

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

Thursday, November 28, 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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 9—The Public Services Sustainability Amendment Act

Hon. Reg Helwer (Minister of Central Services): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), that Bill 9, The Public Services Sustainability Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Helwer: The Public Services Sustainability Amendment Act establishes a sustainable fiscal framework for the private sector collective bargaining. Amendments to The Public Services Sustainability Act are now being introduced to address some of the suggestions from employers and unions.

We continue to encourage collective bargaining and will continue to encourage employers and unions to work together to find innovative ideas that will ensure sustainability of our public services.

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

Bill 14—The Public Sector Construction Projects (Tendering) Act

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Crown Services (Mr. Wharton), that Bill 14, The Public Sector Construction Projects (Tendering) Act, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Schuler: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce Bill 14, The Public Sector Construction Projects (Tendering) Act, as part of the Manitoba government's 100-Day Action Plan.

This legislation will create a fairer and more competitive bidding process for publicly funded construction projects by ensuring that public sector entities tendering processes are unbiased with respect to the unionization status of bidders and their employees.

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

Bill 12—The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Relations (Ms. Squires), that Bill 12, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Fielding: I'm pleased to introduce Bill 12, The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act.

The proposal will amend The Workplace Safety and Health Act to eliminate the chief prevention officer position, increase maximum penalties for offences under the act and approve collection mechanisms for additional penalties levelled by the court, restrict complaints that frivolous—were not being made for specific timeframe, change terminology used in the act to reduce confusion with other statutes.

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

Bill 16—The Labour Relations Amendment Act

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, that Bill 16, The Labour Relations Amendment Act, now be read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Fielding: I'm pleased to introduce Bill 16, The Labour Relations Amendment Act.

This proposal will amend The Labour Relations Act to facilitate the transition of 'conciliation'–'concileration' in grievance to mediation functions to the private sector, eliminate the requirements due by annual review of the act's provisions, respect in the settlement of collective agreements and give Lieutenant Governor-in-Council regulation-making authority to establish fees for services provided by the Manitoba Labour Board.

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

Bill 21–The Workers Compensation Amendment Act

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Families (Mrs. Stefanson), that Bill 21, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Fielding: I am pleased to introduce Bill 21, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act.

The bill implements the majority of recommendations from the legislative changes made by the Legislative Review Committee. It also introduces several changes to the corporate governance structure of the Workers Compensation Board that are designed to increase its financial and operation independence from government.

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

Bill 203–The Climate and Green Plan Amendment Act (Improved Climate Change Targets and Enhanced Ministerial Accountability)

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): I'm pleased to bring forward–sorry–my mistake. Seconded–sorry.

I move and–seconded by the member for Keewatinook (Mr. Bushie), that Bill 203, The Climate and Green Plan Amendment Act (Improved Climate Change Targets and Enhanced Ministerial Accountability), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Naylor: I am pleased to bring forward Bill 203, The Climate and Green Plan Amendment Act.

This bill will strengthen Manitoba's position in fighting the climate crisis. It will hold our government accountable to implementing meaningful targets,

identified by the international panel on climate change, to reduce the impact of climate change in our province and in our country.

* (13:40)

Bill 203 will also hold the minister accountable to meeting these targets by deducting their salary until the targets have been reached.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs First Report

Mr. James Teitsma (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the First Report of the Standing Committee for Legislative Affairs.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs–

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on November 27, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Annual Report of Elections Manitoba for the year ending December 31, 2018 including the conduct of the St. Boniface by-election dated July 17, 2018*

Committee Membership

- Ms. ADAMS
- Hon. Mr. CULLEN
- Ms. FONTAINE
- Ms. GORDON
- Mr. JOHNSTON
- Mr. MICKLEFIELD
- Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE
- Mr. MOSES
- Hon. Mr. PEDERSEN
- Mr. TEITSMA
- Mr. WASYLIW

Your Committee elected Mr. TEITSMA as the Chairperson

Your Committee elected Mr. MICKLEFIELD as the Vice-Chairperson

Officials speaking on the record:

- *Ms. Shipra Verma, Chief Electoral Officer*

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record

- *Mr. LAMONT*

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following report as presented:

- *Annual Report of Elections Manitoba for the year ending December 31, 2018 including the conduct of the St. Boniface by-election dated July 17, 2018*

Mr. Teitsma: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Radisson, that the report of the committee be received—[interjection]—or, sorry, for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: Tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Would the honourable minister please proceed with his statement.

Farmer Appreciation Day

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development): I am pleased to rise in the House today to acknowledge Keystone Agricultural Producers' Farmer Appreciation Day. Today, many members of this House, including myself, had the opportunity to celebrate the role agriculture plays in our province and to recognize the farmers who have made our industry what it is today.

Agriculture is one of the key economic drivers for Manitoba, as well as a strong history, the heritage and culture in this beautiful province. Farmers have made and will continue to make significant contributions to

the prosperity of Manitoba, and these contributions have certainly been recognized.

Keystone Agricultural Producers, otherwise known as KAP, work with farmers to develop policy, protect the environment, ensure safety and promote agriculture in Manitoba and throughout Canada. KAP members play an important role in being the voice for farmers and guiding agricultural policy.

The Manitoba government looks forward to continuing to work with KAP and our industry partners to build on the solid foundation relationships that—and that has shaped this critical pillar of our economy.

I ask the House to join me in acknowledging the contributions of KAP and all of Manitoba's farm families as we celebrate Farmer Appreciation Day.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to be saying a few words to celebrate Farmer Appreciation Day. On behalf of the NDP caucus, I want to thank our farmers and farm leaders for the work they do for our province.

As we all know, agriculture and agri-processing is a crucial element for Manitoba's economy. Agriculture contributes to our gross domestic product and provides thousands of valuable jobs in the northwest, southwest, Interlake, central and eastern regions of the province.

More than 10 per cent of the jobs in our province are tied to agriculture and billions of dollars of our agricultural products are traded internationally.

On November 5th, I had the pleasure of meeting and speaking with Manitoba Beef Producers and Crown land leaseholders at the Beef Producers district meeting. These meetings made it clear producers across the province are not happy about the leasing changes to Crown land. It is important we acknowledge their concerns.

Farmers are facing challenges, and this government needs to do more to help our farm families. Farming and rural living are central to Manitoba's culture and identity as a prairie province. It is absolutely essential that our agricultural industry thrives for the economic health of the province and for upcoming generations.

I am proud—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

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

Mr. Brar: I am proud to be an advocate and stand with our farmers. Thanks again to KAP and all Manitoba farmers for the good work that they do.

Thank you.

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): I request leave to speak to the minister's statement.

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

Mr. Lamont: Madam Speaker, this 15th annual KAP Farmer Appreciation Day gives me an opportunity to recognize the farmers who contributed to our agricultural industry being a key economic driver for our province. Farmers are part of Manitoba's identity. Today, we thank Manitoba farmers for the work they do in producing food and for their stewardship of the land.

My father grew up on a farm in Headingley. He, my grandfather and uncles also farmed in Gladstone. And for more than 30 years we've owned a farm near Rosburn that we rent out for pasture to cattle farmers, including during the BSE crisis.

Over the last few months, I've talked with many farmers about the serious challenges they face, as well as the opportunities, some of which have arisen as a result of climate change. Farmers want to be full stewards of their land, but the ever-increasing cost of running agricultural operations is a serious threat.

Ranchers in central Manitoba were hit with two back-to-back years of drought. Following a couple of dry summers, a wet autumn has now wreaked more havoc on producers, limiting their ability to produce enough feed for their stock.

Further to natural impacts on this land, this government has been making life more difficult for farmers who use Crown lands. Many have expressed the changes will destabilize their farms or bring their businesses as farmers to an end or make it impossible for them either to sell or leave their farms to the next generation.

We have many reasons to be proud of our farmers. Whether in livestock, crops or other parts of the industry, our farmers need our strong support to remain competitive on the global stage.

On behalf our Manitoba Liberal caucus—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Dino Moran

Ms. Audrey Gordon (Southdale): Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a pillar in the community, Dino Moran, who passed away unexpectedly on April 21st, 2019, at the age of 48.

Dino was the facility manager at Winakwa Community Centre for over 20 years, and in that time it truly became Dino's place. He did everything at the centre, from electrical to plumbing to carpentry, but it was Dino's personality that made Winakwa a place where people wanted to be. He was friendly, understanding and accommodating. He was an excellent problem solver, finding creative solutions to issues and was a true mentor for managers at other centres. Indeed, the only thing that approached his love for people was his passion for his motorcycle.

Dino also grew Winakwa's pickleball program into one of the best in Manitoba. So, in September, the community organized the first annual Dino Moran memorial pickleball tournament, raising over \$3,000. It was a testament to his effect not just at Winakwa, but in all of southeast Winnipeg. The funds will go towards a plaque to honour his memory and towards a scholarship fund for high school students who are entering trade school.

I would like to recognize Dino's wife Lisa and his children, Nathan, Natasha, Calvin and Jenna, who are here in the gallery today. Dino loved them intensely and found joy in their accomplishments. They're joined by his mother Lorraine Stewart and his step-father Larry Stewart. Guy Poirier, the president of the board, is also here, as well as Darren Bishop, the facility manager; Melissa Fedorchuk, the office assistant; and other members of the Winakwa community.

Dino was taken from us too soon. The entire Winakwa community will miss him greatly, but his legacy will live on forever.

Please join me in remembering Dino Moran and thanking his family for sharing him with us.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Southdale.

Ms. Gordon: Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to have the names of all these guests here today from Winakwa community entered into Hansard.

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

Ania Bator, Darren Bishop, Jeff Bowen, Melissa Fedorchuk, Brianna Fierback, Cory and Candace Fierback, Ken Harrison, Russ Hepburn, Lisa Jeffrey, Barbara Moran, Calvin Moran, Nathan Moran, Christine Mousseau, Guy Poirier, Janice Roy, Lorraine and Larry Stewart, Michelle Trudeau

* (13:50)

National Farmers Union of Canada

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): I rise today to honour the 50th anniversary of the farm movement and the National Farmers Union of Canada. First established in 1969, the National Farmers Union has been committed to promoting the betterment of farmers, markets, agricultural education and achieving social goals in the country.

The National Farmers Union is organized into eight regions, Manitoba being the fifth. The organization has a number of advisory committees and boards ranging from women's, youth to international. Each individually designed to ensure the equal participation and support for all those concerned about the present and future direction of agriculture in Canada.

The union prides itself in raising awareness and addressing social issues of malnutrition, poverty and hunger; also preserving a strong, vibrant rural community and protecting the national interest of Canada's farming industry.

They are committed to assisting legislatures in developing equitable agricultural policies. Most importantly, the union promotes the mutual co-operation and collective action of farmers to enhance their bargaining power.

This past year has proven difficult for Manitoba producers: 12 rural municipalities declared a state of agricultural emergency after climate-change-induced drought and flooding left farmers with a severe shortage of feeds.

Despite the obstacles, Manitoba producers remain resilient and dedicated. However, this government has chosen to implement changes to Crown land leasing regulations which will cost farmers more in these hard times. Manitoba farm families need to support to ensure a stronger and more prosperous agriculture and food sector.

