget to change the battery—actually, she didn't even have money to change the battery in her smoke alarm. They came in, they did an inspection, saw that she didn't have a working fire alarm. They gave her an eviction. Her and her three children had to move.

* (16:40)

Another woman who is going through dialysis is, like, almost on her deathbed. Her daughter was found in the river last summer. She has bedbugs. She was asked to move her furniture from the walls of her apartment. She couldn't even do that because she didn't have the strength.

And what did this government do? They served her with an eviction while her daughter was murdered and she doesn't have answers, while she's on her deathbed, while she's going through dialysis. Does this government care? No. What do they care about? They care about saving money. They care about putting money on kitchen tables. They don't care about people who are struggling.

What did we find out just this week—actually, yesterday—that they've cut the special benefit to people with disabilities: \$200 to—up to 600 people that are struggling with mental health issues. All of us, I'm sure, at some point of our life, have struggled with mental health issues and have had to, you know, take a cab or pick up that phone to call someone.

That's what they're taking away from those people: the ability to take a cab to go and get some support, which could mean saving their life; which—might have to cut off their cellphone, which, you know, is social isolation. They might have to cut off their Internet. But does their government care? No, they are only worried about money. They are not worried about people. Continually, they have shown that.

They've put management for social housing under other management services. They don't want the responsibility of having to manage housing. Why not? Because they want to give that responsibility of kicking people out—who actually need that housing—out of their apartments, out of their houses.

And I'll give you another example. I have a family right now, of three. Her children were just taken away. So she's been living there for about a month. She was told that she has to move out because she doesn't have her children, and she was given an eviction notice.

So you tell me, is that fair? She's working on getting her children back. You know, we all struggle at some point in our life, but this government doesn't care about those that are struggling. What they care about is putting people in jail.

They care about having this heavy-handed, where they think, oh, I'm going to incarcerate someone that's, you know, on drugs because they're dealing with trauma in their life and they're trying to suppress what's happened to them. And they figure that they're going to put them in jail and that's going to, like, solve everything.

Well, let me tell you, I've worked with level 4 car thieves and I've seen that. That does not work. I ran a program that was an alternative program that worked with level 4 car thieves. In the morning, they would come and learn academics. In the afternoon, they would do—or alternatives, so whether that was helping them get some job skills; getting them back into regular school; helping them to become independent adults; building up their self-esteem.

No—does this government want to invest in anything like that? No. They would rather put people

in jail and expect that, oh, they're going to go into jail, they're going to learn their lesson, they're going to come out and they're going to be different human beings.

Well, let me tell you, that doesn't happen. What happens is they just come out even angrier, and this government has no plans to address that. They've cut services to people who are in jail that could actually get some skills, some job skills, to be able to come out and put something on their actual resumé. They cut that.

So what does a person do when they're in jail? Well, they sit, they watch TV and they get three square meals. They don't learn, really, anything. There's no alternative to that. This government is only worried about putting people in jail.

So, if someone's struggling with, you know, mental health issues and, you know, something happens, they'll put them in jail even with their mental health issues and not deal with their mental health. It's like, oh, well, you've committed a crime: too bad, so sad. In jail you go.

I want to talk about poverty. You know, this government has no strategy on addressing poverty in this province. We have, you know, more people in poverty since this government's taken government in the last three years, three-plus years, and this government is proud about putting 3,000 more people on Rent Assist.

That's because they've put them on to—into poverty. They've cut this. They've cut that. They've cut that. They've put more people on EIA on the—in the welfare trap than any other government. I know people who have lost their jobs and have had to go on EI, can't find another job.

They can't, you know, afford to take care of their family now and they find themselves as a single parent having to take care of four children, maybe five children. Does this government care? No.

And let's talk about EIA. So a lot of our casework has to do with, you know, people accessing EIA and a person has the right to access EIA, and this government is making it even more difficult for people to access it. They're now expected to make an appointment, so you go to this appointment, you hear the information, and then they give you another appointment, and your next appointment is over 30 days, so in Estimates I asked the Minister of Families (Mrs. Stefanson), I said: What—how long are

people actually waiting before they actually receive any benefits? And the minister said one week.