We are joined in the gallery by members of the National Farmers Union.

Thank you to Manitoba farmers and all members of the National Farmers Union who continue to have a positive impact on the social fabric of our province.

Taylor Pryor

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak of Taylor Pryor, an amazing young woman who did very well in school and was an athlete who loved playing soccer. She lived life to the fullest and lived a life where no one was left behind.

One day, playing soccer, she collided with another player and had a concussion. The concussion, in some way, changed her brain. She became suicidal. Her thoughts, no matter what she did, were of suicide. She reached out. She called out for help again and again and again and again. Her parents went above and beyond what normal mortals could do in trying to help.

We must build a better world with more empathy, more understanding and more knowledge of how to help. We must build capacity so that when a young woman like Taylor calls for help, our society and our health-care system can save her.

After struggling for almost a year, and after an unbelievable number of emergency room and Crisis Response Centre visits, she was only a few days away from getting the treatment she needed at the Selkirk residential in-patient centre. If only that option had been available a few days earlier.

It was a system failure, the like of which we hope will never happen again.

I remember a friend who died in 2008. I remember Reid Bricker in 2016. Both reached out for help which never came. There are many others who could have been helped in a better, improved system.

We must dedicate ourselves—all of us—to achieving what could be, what can be, in order to ensure the Taylor Pryors of the future can get the help they need, when they need it. Taylor could have been our daughter, our son or our grandchild. She's a member of our family—our Manitoba family—and for the future we need a system which is there for all families.

Today members of Taylor Pryor's family are with us in the gallery as we honour the memory of Taylor Pryor.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights.

Mr. Gerrard: Yes, I ask leave to put the names of the family members in the Hansard record.

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

Karl Dirks, Darseen Pryor, Doug Pryor, Teaghan Pryor.

Brandon Wheat Kings

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): I want to first and foremost take this opportunity to stand in the House and thank the electorate of Brandon East for both the honour and the privilege of serving a second term in representing them in this House.

Now, Madam Speaker, I truly believe that we need to give credit where credit's due, but we also need to brag and boast when the opportunity arises. As many in this House are aware, the member from Brandon West and myself have stood in this House many times and spoke about our beloved hockey team, the Brandon Wheat Kings.

Since its inaugural season, we have seen 104 Wheat King alumni advance to the show known as the NHL. Of these 100-plus amazingly talented players, nine were born in Brandon, with numerous others coming from other areas all over Manitoba.

As the 2019-20 hockey season kicked off, Madam Speaker, Wheat King fans learned that the current number of Wheat Kings in the Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame would increase from 23 to 29.

Madam Speaker, on Saturday, October 5th, six former members and associates of the Brandon Wheat Kings were inducted into the Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame. Wheat King team owner and general manager of the Vegas Golden Knights, Mr. Kelly McCrimmon, joined players Trevor Kidd, Marty Murray, Terry Yake and Bob Fitchner as part of the class of 2019.

In addition to the players and management team, local Westman official Rob Haithwaite will be—has been inducted for his officiating at the local, national and international levels. Rob can now be found at the Bell MTS centre, where he is a goal judge for the NHL.

Madam 'smeakers'—pardon me, Madam Speaker, all members of this House will have the opportunity to come out and applaud the Brandon Wheat Kings at the Wayne Fleming Arena at the University of

Manitoba campus this Saturday, November 30th after they defeat the Winnipeg Ice, the Western Hockey League's newest team.

Go, Wheaties, go.

African Communities of Manitoba

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): Madam Speaker, Manitoba's growing culturally dynamic population plays a fundamental role in our economic, social and political landscape. This includes a vibrant African community which has over—which has many of the over 50 countries of the continent represented right here in Manitoba.

The African Communities of Manitoba, ACOMI, is an outstanding non-profit organization located in Union Station. ACOMI is dedicated to providing leadership, support and settlement services to various African organizations, individuals and families across the province.

Over the last 30 years, ACOMI has worked hard to progress the cultural development of ethnocultural groups and helped members of these groups overcome barriers to full participation in the province. Their model of inclusivity and guidance has helped provide support to about 25,000 newcomers, 3,000 of which are located in rural Manitoba.

The ACOMI Resource Centre is a community hub which offers settlement, youth programming and other services in our downtown. ACOMI facilitates an after-school program which supports youth through mentorship and academic support.

Newcomers and those in need can receive referrals to housing, health, employment and education. They also provide bursaries for high school and post-secondary education. ACOMI has created an atmosphere where newcomers, indigenous and all peoples can come together, build community and receive support.

The organization recently launched their I Belong fundraiser, which beautifully shares the stories of people from varying cultural backgrounds and identities expressing their sense of belonging. The campaign will help fund a new African centre which will open—which will be open for all to utilize. I encourage everyone to donate and support this excellent cause.

This past weekend, I and several of my caucus colleagues attended an important public safety forum held by ACOMI at Knox United Church where community leaders and members came together to

discuss issues and table solutions that centred families and community wellness.

Thank you to ACOMI for contributing to the prosperity of all communities. I welcome and ask all members to join me in honouring them here today.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Union Station.

MLA Asagwara: Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to include the names of my guests from ACOMI and community into Hansard.

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

Elizabeth Aluk Andre, Minh Dang, Joseph Fofana, Frank Indome, Amira Khalifa, Mandela Kuet, Dut Link Nguyen.

Introduction of Guests

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

Seated in the public gallery, from Kildonan-East Collegiate, we have 23 grade 9 students under the direction of Steven Collier. And this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe).

And also in the public gallery, from Aboriginal Community Campus, Neeginan Centre, we have six History 30 and Law 40 students under the direction of Scott Powers. And this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith).

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

And I'd like to draw your attention to the loge to my right, where we have with us a former member, Gerry McAlpine, the former MLA for Sturgeon Creek. And we welcome him back to the Manitoba Legislature.

* (14:00)

ORAL QUESTIONS

Liquor Mart Employees Safety and Job Security

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge the many employees of Liquor Marts who join us in the gallery today.

You know, the government has a responsibility to provide for the safety of everybody in the province, including their employees. Yet, during this recent spate of Liquor Mart thefts, we know that many Liquor Mart employees fear for their safety. What's more, many of them are also fearful of their jobs. They're very concerned that if they behave in any way that's considered inappropriate by the employer, that they may actually lose their employment positions.

So, certainly, there are many steps that we would like to ask about today, but I would begin by asking the Premier: What specific steps will he take to guarantee the safety of Liquor Mart employees, and what reassurances can he provide them about their jobs?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): It's been a tremendously emotional week, I think, for all Manitobans, Madam Speaker. The highs of success on the football field are dwarfed by the concerns about the safety of Manitobans in our streets and neighbourhoods, and, in particular, the government employees in our liquor stores. And so we have taken measures.

But we are not pleased, obviously, as no member of this House should be pleased, at the circumstances that have been faced by employees in our stores, and by customers, as well. That's our first concern. And, as I have had with Michelle Gawronsky, or—the head of the MGEU, had some good discussions and input from her and from her members, frankly, on ways that we can address this. We've taken a number of steps over the past few months—Liquor & Lotteries has, never always with success and never as fast as we would like.

But I would not wish the member to link job insecurity with the issues around security. The fact of the matter is that we take the security of all our employees and all Manitobans to be of utmost importance, as I know he does.

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

Liquor Mart Robbery Prevention Installation of Secure Entrances

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Yes, Madam Speaker, there'll be time to discuss cuts at Crown corporations in the near future, but just to make clear for the Premier: what I'm talking about is employees who are unclear about what they can do during a robbery or a theft situation, who are concerned that if they act in any way that's interpreted

in a different fashion than they do by their employer, that their jobs may be on the line.

So, again, reassurances from this government that no employee would lose their job in such a situation would, I think, go a long way.

Now, beyond that, we have heard about some measures that the Crown corporation has begun to take. We've all seen in the media that the secure entrance for the Tyndall Park location is now in place. We've heard some reference that there are going to be installations like that at other Liquor Mart locations across the province, but what is the timeline? Certainly, we're heading into a busy season.

Can the Premier tell us today when these secure facility entrances will be installed at the other Liquor Marts across Winnipeg and Manitoba?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, the member's referenced several important points in his preamble.

I'll start with the trimming at the top that we've done in government—not at the front line. And so we have continued to emphasize that we have to move towards balance. We can't continue to run billion-dollar deficits and jack up taxes on every Manitoban every year after year, as was the case in the past. So we have taken the initiatives to trim at the top of Liquor & Lotteries, and other Crown corporations, as well as in core government. On the front line, our numbers remain steady, and we will continue to emphasize that.

And we've had the good discussions this morning, as well, on the issue of training. And training in the workplace can always be improved. But on the issue of work safe training, I think there have been some important points raised by the MGEU that I am following up on. I do think that it's critical for people to have confidence in their workplace, as much as is possible given the circumstances of lawlessness that seem to prevail in our liquor stores and elsewhere in some of our communities right now.

And so I accept the member's assertions, and we have been and will continue to admonish the MLCC to take action rapidly and to secure security as soon as possible for all employees and customers.

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

Mr. Kinew: As a gentle reminder, the question was: When will the secure entrances be installed at the other Liquor Marts?

Again, we have seen, you know, the announcement that there is a secure entrance at the Tyndall Park location, but this government would well know that there are other Liquor Marts in the city which are considered hot spots. The location at Portage and Banning, in particular, seems to be one that sees many liquor thefts happening very, very frequently—far too often. So there is a legitimate question to be asked as to when this specific security measure will be installed at other locations like the one on Portage.

Can the Premier tell us to today when the other facilities will get secure entrances?

Mr. Pallister: Not only will measures be taken by Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries over the next few weeks to secure the entrances, but enhanced measures will be added as well, including ID checks upon entry for those appearing to be under 25; not allowing larger bags, backpacks in store; show cards measures to prevent stockroom access; rotating special duty constables throughout stores across Winnipeg; installation of video display monitors at entranceways to alert customers they are being recorded.

We have to make sure that we make measures such as this work to make sure that we have our folks who are working in these stores secure and confident in their jobs. We also must secure the confidence of customers so that, of course, we can do the business in these liquor stores that provides us with the revenue to support health care, education and social services in the province of Manitoba.

This is very important and we will pursue it with focus.

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

Placing Police at Locations

Mr. Kinew: I would invite the Premier and his ministers to provide with great clarity when the installation of those secure facilities will happen as soon as they can. And again, the liquor store employees who are here today, want specificity, not just a broad, general statement of several weeks. Again, specific answers forthcoming would be greatly appreciated from those members who are in the gallery today.

Beyond this, I would like to—beyond that, I would like to follow up on a specific point to—that the Premier raised, which is the use of police officers. We recognize that there will be some interim period before these additional security measures can be

installed at other liquor stores. It seems, though, that there will be perhaps an opportunity to use police officers to help fill in that gap.

Can the Premier tell us today about the use of police officers to help secure Liquor Marts and provide safety to both the public and to the employees?

Mr. Pallister: I don't, frankly, see this as a partisan issue, Madam Speaker. I would hope that all members of this Chamber would believe that and act like they cared about the security of employees in government and the customers of government businesses.

So I'm not going to reference the fact that the member opposite has failed to present a single idea prior to earlier this week around encouraging public safety in Liquor Marts or anywhere else. In fact, the entire NDP platform was absent any reference at all to public safety. So I don't appreciate the member trying to make this a partisan issue. Let's not do that.

Instead, let's make sure that we act accordingly to provide additional security for the people who work in our stores. That's exactly what our focus will be. That's where we'll continue to focus, without partisanship.

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

Mr. Kinew: He attacks our party platform and then he says he rises above partisanship, Madam Speaker. It's a bizarre answer.

Our platform document, to be clear, committed to community safety. Community safety is the term that we used, again, because the public has a role, but so do other stakeholders have a role. And that is what we're asking about today.

Again, there will be some type of lag period before secure facility entrances can be installed at all Liquor Marts in the province. We're asking about what will be provided in the interim. Specifically, I heard a reference to police officers. We would like to know if that will be made available at all Liquor Mart locations, or what exactly is the plan there. Customers want to know the answer to these questions. Employees want know the answers to these questions. We are bringing them forward here today.

Can the Premier tell us when police officers will be dispatched to Liquor Mart locations to guarantee the safety of all?

Mr. Pallister: Members of the MGEU and the employees that are here today are far ahead of the member opposite on this. They understand that, for security measures to work, we don't talk about them and tell the people who are going to endanger the employees exactly what we're doing to provide security.

* (14:10)

So I would coach the member that I'd be happy to share with him some of the initiatives in private, but I'm not going to let the very perpetrators of violent behaviour in our Liquor Marts know what we're doing in terms of security. The employees deserve to know that we're going to create a safer workplace for them, for sure, but they also understand that we're not going to be telling everyone in the world how we're going to protect them in every respect, nor will we be telling the criminals where every policeman will be and where they'll not be because that would be counterintuitive to providing better security to all.

So we'll continue to do things like gang suppression policy, policing and public safety strategies, Illicit Drug Task Force work and implement the measures that communities have given us as-by way of suggestion and initiative, so that we can create a safer society for everybody here. We're doing everything we can to focus on that. I'd encourage the member to get on board.

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

Consultation With Stakeholders

Mr. Kinew: So I take it from that answer that there won't be police officers at every Liquor Mart location.

Again, we would invite the Premier to share—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew:—a briefing with us. Any time the Premier wants to invite us into a briefing and share some of these strategies, we will certainly take him up on that offer, skeptical as I might be that such an invitation will be forthcoming. In the meantime, we will continue to rise in the Chamber and ask the questions that the people of Manitoba want answers to.

We know that there are a number of liquor store locations which are continuing to be hot spots. I mentioned the one on Portage and Banning. We know

that there are others in other communities across the province.

The question that the Premier ought to ask is, what specific steps will he take to bring along stakeholders who are very concerned about this issue?

We know that in addition to the employees at Liquor Marts, there are also community organizations, there are business stakeholders, there are labour organizations concerned.

Will the Premier call a summit today to address these issues with all these representatives of the community?

Mr. Pallister: The member has some skill, and he's demonstrated today, of defining problems. We have demonstrated we're focused on solutions. We will continue to do that.

Each of the initiatives we've undertaken, and all we'll undertake in future, have been as a result of the input and ideas of people we've consulted with, as recently as this morning and continuing this afternoon; we'll continue with that practice.

In terms of his cynicism, Madam Speaker, I just shared with him answers to all the questions he raised in the Estimates process. He has that as a demonstration of my willingness to be open and transparent with him. That will continue.

Liquor Mart Robbery Prevention Placing Police at Locations

Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James): While Liquor & Lotteries investments in new enhanced security measures are a welcome step, we've heard there is no clear timeline for when all stores will have them. As an issue that's turned into a full-fledged crisis situation for employees, the failure to produce a clear timeline is unacceptable.

These are traumatic situations that have the ability to affect employees on a personal level for the rest of their lives, especially if that violence continues to escalate.

We've yet to hear an answer so we'll ask again: Will the minister place a police officer in each liquor store immediately until new security entrances are in place?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Crown Services): Certainly, we heard a lot of discussion over the last several weeks and months, and our government, its first priority, Madam Speaker, again, is safety—safety for all our MGEU staff that are in the gallery today,

safety for all our customers. We are working close with all our stakeholders to ensure that safety is No. 1 for this government.

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

Mr. Sala: The minister references their focus on safety, and yet they have failed to act for an extended period of time.

All Crown corporations were given the mandate to find cuts and efficiencies by this minister, and while liquor stores and casinos are operated by the same Crown corporation, I am almost certain you would not be able to walk into a casino and walk out with cash like you can out—with alcohol in our liquor stores. Why is this the case?

The minister and the Premier (Mr. Pallister) do not want to spend the money required to take immediate action and place a police officer in every store. And, Madam Speaker, we've waited way too long for action.

Did the minister's cuts to our Crown corporations impact Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries' ability to take the required actions to enhance security for our Manitoba government employees?

Mr. Wharton: The answer—the question was asked, did the alleged cuts affect Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries to ensure that safety was an issue—or cut? Madam Speaker, the answer is no.

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

Mr. Sala: I find it odd that we're referencing cuts as alleged, given that this government did issue a mandate to our Crown corporations to cut management by 15 per cent. So those aren't alleged, those are real.

We're providing this government with an interim solution: address the horrible situation Liquor Mart employees are facing. I want to thank the Liquor Mart employees who are here joining us today, thank them for their strength in this difficult situation.

Employees need immediate action today from the minister and the Premier to address safety issues.

Why won't the Premier invest in immediate security measures for Liquor Mart employees and place a police officer in our liquor stores?

Mr. Wharton: Again, safety—and I'll reiterate—safety is our No. 1 priority. As the father of two daughters

and the grandfather of three granddaughters, Madam Speaker, we take this issue very seriously.

Madam Speaker, that's why, joined by my colleague from—Minister of Justice (Mr. Cullen), this morning we announced the Operation Safe Streets initiative, which will essentially set up a table model to address ongoing issues with theft in Liquor Marts.

Right now, Madam Speaker, I can tell you that these issues are moving forward at lightning speed. We take it very seriously. Safety is No. 1, for all our staff and our customers throughout Manitoba.

Addressing the Root Causes of Crime Need for Multi-Faceted Approach

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): The recent spike in crime has brought together workers, business owners and community members like we've never seen. We know that addressing this complex issue requires more than just police and more than just security and more than just a recycled meeting table like the minister just noted.

We need to address the root causes of crime or this will just continue, Madam Speaker. But the Premier's approach seems to be only a band-aid solution. To be clear, we need to address the root causes upon which this crime wave is predicated upon.

Will the Premier commit to a new approach that includes addressing these issues?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I'd be wrong if I did, Madam Speaker, because it wouldn't be a new approach; it's an approach we've been acting on for four years. We've launched over 100 initiatives in respect of addressing poverty. We've moved from the No. 1 in child poverty under the previous administration to now fourth in the country.

We're addressing Health initiatives, Justice initiatives, Families initiatives, always with a community focus, always with a consultative preparatory phase and always ready to listen and implement ideas we receive. A number of the ideas we've received have come directly from the front line in each of our departments, and we're initiating progress in each of those files.

But the member should not continue to make excuses for the perpetrators of violence. There is no excuse for punching someone in the liquor store, regardless of where they come from or what their

background is—no excuse for that kind of conduct in a store.

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

Ms. Fontaine: While we face the challenge of growing crime, I have never been—proud of the resolve of our community, a community that the Premier has absolutely no clue about. Community gatherings brought hundreds of people together to discuss these issues in the last many weeks.

Labour and the business community are working to support solutions. They know we need a dynamic support system to a complicated problem and not leadership, like we just saw, that drives fear.

Will the Premier listen to community and labour and business who are calling for a more substantial and comprehensive response to this issue?

Miigwech.

Mr. Pallister: Loud and deliberately painful accusations don't change the fact that the real victims of these crimes are not the perpetrators; they're the people who work in our liquor stores, and those are the people we'll continue to defend.

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

Ms. Fontaine: The Premier's cuts to social services and a lack of response to mental health and a housing crisis is only making this issue exponentially worse, Madam Speaker.

* (14:20)

We simply cannot address the issues of public safety unless we also address the underlying issues, such as mental health, housing and poverty.

What steps is the Premier prepared—to keep our kids and our community and all of Manitoba safe, educated and engaged to ensure that we are all safe?

Miigwech.

Mr. Pallister: Three hundred million more invested this year in the very things the member accuses us of ignoring, Madam Speaker, is compelling evidence that we take very seriously investing in the root causes she alludes to.

And personal attacks aside, I would say there are many people in this province—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Pallister: –including myself—who did not grow up in generous circumstances, who did not make the excuse of that fact to beat people or to steal from people.

And so she needs to recognize that somewhere along the line, we need to stand up and say this is wrong behaviour. And if we love our children enough, we'll say that. And I love our children enough to say it, and I hope that—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Pallister: –she does, too, because there is no condoning the kind of behaviour we saw in that video tape, and there is no condoning the hurt that that causes people and the fear it causes people. And we will not condone it on this side of the House.

Liquor Mart Robberies Employee Safety Concerns

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): The answers we've heard today really are unacceptable.

Yesterday, it was thoughts and prayers were going to solve the problem. Today, it's the old stand pat: safety is No. 1. Well, clearly it isn't, Madam Speaker. Workers are being put at risk, not just in the liquor stores but in retail situations; customers in parking lots.

So we want to know what measures this government is actually going to take. They've talked about some things, but when are they going to be put in place? When are these things happening?

You've got one store that's protected. When are they going to protect employees in the rest of the stores, and what do employees do in the meantime, Madam Speaker?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): For the folks that are visiting us in the gallery today, and certainly for viewers across Manitoba, we do take public safety very seriously. We've been working on this specific situation for a number of months.

We have a group of officers, concert—sorry, Crown prosecutors and certainly other members across Justice involved in a table. This operational table is looking at the liquor thefts and, in fact, other thefts from retail stores. We take the issue of thefts very seriously.

These individuals are working together to make sure that these criminals are apprehended and they face the full extent of the law.

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

Mr. Lindsey: What I just heard the minister say is they're going to react after the fact: after employees are put at risk, after the public is put at risk.

So the question remains, Madam Speaker. Employees going to work need to feel safe. People going to stores need to feel safe. So what is the government prepared to do and when are they going to do it to make sure that employees have a safe workplace?

They've got one store that they've put a new entrance in, so when are they going to put those kinds of measures in place in other stores?

We haven't heard that answer, so how about actually giving us that answer.

Mr. Cullen: Well, Madam Speaker, I don't think the member opposite was listening. We've been dealing with the issue for months, if not years. And certainly, we're taking very positive action and we're making sure—and if he's reading the paper at all, he will recognize that police have apprehended a number of individuals, and a number of these individuals are repeat offenders.

We and Justice have designated a Crown prosecutor specifically to deal with theft around liquor stores, and we have made arrests. We've put people away because of the actions. We will continue to take actions.

The members opposite talk about a summit. They want to get together with coffee and doughnuts. Madam Speaker, the time for action has come. We're taking action.