Well, I can tell you out of the dozens and dozens of people that come into our office that are trying to access EIA, that they are waiting more than 30 days. That means people don't have anywhere to live. They're either couch surfing or they're homeless and having to access, you know, Siloam Mission or Salvation Army. People shouldn't have to live like that, but that's what this government is creating.

And do they care? No, because they know what they're doing. They're doing it intentionally. They're doing it because they don't care about people who live in poverty. And we see this with people going in, you know, committing crimes to get their needs met. Someone goes into a grocery store to steal some food, they're doing it because they're hungry. They're not doing it because they want to go and commit a crime.

And, you know, I hear this—or this—our Premier (Mr. Pallister) say, you know, oh, we're going to go and we're going to catch them and you just watch. You can't hide from us. Like, really? Like, who are you serving? You're serving the 1 per cent corporation who makes tons of money, but what about the other 99 per cent?

You know, I think about the less fortunate here in Manitoba, and I know, I've seen lots of these MLAs come out and they do their good deed and they'll come and they'll serve, you know, turkey at certain times of the year. But I don't see them do anything else. I don't see them coming and helping these families. Families come into our office hungry, asking, we need some food. You know, we've gone to the food bank. We've got our food bank allowance for this week.

We help them because we care, but I don't know if I could say that about any MLA on that side if they would do that, and it's unfortunate because, you know, it's our responsibility as Manitobans, as human beings to help one another, to care about one another, to share with one another.

Somehow we've become this consumerism—you know, if people that just—I want more cars; I want more houses; I want more land, and it's like we forget about people and that not everybody can do that. We have two houses, three houses. Some people don't even have one house, and, you know, this government doesn't care.

And I think about, you know, our health care, and we were talking about Dynacare yesterday, and my doctor actually, when I go see her I'm able to access

to go and get blood taken right in her office, but when I went for my last checkup she told me, she said, well, you're no longer going to be able to come and see me or to go get your blood here after you've seen me. You're going to have to go to Garden City.

And, I mean, Garden City's not that far from me. I have a car. I'm able to go there, but I think about our seniors and my doctor's been practicing—I've been with her now for about 30 years and many of the people that are sitting in her waiting area are elderly people.

I think about those people that are on fixed incomes that aren't able to leave her office and take a taxi or get on a bus that have mobility issues and go into this big mall. And it's not soon as you walk in the door, because if you've been to Garden City you can see all of the renovations going on. It's a trot to be able to get to where they're going to put this, what they call, super centre—super what—[interjection]—super site.

So, you know, but does this government care? No. There's—they think that this is a good idea. They're not listening to Manitobans. They're out of touch and, you know, seniors and people with accessibility issues deserve to go to their doctor and be able to have their blood taken right there. I think about our ER closures and it just blows my mind how this government can think that closing three ERs is going to reduce wait times. I mean, they can do the math, although they'll tote it in here and say, oh, the wait times have reduced.

* (16:50)

We know that that's not true. We know that they've changed the metrics on how they count people. So if you go into the doctor, you go into the emergency room, you are sent for bloodwork, you're no longer a part of that wait time. You go in there, they send you for an MRI—same thing. You're automatically taken out of that wait time.

The NDP was actually transparent in how we counted patients. We counted them from the time you walked into the door until the time you left the hospital. This government has not been transparent with Manitobans. They're actually hiding the amount of time that people are waiting in the ER.

And I actually visited the ER this summer, actually, and, I mean, the things I saw in that ER, and I talked to one of the doctors, and he's just like, we're doing the best with what we have. You know, this government expects us to do more with less and it's really having a strain on our mental health, and the

nurses' mental health, and all of the front-line workers that are working there. And this government has not been listening to, you know, our concerns and have just continued to push through with their changes and, you know, don't really care what we think even though we're the ones that are delivering the services.

We had to actually go by ambulance and—there is actually an ambulance at—actually two fire halls that are, maybe one that's two kilometres and the other one maybe six kilometres from our house, and we were told on the phone that we would have to wait 13 minutes. So my husband was timing, and it was actually 15 minutes—15 minutes that it took the firemen to get there. The ambulance hadn't even arrived yet. It was the firemen that came, and they came in our house, they did whatever, then we went to the emergency room.

And I mean the emergency room, we came in and it was pretty scary. We didn't get to see a doctor right away because every—like, it was so busy in there. The waiting room was full of people. Like, they took us right in the back because it was a real emergency, but, like I said, we didn't see a doctor right away.