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

Mr. Lindsey: I disagree with the minister: the time for action has long since come and gone. It's really time for them to step up the game. They won't give us an answer when they're taking the next measures.

So, Madam Speaker, I recognize members of MGEU up in the gallery, and each one of those members has the right to a safe workplace. They also have the right to refuse to work in a workplace that is not safe.

Will this government actually do something before those employees have to exercise their right to refuse to go to work in those liquor stores?

Mr. Cullen: Well, Madam Speaker, I would encourage the member to pick up the newspaper. I know he doesn't have to take my word for it. He can look at what media has been reporting in terms of the steps that Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries have been taking. He can read in the paper about the steps that we in Justice have taken. He can look at the apprehensions that have been made. He can look at the number of cases where individuals have been put away because of their actions.

Madam Speaker, we are taking action on this front. I know they want to sit around and have a cup of coffee and talk about the situation, and we will do that too, but in the meantime, and for months now, we have been taking action. We will continue to take action because we believe in public safety in Manitoba.

Increase in Retail Crime Retail Council's Concerns

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): Retail crime in Manitoba is at a crisis point. That's what the Retail Council of Canada is saying. Members of the council, including the Manitoba chamber and the Winnipeg chamber, wrote the Premier a letter, and I table that letter.

They urged him to take immediate action on this issue. They're concerned with growing brazen thefts that are occurring in Liquor Marts and other retail businesses across the province.

When will the Premier listen to the Retail Council and work with them in addressing this very important issue?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Certainly, I've outlined some of the steps we have taken from Justice, certainly, in talking about other issues around mental health and addictions. Our government has made many inroads in terms of that. We've addressed, oh, close to 100 initiatives over the last several months, investing \$20 million in a Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. We are working with law enforcement all across this province and we will certainly be taking advice from the Retail Council as well as we move forward in our fight against crime.

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

Mr. Moses: Madam Speaker, the Retail Council said an estimated \$172 million of product is being stolen in Manitoba retailers in an increasing alarming way and that Manitoba's reputation is at risk.

They understand the challenges that we are facing, that they're simply complex challenges, but they are also determined not to accept this as status quo. I personally have spoken to retailers who are very concerned about theft in their stores.

How is this minister going to engage businesses in a real way that will address this urgent issue?

Mr. Cullen: Certainly, we've been dialoguing with the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, certainly the retail sector as well. That's something that we do on a daily basis. We hear the same concerns that the member opposite raised. That's why we're taking action.

Certainly, we feed the information that we're hearing to our policing table, our operations table. These are the individuals that we've assigned to deal with theft, not just in Liquor & Lotteries stores, but across the retail market. These folks are experts when it comes to policing. They're experts when it comes to prosecutions.

We believe in the work they're—the good work that they're doing, and we will continue that good work so that we are apprehending criminals and making sure that they face the full extent of the law.

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

Mr. Moses: The Retail Council in that letter is requesting a plan be developed. The Retail Council wants and needs to be part of the solutions of this issue. They want this plan to be developed so that we can see actual leadership across the province to solve these sorts of issues.

When will this minister listen to the Retail Council, engage in leadership across business communities and actually address this very growing issue?

* (14:30)

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): This minister, other ministers as well, have been listening, and this has never stopped, and it will not stop.

The members is proposing solutions that have already been acted upon. As opposed to proposing meetings, which the member opposite is doing, we are taking action as a consequence of previous meetings, and will continue to meet, as I did this morning—and I thank the president of the MGEU for her input this morning. I appreciate it very much.

And I would say we'll continue to listen. We'll continue to act on what we hear. I think the point of meetings is only relevant if it leads to honest action. And it's the actions that I think the workers at our Liquor Marts want to see. And I think that's what our customers want to see, and I think that's generally what Manitobans want to see, so we'll act while the member proposes meetings.

Crime and Public Safety Community Safety Summit

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): This morning the government put out a press release on their anti-crime efforts. It is underwhelming, to say the least.

The list of people who've called on this government to hold a crime and community safety summit is as long as my arm: chambers of commerce, the CFIB, the Retail Council, mayors, councillors, labour. If the government's plan were working, they wouldn't be asking for a summit.

The Premier said his government is too busy doing things to take the time to plan, but the central benefit of Operation Safe Streets is that it is an operations table model, whatever that's supposed to mean. The liquor thefts are horrifying, but it is more than just liquor stores.

Why appoint a Crown prosecutor only for liquor stores while ignoring theft from private retail?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Originality's not on display today in terms of opposition questions, Madam Speaker. The member proposes more meetings; we are taking action as a consequence of previous meetings. We'll continue to take input from all interested groups, including members opposite, and we look forward to receiving such input.

It didn't appear to be a concern to them during the previous provincial campaign, when neither of them addressed the issues of public safety at all, but we have and we'll continue to do that, Madam Speaker.

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

Use of Civil Forfeiture

Mr. Lamont: The government does not have a crime-reducing plan. They do not have a crime-prevention plan. It is a crime-reaction plan, and one of the pillars of it is more civil forfeiture.

I table the summary from a 10-year study from the US institute of justice from June of this year. It shows that, quote, increased forfeiture funds had no

meaningful effect on crime fighting. It doesn't affect drug use or reduce drug crime.

They did find that civil forfeitures increased when there were budget cuts, as there have been. It's about raising revenue, not safety. We already have civil forfeiture in this province. It clearly hasn't reduced crime, which is soaring.

Why does this government think that doubling down on a failed policy will improve the situation?

Mr. Pallister: Why does the member opposite think that not having criminals face consequences for their actions is going to work any better?

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

Community Safety Summit

Mr. Lamont: What we need to do is get out-of-ahead of this problem with prevention. All this government is doing about crime in Manitoba is reacting—very, very slowly, I might add.

The rising tide of crime has unified Manitobans across political and geographic lines in rural Manitoba and Winnipeg, business groups, chambers of commerce, unions and others who recognize that this is a crisis in our communities. They would not be asking if this government's plan was working.

And when we look at the announcement this government made this morning, it seems they're driven more by handing out pork-barrel goodies to PC constituencies than any concern about public safety in Winnipeg.

We have unity on this issue, and the only holdout is this government.

Why won't this government listen to Manitobans and convene a crime summit instead of going it alone?

Mr. Pallister: I don't mind the personal insults, Madam Speaker. It just shows he's out of legitimate arguments to make.

The fact of the matter is we're developing and acting on ideas that come to us from front-line workers, from experts in the field, from experts in policing, experts in community betterment, experts in child protection. We're acting, and we're acting significantly more than has been the case in the past. We're investing over \$1 billion, this year alone, more than the NDP government ever did in health care, education and Child and Family Services.

And the fact is the member is an expert only on partisan attack. We listen to the experts on prevention, and that's who we're going to continue to listen to, and that's how you get to the solutions; not that way.

Agricultural Crown Lands Auction Held in Brandon

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Modernizing the Agriculture Crown Lands program was an important step in ensuring the sustainable expansion of the livestock herd in Manitoba. It also gives more opportunities to the next generation of producers.

While the NDP has been trying to scare producers with fear mongering and misinformation, the facts speak for themselves. The first agricultural Crown lands auction was held yesterday in Brandon.

Can the Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development please share the good news from this auction with the House?

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development): I thank my colleague from Riding Mountain for this important question.

Madam Speaker, the government wants to see agriculture grow and flourish throughout Manitoba. We know the NDP tried to kill the ag industry while they were in government, but I am happy to report to the House that yesterday in Brandon, the first ag lands auction was a tremendous success, with young farmers signing new leases. To further that, just this morning another auction was held in Minnedosa and it, too, was a success, with strong bidding on a number of parcels.

Madam Speaker, our government values the hard work farmers do, and we look forward to growing the ag industry in Manitoba, unlike the NDP.

Child Nutrition Council Future Funding Inquiry

Mr. Nello Altomare (Transcona): My colleague, the member from Notre Dame, raised earlier this week that—our deep concern for addressing poverty. We can't expect good educational outcomes for children if they don't have enough to eat.

Unfortunately, things are getting worse, and not better. Manitoba has the highest percentage of children using food banks. And because of a lack of provincial funding, the Child Nutrition Council's support to schools has been—declined.

Will the minister address this with renewed funding for the Child Nutrition Council?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Education): First of all, Madam Speaker, I want to thank my critic for the question. It's a pleasure to see him in the House today, and I want him to know that all members of this House fully support him.

When it comes to the question, it's an important question. We expect that the K-to-12 commission will be talking about a number of different things when it comes to education success for students. We look forward to hearing those results, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Altomare: As a former school principal, I can tell you we applied to this program. This program not only allowed us to build community, kept kids in schools, got kids to school. Right? One of our primary purposes, of course, is to make school a welcoming place.

So, Madam Speaker, with the nutrition council's contribution to food costs in schools that has been steadily decreasing, we have—our question still remains: Will he commit to new funding for this Child Nutrition Council?

Mr. Goertzen: Not only is there a record amount of funding when it comes to the K-to-12 system in Manitoba, Madam Speaker, we are working with others to ensure that we can provide new programs. I cited a couple of days ago the new cafeteria at St. John's High School.

I would commend Walter Schroeder, who has committed tens of millions of dollars to the education system, from his own funding, to help students who need it, Madam Speaker. 'Bis' a result of Mr. Schroeder's generosity, that new cafeteria is not only training young people in terms of culinary arts and skills, but also feeding young people at an affordable and an appropriate price.

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

Mr. Altomare: Well, Madam Speaker, I'll just get back to the question at hand.

The Pallister government's funding for education is not meeting the needs of our children and they are not providing the funding necessary for nutrition programs to keep up with the growing demand. And we know there's growing demand. The nutrition council can only meet a small fraction of what is requested from them. If children don't have their basic

needs met, they can't possibly perform at their highest potential. He doesn't need to wait for a review.

Will the minister commit to new funding for the Child Nutrition Council?

Mr. Goertzen: I'll take exception with my friend's assertion on the issue of funding, Madam Speaker. There's more funding each and every year to the K-to-12 system under this government than there ever was under the previous government.

Madam Speaker, we continue to be among the highest per student when it comes to funding across Canada. We continue to provide significant support and growing support to those students who need that within the system, either specifically or generally for their education. And I know that we'll continue to be strong supporters and funders of the K-to-12 system.

And I do look forward to the K-to-12 commission's report next year, Madam Speaker.

*(14:40)

Youth Mental Health and Poverty Adequate Funding for Services

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Last week, through press-through a press release, the Pallister government claimed that somehow \$500,000 was enough to, and I quote, fulfill recommendations of the VIRGO, MACY and other reports for funding for youth.

Does the minister truly think that the Pallister government can fulfill its obligation to address issues of suicide, mental health and poverty in this fashion?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): In just a few weeks, since the last provincial election, we've invested over \$20 million into programs that the member speaks about. And, obviously, that would be some demonstration of the sincerity we have in wanting to address the concerns I know she shares.

I'd like to share with the House—and it is my honour to do so—an announcement that the Winnipeg Blue Bombers will be invested, in conjunction with the celebration of our 150th birthday, into the Order of the Buffalo Hunt with a formal event this spring.

This is the highest honour outside of the Order of Manitoba that our government can bestow, and I know that all members would share in wanting to recognize the outstanding skills that the Football Club has demonstrated in this season, and the honour and glory that they have brought our province. And we thank them for their work and their achievements.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Petitions?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Could you please resume the debate on the Throne Speech?

THRONE SPEECH (Sixth 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 The Maples, who has 17 minutes remaining.

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): I start where I left off; I'll start there.

I was talking about myself, how I arrived in Canada. I arrived in Vancouver on June the 30th, 1989, and staying there one night. After that, on July 1st, 1989, I arrived in Winnipeg. While we were landing, through the windows I saw fireworks going on. That fireworks, I thought was for me, but later on I found out that this was actually Canada Day.

I would like to thank my sister, Narinder Sidhu, and brother-in-law, Avtar Sidhu: from day one, helped us with job searches and hosted us in their home.

To support my family financially, at the age of 16 I started working at a company called Olympic, on Notre Dame and Dublin Avenue, in the laundry department.

After working a few months at this place, I decided to switch jobs, because the job I was working was in the evening, I did not have the driver's licence and there was no bus service to the Maples at that time. The next job I found was one at a cabinet maker on Mountain Avenue. After working a few months at this place, I was laid off, and then I decided to go back to school.

I started attending the Maples Collegiate. While still going to the school, I started working at the gas station on Mandalay Drive to help my family financially. Even though I was still a student, my brother and I were given the opportunity to own our first small business, which was a gas station on Roblin Boulevard.

We took on the opportunity and started our first business. I would still go to the school in the mornings and work in the evenings.

From there we purchased a taxi while I was still owner of the gas station. While I was working with—at the gas station and also at Unicity—one month I will work at the gas station and my brother will drive a taxi, and the other month I will drive a cab and he will go.

At Unicity Taxi, I got elected to the board member six times. I served the secretary and the president there. Some people don't know, actually, taxi—Unicity Taxi and even Duffy's Taxi, they are small-business people own one taxi. It's not—company's not owned by one individual person. It's like a co-op.

I sold my taxi share in 2019, just this year, and started working as a general manager at Unicity. While my journey getting into the politics started a few years ago—actually, not a few years ago, for the last 20 years—I was working with—I worked with the federal elections, provincial elections, civil elections, civic elections.

While I was the president of Unicity Taxi there were a few issues came up, one you probably most remember—know. We were under the provincial government, Manitoba Taxicab Board, and from there we got transferred over to the City of Winnipeg. At that time, most of the people who were the owner of the taxis at that time, they lost a big investment. Where the taxi price was around four hundred to five hundred thousand dollars, the tax price went up to \$130,000.

Mr. Andrew Mickelfield, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

Here's a little bit about my family. On October 27th, 1995, I married my beautiful wife, Inderjit Sandhu. We have three beautiful kids, Maninderpal Sandhu, Tejvir Sandhu and Bhavika Sandhu. I would like to thank my family for putting up during the elections. Sorry, we had to miss our Banff vacation, but I guess I can blame this for Premier (Mr. Pallister) because he called the one-year, right, early election.

My daughter, she was on the election trail every single day, from door knocking, delivering pamphlets, even though she's only 14 years old.

My sons didn't help me that much, but they were there a few days, but my daughter Bhavika, we had to go to the door knocking. Let's go, she will say, and even she convinced her friends who I never thought

would come out and support, and even their family members came out and they supported, too.

And she is a shy girl, but talking to the voters, she felt comfortable. She can—she even told our party platform to the voters. The other day she was actually talking to me that she will be 18 next time the election comes around. I asked her: Are you going to run for it? Well, she said no.

* (14:50)

I would like to acknowledge my friend Gurbinder Toor, who is not with us anymore. He passed away on December 1st, 2017, from a heart attack. We had been friends since our Maples day school. He was a kind and gentle man. He helped any person who came with different kinds of issues. He was a kind of a community leader even though he was a really young person. Each time we spoke on the phone or met, he would always ask me, are you run—are you going to run for the elections? I would say, no. I never had in my mind that I will be running for the elections.

To this day, whenever I look out the back door, I can see him walking past my backyard. Gurbinder, brother: I miss you, I love you.

Another person who would I like to thank is Aman Boparai. He is my nephew. He is on dialysis. He would come every single day for calling. He doesn't want to sit home even, as I told you, he is on dialysis. He will tell me why Seven Oaks was so important. There's so many people who are on dialysis, sometimes they have to transfer those patients over to ER and ICU. I guess this party's taken away from us. Seven Oaks has taken away from us. All those patients now need to be transferred over to the different hospitals.

I would also like to thank our manager, Ravi—Ravi Parmar, who worked so hard because there were three campaigns we were working. One thing I will remember from Ravi—and you probably know me, I'm kind of a quiet guy and usually I don't really laugh that much either, or smile. He would say, you know what, whenever somebody taking a picture, you have to smile. This is very, very important and you have to smile each time.

I'd also like to acknowledge some of my volunteers: Jagjit Deol, Rajinder Rai, Onkar Litt, Balvir Toor, Iqbal Chahal and many more volunteers who worked really hard, starting from signing up members for the nomination all the way to door knocking, delivering pamphlets, putting up the signs.

Even though they don't want to go door knocking, we have to force them to go door knocking too.

I'd also like to acknowledge my best friend. We have been—Harwinder Brar. We have been friends since high school at the Maples Collegiate. He and his daughter, Gurveen, supported me every single day—same thing as—whenever my daughter go with me for door knocking, Gurveen was also there to help.

Another very, very important person that I want to thank and acknowledge is Ted Marcelino. Each time we have a—we were stressed—me and members from the Burrows, our campaigns were all together, whenever we were stressed or feeling uncomfortable, Ted was there. Yes. All those chants, I still remember.

My father passed away in 2015. My mother passed away in May, 2019 at the Seven Oaks hospital just four months before the elections. I would like to acknowledge the staff at the Seven Oaks for helping us during our grieving times.

I would like to talk about a little bit about The Maples. While going door knocking during the elections, voters in The Maples were concerned about health care, education, crime, affordable living. Under the Pallister government, life in Manitoba is getting more expensive. Manitobans are facing an increase in Autopac premiums for the third year in a row, with an average rate increase of 1.8 per cent in 2019—a total of 8.1 per cent for the last three years.

Brian Pallister is putting post-secondary education further out of reach for young Manitobans. In the last three years, he has eliminated the tuition cap, cut the \$2,500 tuition rebate and frozen funding to post-secondary educations. Because of Pallister's refusal to invest in the education, University of Manitoba and University of Winnipeg have been forced to hike their tuition for the second year in a row by 3.75 and 3.7 per cent respectively. Combined, that's 400 more coming out of the pockets of young students who are trying to live, work, pay for a better future.

Manitoba Hydro rate are continuing to rise as—above inflation. Since the PC government, Hydro rate have been steadily climbing with an increase of 3 per cent—3.6 per cent in 2017 and another 3.6 per cent in 2018 and now 2.5 per cent in 2019, for a total of 9.4 per—46 per cent.

Another thing, while I was door knocking, we have seen so much negativity coming toward our leader. You know what, while going door knocking, the first thing they would say: you know, we like NDP

because you guys are not going a negative campaign. We like your leader. We really like it because you will make Manitoba better for all of us.

I want to dedicate this speech to my parents: Mom and Dad, missing you isn't the problem; it is knowing you are never coming back. That's killing me.

Thank you.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): *Punjabi spoken. Translation unavailable.*

I do not claim any knowledge or skill. What I do know is that I put deep love and passion into whatever I do.

I feel honoured to be able to speak here in the Manitoba Legislature. I feel grateful for the trust my constituents have shown on me and my team. A hardworking campaign team with little experience but lots of passion to bring a positive change in society. The team was dedicated, determined and disciplined to achieve their goal. Volunteers who sacrificed their family time, their own priorities and preferences to help in the election campaign. The team that loved to knock on the doors, prepare and raise signs, make phone calls and raise funds. Thanks to the generous donors who made it happen. I also want to say thanks for their interest in the political system they envision for the next generation.

Our team was a very diverse group of energetic kids, women and men from ages six to 60 years. The gender diversity of my team was great strength. Our door knocking team was 90 per cent women and girls. This team made it possible for me to speak here today, and for that, I thank you.

I would like to mention our new friends from the Filipino community: Bev, May, Betty, Ruby, Nick, A.J., Malaya, Flor and Ted Marcelino for their support in the campaign. Janice Little, Troy Cochrane, Dale Edmunds, Nathan Martindale, Doug Martindale, Joshua Luna, Matt Wiebe, Bernadette Smith, Makena Smith—

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): Order, please.

Just a friendly reminder that members should not refer to other members of this House by any other way except for their constituency name or their title.

* (15:00)

Mr. Brar: —David Jacks, Ravi Parmar, Will O'Connor, who gave their valuable time for this success. Thanks to the Manitoba Federation of Labour

for supporting my campaign, my family and friends who put in all their efforts to make my dreams come true also needs a special mention. Thank you is not enough for my mom, Amarjeet Kaur, and dad, Mangal Singh Brar, who sacrificed everything to give me and my brother an education. They always preferred investing in our education and mentoring over their own needs and wants.

I cannot forget to say thanks to my school-teachers, Mrs. and Mr. Jagan Nath Khurana, Mrs. and Mr. Om Parkash, who shaped me up in the early age.

I am humbled to receive all your support and I can assure you that I will work hard and sincerely for the constituency of Burrows, which is one of the most diverse constituencies in Manitoba. As their representative, it's my responsibility to provide them a platform to address their concerns. I want them not only to communicate with my office but across the communities to know each other better, to understand their ethnic and cultural values in the best possible way. Horizontal communication is the key to peace and harmony.

All cultures are rich, all languages are sweet and all folk dances are beautiful. There is no culture on this earth which is poor. Knowing less about each other makes us strangers.

Punjabi spoken. Translation unavailable.

The Almighty God is everywhere, in everyone: therefore, to me, no one is a stranger.

Let's envision a society where no one is a stranger. Let's build a society where there is no intolerance, no hatred. Bad people are not bad because they belong to a particular ethnicity or faith. Rather, they are bad because we failed to teach them values of respect, harmony, peace, sympathy and empathy. Let's get out of our virtual boundaries that stop us embrace, appreciate, love and respect the wonderful people around us. Trust me, there are more kind people on this earth than those who are not so kind.

What I just stated is easier said than done, but there is a wonderful way to make it happen—catch them young. Start teaching our children folk dances across cultures, sharing food across cultures, donate to those in need across cultures. Harmony will follow.

As a critic for Sport, Culture and Heritage, I would like to attract your attention to the importance of leadership development in young children. We need to teach them sportsmanship, teamwork and social skills. I can say with confidence that

co-curricular activities complement academic achievement. That proved to be true at least for me when I was a student. Performing arts is one of the major reasons I am here among you today. I owe a lot of—a lot to my folk dance mentors, musicians, even my dance props, colourful dresses, anklets and the drum who pumped positive energy in my soul and encouraged me to lead my students, kids and constituents. I am gratified to be able to mentor over 300 performing artists in Winnipeg for the last five years. When I say I, I mean my team of leaders who helped me achieve this goal.