My aunt was just admitted maybe a month ago, and you know, the service she got with what they're dealing with was impeccable, but again, you know, this government has created a system of putting these people in stressful situations when they shouldn't be because, you know, they're—they don't want to make mistakes. But does this government care? No, they don't.

I want to talk a little bit about safety in our community. You know, this government expects everybody else to keep our community safe and they've done nothing. I think about the Bear Clan and we've said it. We've asked this government to give the Bear Clan more money, give the Bear Clan more resources, to give the Aboriginal Youth Opportunities some funds as well to actually do some prevention work because this government is very reactive. And reactive, like, maybe a year after things are happening. So maybe a year from now we'll see some action from this government, but I doubt it.

We'll continue to see more deaths and possibly young people dying. We have a crystal meth crisis in our community. The 7-Eleven on Isabel and, or—yes—Isabel and Notre—William just closed down this week because of the amount of thefts. And, you know, this government has done nothing to address the safety of workers, but also to address the root causes of why people are doing this.

We know that people are living in poverty. We know that people don't have adequate housing. We know that they're underfunding people in all kinds of ways. They've frozen wages for people and they expect people to do more with less. And this government can care less.

We had a community forum where we had over 400 people that attended in the North End. And it wasn't just people or folks from the North End. It was people from West St. Paul. It was people from St. Vital. It was people from Southdale. There was people from all over—Lagimodiere—that came to this community forum to be listened to, to hear, to have their elected officials listen to some community solutions. And we invited, you know, the government to come. Did they come? No, of course.

They could care less about listening to community. They say they consult. They don't consult. They do what they're going to do. They speak to their boss. Their boss tells them, no, not happening. Too bad, so sad. Don't attend that. Don't go.

So, you know, I'm very frustrated, to say the least, with this government and their lack of community consultation around safety. Have they met with any of the community members who are directly affected? No. They don't care.

And again, I'm going to preface that they can't have the time of day to get up and actually talk about their leader's Throne Speech. They show that they don't support by not standing up and talking about it. Like, this is something that your government put forward, and you can care less about standing up and talking about it. This tells me that you don't even support what your own government has put out.

You know, I think about, you know, all of the MLAs on that side, and I worry about their mental health as well, and if they're even able to have a voice within their caucus, because I don't hear the voices of the people on that side. What I hear is cut, cut, cut: cut at the people and really, you know, have—could care less about those that are struggling.

So I want to say to the MLAs on that side: have some courage. Speak up. You know, don't always go what your boss says and actually stand up for Manitobans in this House, because that's what you're elected to do.

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): I'm humbled to stand here today to represent The Maples. The Maples is one of the most diverse ridings in Manitoba. I have

lived in this area for roughly 30 years, and I had the opportunity to see growth in our community.

I am a Sikh—I'm also a proud member of the Sikh community. On November 12, 2019, we celebrated Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 550th birthday. Guru Nanak Dev Ji is the founder of Sikhism.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji's three teachings are meditation of God, earning an honest living, share wealth amongst society. Guru Ji's contribution to the communities are threefold: equality of the humans, equality of the woman and universal message for all the people. I want to congratulate all the people who are celebrating Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 550th birthday.

I would also like to tell the House about myself. Most of you have known me by Mintu Sandhu. That's my nickname. My real is Sukhjinderpal Singh Sandhu. Well, there are 26 letters in the alphabet, and guess how many letters are in there—my name: 24 letters.

My birthplace is Dhaner, Punjab, India. My father's name is Jagtar Singh Sandhu and mother's name is Sukhdev Kaur Sandhu. My father was a

farmer and mother was a housewife. I completed middle school in Dhaner, Punjab, India, and completed grade 6 in Sant Isher Das High School, Moom, Punjab, India.

My sister sponsored us to join her in Canada. In search of a better future for their kids, for their family, my parents immigrant to Canada on June 30th, 1989; with my father, mother, brother and I landed at Vancouver International Airport.

After staying one night in Vancouver at my auntie's house, we arrived in Winnipeg on July 1st, 1989. Looking out the window of the plane, I saw fireworks.

The Acting Speaker (Greg Nesbitt): Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Sandhu) will have 17 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, November 26, 2019

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