Public speaking is another skill to teach our kids. Knowing something and being able to deliver what you know are two different skills. Back in my university days, my shyness prevented me from asking my professors questions in class. Not having public speaking skills meant I could not become a student leader, but I developed this skill later in my life.

For this reason, I dedicated myself to creating a generation of public speakers out of my students and kids. I am glad to be able to organize many communication competitions in Winnipeg to create future leaders in this society. Once again, this was possible only with their parents' support. Today, I urge all the parents and constituents to encourage their kids to try public speaking at the earliest stage possible.

Art, education and law enforcement are equally important ways to build peace and harmony. Manitobans want to be able to harness provincial culture and heritage resources. Artists want to have their work recognized and supported by the province. Public safety creates a balance that makes all this reality.

Yet, all we see is cuts, cuts and more cuts to our services. In 2017 alone Sport, Culture and Heritage sector has program cuts amounting to over \$3.5 million. As a result of these cuts, arts groups have had to reduce their staffing base, and with freezes to municipal funding and more difficulties for organizations to qualify for grants, more cuts are on their way for libraries, arenas and other critically needed programming for Manitoba families.

Manitobans want more funding towards libraries. Manitobans want their arenas to remain open. Manitobans need these resources to enhance their involvement and appreciation for sports, culture and heritage and grow and enrich their communities. A government priding itself on preserving sports, culture

and heritage in a diverse and inclusive society must do more in these areas.

I want to thank my NDP leader for trusting me to handle the responsibility as opposition critic for Agriculture. I would like to congratulate new Ag Minister Blaine Pedersen for his new role. I'm excited—

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): Order, please.

Mr. Brar: I'm sorry.

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): A friendly reminder again, just that members in this House don't refer to each other by their names, but rather by their constituency names or titles in this House.

Mr. Brar: I would like to congratulate the new Ag Minister for his new role. I'm excited to work with him for the betterment of Manitoba's Ag industry and our producers who put food on our plates.

I decided to study agriculture when I was in grade 8. However, my parents wanted me to be a physician. So they sent me to study medical sciences in grade 11 and 12. I had to write exams to enter a medical college. I wrote the medical exams, but my soul was inclined to get into agriculture sciences. Sorry, Mom and Dad, if you're watching my first speech in the Legislature.

Finally, I got admission to bachelor's of agriculture program. I completed my undergrad in agriculture and master's in extension education from the same university, Punjab Agricultural University. That's where I also learned performing arts, a little bit of theatre and art of making friends through youth festivals.

Thinking of agriculture takes me back to my native village, Bhangchari in north India Punjab. My parents were retired teachers, but while they taught at school, they also handled a family farm. Manitobans, please do not laugh when I say it was less than five acres.

On our farm, we raised a maximum of four cattle. I have hauled feed for them from my farm to home. I also tried to learn how to milk a cow; however, I was never successful. I often walked my animals to the village pond, which was a popular trend at that time. Interestingly, I have also enjoyed riding my dairy buffalo, that was very decent and receptive. A pair of oxen was our John Deere. We never owned a tractor.

I had the pleasure of hand transplanting and hand threshing paddy by beating it against a wooden plank. I had the pleasure of hand-picking my cotton crop. I had the pleasure of anchoring my bullock cart from farm to home with bales of cotton, with a new—with a few farm workers on the cart, taking—talking about our day.

I had the pleasure of pulling radish, carrots, turnips and eating them on site; plucking and eating green chili never went well, though.

Talking about biodiversity on small-scale farms in Punjab, the farmers grew almost everything: rice, cotton, wheat, corn, canola, chickpea, peanuts, ground nuts, peas and so on. Well, now I know why my parents are renting their land for over \$1,000 Canadian per acre per annum. Anyways, I'm a farm boy.

We need to feed 9 billion people on this earth by 2050. This is a challenge and opportunity at the same time, challenge to make sure the food production without a negative impact on our natural resources. Sustainability and resilience are important to keep feeding the growing population for years to come. This challenge provides us with opportunities to innovate new techniques that are economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally suitable. We need to promote use of renewable resources of energy not only in agriculture, but also in industries, business, offices and homes.

Vehicle emissions in agriculture, machinery emissions, both need to be managed in interest of environment. Judicious use of water, pesticides and fertilizers need to be encouraged through various programs so we can take care of Mother Earth and leave it as clean as possible for the next generations that we borrow it from.

* (15:10)

Climate change is real. I would say it again: climate change is real. Let's realize it. Let's start basing our policies based on science, based on evidence. Let's take care of our planet lest we pollute it to suffocate ourselves. Let's respect the clean water we are blessed with. There are parts of the world where people must walk kilometres to fetch a pitcher of water. Let's teach our kids not to waste water.

Let's ask them not to waste food. There are people on this planet who are not able to feed their families three times a day. Let's respect what we have. Let's thank a farmer, thank God for the food we eat. There are many people on this earth who are less fortunate

enough to taste fruits every other month. There are people on this planet who taste meat only at important events, like marriages. Their regular meals lack nutrition they need to be healthy.

We need to respect the air we breathe and we need to think and lower the emissions to the maximum possible extent. We need to start using alternative energy sources or power to run our transportation system. We need to manage use of fossil fuels.

Once again, we need a government that listens to the local producers, cares about family farms and does not promote policies in favour of the wealthy corporations that adversely hit farmers in Manitoba.

We need to make efforts to support small-scale agriculture, backyard farms, beekeeping and related programs to feed the world, lower transportation costs and generate employment. Local produce should be promoted to support family farms around you. Government should take into consideration the importance of community building and attracting youth and agriculture, while developing policies in agriculture.

In Manitoba, farm sizes are growing day by day. The average age of farmers in Canada is not young. We need to think about attracting youth to agriculture.

We need to attract new Canadians to agriculture; both ag professionals and farmers are seeking avenues in agriculture but lack of infrastructure prevents them from meeting employers who are in desperate need of skilled workers. When I joined one of the placement agencies as a new Canadian, I found out that these organizations lacked the network and links with universities, research institutes and ag industry and ag departments. This leads to internationally educated skilled people ending up switching careers and under-utilizing their skills that could have been—helped—could have helped our organizations grow.

In Canada, I got a chance to work as a labourer at a fruit shop, truck loader in a warehouse, radio host, environmental product manager, a Ph.D. scholar and, finally, extension co-ordinator with Manitoba Agriculture at Arborg in Interlake and Beausejour in Eastman locations.

However, in 2018, the budget cuts forced many of my colleagues and myself to go into positions which mismatched our interest and skills. The bureaucracy and the ministry wanted me, an ag communications professional, to be a meat inspector and one of my colleagues, a vegetarian, to inspect meat at abattoirs.

Bosses and minister refused my request for meeting on the issue.

After feeling ignored and disrespected, I trusted my gut feeling and resigned from the Department of Agriculture. I registered myself as a food delivery guy with Skip the Dishes, but my family and friends did not allow me to start delivering food. Rather, they encouraged me to run for the Legislature. I followed their advice and trusted their support.

Friends, I would like to say thanks to Mr. Pallister and his cuts that encouraged a young—

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): Order, please. Order, please. Order. Order.

The honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Brar), I'm standing, so I would just request that you—thank you.

This is now, I think the third time this afternoon I've had to remind the member that we cannot refer to members of this Chamber by their last name, only by the—their title or their constituency name. I would please ask the member to heed this rule of the Legislature which is long-standing and respected most of the time here.

So, the honourable member for Burrows does have the floor.

Mr. Brar: I apologize again.

Friends, I would like to say thanks to this government and its cuts that encouraged a young, energetic and passionate guy like me to speak against their policies: the policies that do not consider the human resources that could be used to boost economic development of Manitoba and make it a better place to live, the policies that do not care about the highly qualified internationally educated professionals being underemployed and ignored, the policies that do not consider skilled immigrants as assets to this economy. I want to remind this government that it costed hundreds of millions of dollars to develop those human resources that we are blessed with. Let's think of strategies to retain those brilliant minds.

As a proud Canadian, I would like to thank all the new Canadians for their contributions to the economic, cultural and social development of Canada.

Madam—Mr. Speaker, we all need to follow a non-partisan approach to protect our communities, our kids and families from all negatives happening around. I'm sure we can achieve our goals with positive thinking, empathizing, sympathizing and

always standing up for the right thing. I would request everyone listening to get up, roll our sleeves and commit to making our province of Manitoba, and our country, Canada, the best place to live.

Shukria [*thank you*]. Miigwech. Dyakuyu [*thank you*]. Salamet po [*thank you*]. Thank you.

Mr. Nello Altomare (Transcona): It's a great honour to stand as the member for Transcona. Now, the Speaker and I have something in common: both of us graduated from Transcona Collegiate institute. And that's rather the most august institution in that part of the world, of course. And he is much younger than I am, because I think the last time we spoke he said he graduated in 1996. I did not graduate in 1996. But I digress. [*interjection*] So—yes, we can do some math and figure it out.

But I'm just want to talk a little bit about our campaign in the constituency of Transcona and a little bit about myself. And if I get a little warm and I take off my jacket, it's because I can't regulate my temperature. That's one of the things that happens when you are undergoing some of the stuff that I'm undergoing right now. So it's not because of nerves.

So, the question was, it came up that we were sitting around. I retired in December of 2018, looking that, you know, after 32 and a half years working in schools, I had a great career: worked with fantastic people, worked with fantastic students, parents, families, communities. And it was just time to do something else.

So I promptly went and I applied for a job at True North and became an usher, and it was a great experience, you know. I must say that. But then—

An Honourable Member: Thought they wanted you on the ice.

Mr. Altomare: Yes, they did, they wanted me on ice. So they sent me back to the MTS centre.

Anyway, one of my great mentors—a person from Transcona, also the member for Elmwood-Transcona, Birds Hill-Transcona federal riding, the august and honourable Bill Blaikie was saying that, you know what, there may be an election coming up in 2019. I said, no way, Bill. I don't think this government will call an election in 2019. [*interjection*] Exactly. And so I thought, you know, that's not going to happen. We'll just take it easy. But Bill was insistent. And he said, you know, Nello, this could happen. And then he asked me: why don't you consider running?

And my answer was, well, why not. As a citizen, it is our duty. And as teachers, educators, public servants, it is our duty to serve Manitoba when the calling comes. And so we put together an election planning committee, chaired by none other than Bill Blaikie. And I will say, too, that Bill Blaikie was the minister that actually married my wife and I back in the '90s. So we've had a long-standing connection.

And so, at that time, this was, I think, April, May, we put together this election planning committee. And he provided us with the best advice possible: he said that you need to get out and meet each and every voter. And one of the good things that we had going for us was that, because we're community members, we had already know—knew quite a few of the voters, had the connection in community and were able to maintain and also make some very new ones.

* (15:20)

The big push, of course, came in May when we had our nomination meeting in Transcona. I want to acknowledge the honourable member from Concordia, who was present. I also want to acknowledge a former—former MLAs.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can use their name if they're former MLAs, correct?

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): That is correct.

Mr. Altomare: So, at our nomination, we had not only the member from Concordia, we also had the member from Fort Rouge attend. We had Andrew Swan attend. We had Daryl Reid attend, and a plethora of former NDP MLAs attend—be—right now, of course, it's escaping me, because I was putting together this little speech, because I just found out that today I'm doing my 20 minutes.

So, anyway, but—you know, it started from there, and then after that—that was a Thursday evening, and then we were door knocking that very next day on Friday. It was just me and my cousin, this guy I've known for 55 years. I call him a cousin but—he's not an Italian guy, but he happened to marry my cousin, so we call him a cousin, right.

And what ended up happening is that every day, we were door knocking. And we started at the neighbourhood right behind my house. It was a new part of the constituency called Waterside Estates, right off of Dugald Road.

Now, what does that have to do with Transcona? I don't know. You have to ask the election committee—

or commission, because you know what? The election commission decided to put that part into Transcona and removed the whole northwestern part of Transcona that made more sense for it to stay, but you know what? I'm not the commission. And so we have to, you know, live with some of those decisions.

But we went there and we were knocking every day, and that's the neighbourhood we started. I knocked—the very first door I knocked was a nurse: 20 minutes later, I left with an earful. And I left with a ton of advice, and I left humbled; humbled because I didn't know what to say to this person. All I knew is that person was feeling under the gun, stressed, not knowing where things were going to go.

I took great pains and it really impacted on how—the type of campaign that we were—that we ran, because we knew that we needed to spend time with people. Many people told me: You know what? You can only spend about two to three minutes per door. But that's not possible.

We had the benefit of starting early, so sometimes it did take 20, sometimes 25, sometimes 30 minutes—especially after they're bringing you coffee and cake to sit down so that—because they wanted the opportunity to speak to somebody that may be their representative, and we had those many opportunities to do just that, because it is about connection.

Any good schoolteacher, any good MLA—oh, we're all great MLAs, don't get me wrong—understands the power of connection, understands the power of dialogue; dialogue meaning that it's a listening exercise, not a wait-to-talk exercise. Discussion is about waiting to talk and getting your point in. Dialogue is the art of listening and the art of honouring that person that's across from you at their door inviting you into their home.

So then that's the way it went. We're rolling through the month of June, going every day. We took Sunday off. Part of the reason I took Sunday off is I sort of like going to church every once in a while, because it kind of, you know, that kind of thing.

I'm a member of Transcona Memorial United Church, although I was raised Catholic. Now, why did I switch? Why did I switch? Because my spouse, she was a member of that church. She said Nello—or, the member from Transcona, she said: I am not—

An Honourable Member: She said that?

Mr. Altomare: —I am not—no, the maybe-member from Transcona—I am not going to—I'm not converting

to Catholicism. And so I, you know, I love my spouse, of course, and so I ended up switching over.

The interesting thing was is that—as a connection with this church—is that I even taught the confirmation classes at Transcona Memorial United Church before I was confirmed in the United Church. And so after, the running joke was you need to get confirmed in the United Church in order to teach these classes. And then I did. So then later on, about two years after I was confirmed as a member of the Transcona Memorial United Church.

But the big, real—the big thing when we're doing our election campaign, of course, is—and many even know this—unfortunately, the member from Radisson is not here, because the member from Radisson also—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Altomare: Oh, sorry. The member from Radisson would understand—can I say that—about this next point, being the importance of the Transcona Hi Neighbour Festival.

I apologize—I thought he was going to—I saw him there—sorry. Okay—[interjection] Oh, if they're not here. Okay, got you. Sorry—[interjection]

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): Yes, we—order, please. Just to remind all members of the rule that members should not reflect on the absence or presence of any other member in the House.

The member for Transcona (Mr. Altomare) has the floor.

Mr. Altomare: Thank you. I want to apologize for that, Mr. Speaker. I have a very good relationship with the member from Radisson and I want to maintain that, in all seriousness.

We had the Transcona Hi Neighbour Festival and, of course, we had a little table there, and we had a great response. We just set up our table, put it down there, put up our little banner and people kept coming.

The good thing about community and community connection is that people remember you. It's just amazing. When you're an educator and you actually work in the community—I had the good fortune of working in River East-Transcona School Division—the amount of students that would come through, it was just amazing—their families with parents, and you're—again you're re-acquainting yourself and getting to know what the issues were for your community.

And that led—I mean, that was the catalyst and that got everything going, and then after the Hi Neighbour Festival we had two teams of two—two teams of three door-knockers going every day—every day, six days a week, meeting people, listening to their concerns.

June turned into July, and we continued to door-knock, door-knock, door-knock, door-knock. I don't care what kind of social media platform you have, how good you are on Facebook or on Instagram or on Twitter, it's still about that personal connection and about getting to meet and to know people.

And then the election was called in early August, and that's when we went into full campaign mode. My partner at home, she would say: Full campaign mode? You're in campaign mode since you were nominated. But we were—we continued to roll.

I just want to acknowledge our campaign manager in Transcona. His name was Nathan White who brought the team together. Nathan did an outstanding job of recognizing the talent that we had and putting them into places where they can succeed.

And we were also lucky enough to share our campaign office with the Radisson NDP candidate, who was Raj Sandhu. I want—and that will be in the record, right, when—I can use his name? Correct? Good. Raj is an outstanding individual who ran an outstanding campaign and I want to acknowledge that.

But our volunteer group, of course, was massive. I mean, and I can say without question we had many of our members here also participating in the campaign in Transcona. We had the member from Concordia, the member from Point Douglas, right, the member from Fort Rouge came out.

We had some of the—our former members as well. I want to acknowledge Flor Marcelino, who came out. I want to acknowledge Andrew Swan, who came out; I want to acknowledge the city councillor from Elmwood who came out—Jason Schreyer, as well, who was campaigning, door knocking religiously and intently with our team.

I can—I have a number of names here. I'll just read them—just going to read their first names: Archie, Steven, Adam, Mendy, Darrell, Levi, Robert, Charles, Leslie, Alan, Sharon—just great people that were coming back.

I even had some of my friends from high school I hadn't seen in 38 years—38 years this guy shows up in front of my campaign office and says, Nello, I'm door

knocking with you. It was Charles—hadn't seen him in 38 years. He shows up and he was enthusiastic.

* (15:30)

But the biggest thing is I had a fantastic voter contact person who also happens to be one of my wife's best friends. Her name was Sharon. Sharon had worked on many campaigns before federally and had an expertise and a knowledge base of our community that was second to none, and we got it done, and Sharon brought that team together so that during the last week of the campaign, on a daily basis, not only did we have members from Concordia, from Point Douglas, we had 30, 40 people a day rolling through that office, picking up stuff, doing drops, door knocking. It was amazing. Amazing. And that sustained us, that gave us the energy to carry on.

And then, of course, it's election day. What's going to happen? Of course, we have an army of scrutineers. Everybody at the polls and rolling through. And we won that election by 114 votes—114 votes. That was the amount of people that we would talk to on a daily basis. So you just never know what can happen. We were winning polls by five and six votes. There are 31 polls in Transcona. Many of those polls, when they were coming through and we were listening and the numbers were coming through, they were—we were winning them by five or six. We were also losing some by five or six. It was a tight race.

I do want to acknowledge a former member from Transcona; we ran, I think, a very quiet but very focused campaign, both of us. And it was just an incredible experience, especially when the numbers finally came through and we were three, four hours later and we're getting texts and phone calls. We really couldn't really celebrate because we hadn't been—not until, I think it was 12:30 in the morning on September 11th.

So, a little bit about myself. I want to be the type of MLA that obviously represents not only Transcona but also each and every Manitoban because we have so much potential and we also have challenges that we need to tackle. We're—I'm just one of 57. It's an honour to be here. I will say that 56 other members have reached out in some way to talk to me about—since my diagnosis and I will say that means a lot to me. That speaks to the character of the people in this Chamber. I truly believe that.

The other piece I want to say—I want to acknowledge CancerCare Manitoba for the outstanding work that they do. I will say that during the campaign there were some things that were going on that weren't quite in my own body that seemed a little odd thing but I thought it was just the campaign, right? You're so pumped up, you're so going that you kind of ignore some things. But my spouse said, you know, you can't ignore this, Nello, you have to go get this checked out. So during the campaign we had to go and get some things checked out and I will say it was quick and humbling to receive that stuff later on. But I am—I'm here and will continue to be here and do the job as the member for Transcona.

Just a little bit about myself growing up in the community. I've lived there all my life. I know, you're saying, holy mackerel, Nello, you didn't leave? No, I didn't. And, you know, interestingly enough, neither did my wife. My wife happens to be a little—a few years younger than me and one of the interesting things about this is that, you know you're just young enough that when I left junior high, she was just going in.

So I left high school, she was just going in. I never knew her. I met her when I was, like, 29 years old. She grew up a block and a half away from me, right? And so, where do we meet? We meet at—we meet on the volleyball court playing co-ed volleyball because I got kicked off another team because they—something about my height. I was a great setter, though, and I have a fantastic vertical but this team I was playing for, they kicked me off. So, I get on another team and she just happens to be on it and c'est la vie, right?

But I grew up across the street from the CN shops in Transcona; actually, lucky enough to work there for three years in the shops. Now, I'll tell you why that's important because not only is it a working class community but also because my father worked there.

He took great pride in his kid actually getting a job as a section man, replacing switches, changing out track and all this kind of stuff and I was able back in those days, when, you know, I was paid, like, \$7 an hour in 1981—I'll tell you, enough money to pay for my university. Now, how rare is that nowadays where a kid can work for two and a half months and have their university paid for? So that was a very, very—again, very lucky.

So then afterwards, I was—I got, you know, I got kind of good, and they sent me to Symington Yards. And I was responsible for greasing retarders on the hump.

So the hump at Symington, you make trains by sending trains over the hump and they get shunted down at certain rails, and when they're shunted down, there's retarders on the track that slow them down. And you grease them, and it's quiet. And you had to have your wits about you because silent trains, and you had to be very, very careful.

The foreman loved us. We were a great crew; says to me, Nello, you know what? You don't have to go back to university. I'm going to offer you a job. I was so excited. I went home. I said, Dad, guess what? They offered me a job to stay past September. And this is the one thing—my dad has never admonished me in my life. You know what he said to me? He said, Nello, I didn't come to Canada for you to do the same thing I did.

Talk about perspective. I went back the next day and I said, sorry, I can't do this job. I have to go back to school. There, right there, I learned everything I needed to know as a 19-year-old about the importance of being in Canada, about the—how fortunate we are here, and as MLAs, the important job that we have not only representing our constituents, but representing each and every Manitoban.

It's an honour to be here. It's an honour to be with this group, and I will continue to serve as long as the good Lord has me.

Thank you, everybody. Have a great afternoon.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): It gives me great pleasure to stand today and put a few words on the record in regards to the Throne Speech for the opening of the Second Session of the 42nd Legislature.

And it also gives me great pleasure to follow the newly elected member from Transcona. I would like to take this time to congratulate him and absolutely all of the new members on all sides of the House, because it is, as the member from Transcona had just mentioned, it is an extreme honour and a privilege to serve in this fantastic building.

So, as you know, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, I have now started my third term. And I sat in the back few chairs there back in 2011, and I remember when my seat partner was the MLA for La Verendrye, and we sat in those chairs and—matter of fact, the member from St. Vital is in the chair where I believe I sat when I was first elected.

And the member from La Verendrye and myself, we sat there and we listened to the question period and

asked the—[interjection]—the member from St. Vital's asking me if we'd switch back. Well, hopefully, not for a long time, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

And, with that, we'd sit there, and we would listen to question period, and the answers and the heckling back then. And it was witty and humorous, and rarely would it get overly—it would always be partisan, of course, but it wouldn't—I didn't find it got mean. And we'd sit there—I think we sat there for the first couple weeks, and we basically just laughed. And we often thought, what the heck are we doing here?

And what a fantastic Chamber, what a fantastic opportunity that almost anybody—almost everyone in our great province of ours should get the opportunity to. And I say almost because, yes, there's some people, definitely, shouldn't get the opportunity to be sitting here in this Chamber, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

But, with that, my sincere congratulations to absolutely all the new members in the Chamber plus all the re-elected members. We have some members on the Progressive Conservative side, the government side, that have been here in this Chamber for quite some time. And I'm not going to name names, but they bring a great perspective of being multiple years in opposition, and then now, in government.

* (15:40)

And I think, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, of course, I'm getting a little bit off topic, off my notes, and I'll get back to the Throne Speech right away. And I thank the member from Concordia for the reminder. I do feel that the few years that I had spent in opposition was good training ground for now being in government. I wouldn't recommend that for more than the four years, and I'm happy to be part of a government that has now been elected for the second straight time, and with the largest back-to-back majority seat count in the history of the province. So, kudos to—definitely go out to the Progressive Conservative team and forming a—and getting a strong mandate from Manitobans.

I'd like to take this opportunity, again, of course, as I'm speaking to the Throne Speech. I am going to, you know, I don't think it's a secret, but I am going to be voting against the amendment to the Throne Speech. And so today, I am going to put a few words on the record in regards to the Speech from the Throne, which was delivered on November 19th by His Honour the Administrator.

I would like to take a few minutes, as well, for congratulating the—our fantastic Winnipeg Blue

Bombers. As many members have stood up in this House over the last few days speaking to the Throne Speech, I, too, played football for quite a few years. And, back in the day, the Lockport Cowboys, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker. And, it was absolute—absolutely a sport that I loved—loved playing it, you know, in the league, touch football, just getting together with a bunch of friends and playing football throughout—in, you know, under the streetlights at the hospital grounds in Beausejour and that—and just growing up with the sport.

I never lost that passion and commitment, I guess, to our Winnipeg Blue Bombers. I know many of my friends and many people within this Chamber, they cheer and they really, really enjoy the NFL, but I absolutely stick to the CFL game. I absolutely love it. I do watch the NFL, for sure I do. But the Blue Bombers have always been my team and I've always cheered them on and it's great to see that, after 29 long years, we brought back the cup.

And I don't think it's going to take that long to get another one, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, because we've got a solid foundation there and with Coach O'Shea and the management and that, I think we're going to be pretty solid for a few years to come. We might even outdo that Calgary history—historical teams that they've been having the last few years.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker. I would like to take the opportunity to also thank the clerks, the table staff, all the staff within the Leg., of course, that keeps us safe on a day-to-day basis in regards to security within the building, and Hansard staff, our translation staff, everybody who puts in those extra hours that we really don't see on a day-to-day basis because it's everything that's behind—the behind-the-scenes.

So, I would like to thank them for their dedication and their guidance each and every day when we're here in the Chamber. So, again, to the table staff and everybody here in the Chamber and to the—our new pages as well, thank you very much. And it is truly an honour to be here in this fantastic Chamber and building.

So, when we talk about team, and we—I was already speaking about being re-elected. I was first elected in 2011 in the Lac du Bonnet constituency. And it does—it takes quite a large team to get elected and to take on this opportunity or this—or the challenge of running in a provincial election to become an MLA. I know that the team that we have in Lac du Bonnet constituency is a fantastic, dedicated, hard-working team, and I would like to just list off a few of them,

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, so I'll read that into the record.

So my campaign manager for all three elections, Mr. Bob Grant, he—I believe he told me the other day that this was his 11th election that he was either campaign manager or was a co-campaign manager, and Bob has put in countless, countless hours.

Bob actually was, way back in the day, he was my—one of my teachers, and then after, when I received my teaching degree, he was a co-worker, and then when I decided to run for politics in 2011, I approached him to see if he would be my campaign manager, and he agreed to it.

And so three elections later, Bob's telling me that the 2019 election probably was his last. But knowing Bob and his competitiveness, as he's been a coach all his life and a teacher, I'm thinking he's probably got a couple more in him, and so I'll be trying to twist his arm over the next three, three and a half years. We're looking forward to the next election there, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

I also—in the same breath, Mr. Phil Stairs was my official agent, and Mr. Stairs was the father of a great, great high school friend of mine who, unfortunately, passed away in a motor vehicle accident back in the early 2000s, far sooner than he should've.

But, with that, I'd asked his dad, Phil, to become my official agent. And, of course, Phil always reminded me when I first was running in 2011 that his job was to keep myself and him out of jail in regards to campaigns, and he's done an absolutely fantastic job. I know if he's out a nickel, he spends, sometimes, hours looking for that nickel. And just recently he's told me that the books are balanced and it's all looking good for this four—this past 2019 election.

The rest of the team, I'm going to, as I said, list, because I know that I'm running out of time, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker. But some names just into the record: Jack, Robert, Gerry, Leanne, Keith, Greg, Martin and Kim, Jane and Claudia, Phil V., Al, Bob Y., Dick, Mel, Lisa, Sue, Bill, Mark, Tom and Doug. And that's just the list of people who, as the member from Transcona was saying, that's just a list of people that pretty much, on a daily basis during the campaign,

I had touched base with, and there were many more incredible volunteers that came out to support because, as you know, the boundaries have changed. And my area had expanded quite significantly, all the way to the Ontario border, including the Whiteshell,

West Hawk, Falcon and the RMs of Whitemouth and Reynolds.

So I am losing a few sections, and the member from Keewatinook has taken on some of those sections, so I will be trying to make sure that he's representing them well. And I have had the pleasure of getting to know the member from Keewatinook before this election and through my role as MLA in that area, so I know that he will serve them with some honour. And if he's not, well, I'll be reminding him. So—I'm sure he'll be doing the same for me.

* (15:50)

So, boy, I'm just a little bit into my notes here and we're getting close to the end of time, there, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker. So I am going to continue a little bit because, of course, when we're talking about team and getting ready for elections, you just can't—you just don't make these decisions up by yourself and just think that one day, hey, you know what, I'm going to run for MLA. I've been blessed with an incredible home team. So, my wife, Tracey, and my boys, Brayden and Jarvis, and my mom, Lydia, and my mother-in-law, Sylvia, and my brother and my sister-in-laws and brother-in-laws and whatever. It's a lot of support.

And before each election, the conversation would go on for a couple weeks to see if we as a family are ready to do it again. And—so, of course, you know, got that blessing from the—from home. And—so here we are. We're again elected in September to carry on as the MLA for Lac du Bonnet.

And I would like to say the new section of my constituency, I'd like to congratulate my friend and—good friend and neighbour, the MLA for La Vérendrye, and thank him for the hard work he did in the new area that I have now inherited in the Lac du Bonnet constituency. And I know he'll continue to serve his constituents well and, hopefully, I can serve the constituencies he's left just as well as him, if not maybe a touch better, if I can. So it's a big hill to climb, but I'll—I'm up for the task.

So, again, family and friends, when you get into this type of occupation, job—and keep in mind that it's not really a—it's not a lifelong occupation. And I think everybody in here has to be reminded that this is an absolute honour and it's not something where you should get comfortable, that this is going to be it for life.

I know that there's been some members in the past that have served 30-plus years in a row here, and wow,

hats off to them. And I know that the NDP had members like that and we've, of course—Progressive Conservatives had members like that, as well. And they'd served their constituents fantastically.

But at the same time, we do have to know, we do have to remember that it's the constituents that put us here, and we're here to serve them on a daily basis. And I think once you start to forget that and you start to lose the focus of why you're here, that's time—that's the time that you should make the decision to step aside.

With that, the Throne Speech, basically—Manitobans have given us that strong mandate to continue building a stronger and more resilient province—the Province of Manitoba. Our government has made tremendous progress since forming government in 2016. But, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, as you sit there, we know that there's a lot of work to do yet.

We will continue moving Manitoba forward this session with a series of initiatives that will ensure a brighter future for all our—all Manitobans: our kids, our grandkids, our great-grandkids, for many generations to come, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker. Because what we cannot forget is that the decisions we make today will affect the future generations to come.

And, with that brief speech, dyakuyu [*thank you*], Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker. Thank you. And I'd like to encourage all members in the House to vote yes to the Throne Speech brought forward by the Administrator on November 19th. And, again, thank you and I look forward to serving in these upcoming four years as well.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Vérendrye): I would—I, too, would also like to congratulate the Winnipeg Blue Bombers for ending their 29-year drought and bringing the Grey Cup back to Winnipeg and Manitoba. I mean, I think that was a great feat. I'd also like to congratulate all the fans that have supported them over the years. We do, now, have a reason to celebrate.

Manitoba is a great province and it is an honour to be in this Chamber today and be part of the Second Session of the 42nd Legislative Assembly of the Province of Manitoba. I would like to welcome all members newly elected and returning. I look forward to working with all members in this Chamber. I believe we're all here for the same reason: to make life better for those that will come after us.

To the clerks, the pages, and all the staff, thank you for the hard work you do. Having spent some time chairing committees, I know they do a lot to keep things running smoothly and keep us from making mistakes. And, of course, thank you to Madam Speaker for acting as a referee in question period and the many other duties she performs.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, this is my third term as the MLA representing the constituency of La Vérendrye, and I would like to thank the voters for putting their trust in me to represent them. The constituency name has remained as La Vérendrye but borders did change for the 2019 election. In the elections of 2011 and 2016, the RM of Whitemouth, the RM of Reynolds, part of the RM of Springfield, and the Whiteshell Provincial Park were part of La Vérendrye.

Over the years I have got to meet a lot of great people and made many friends in those areas. I will miss representing them. I thank them for the support they gave me. Now they are in the hands of the member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lagassé) and the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), which I'm sure they will be looked after fine.

In the boundary changes for the 2019 election I gained the RM of De Salaberry and more of the RM of Hanover. I look forward to serving and working with the people from the new part and all of La Vérendrye.

Volunteers are an important part of elections, and I would like to thank all the volunteers that helped with election 2019 in La Vérendrye: my campaign manager, Michael Bataluk; my chief financial officer, Konrad Narth, all my scrutineers, door-knockers, and other volunteers. I appreciate your help.

I would also like to thank the donors for their contributions to help me fund the campaign. Campaigns cannot run without funds. You do need to get your message out there. So I would like to thank them for their support.

My wife, Gwen, and our four boys: Christopher, Justin, Tyson, Brandyn and their families, for support and encouragement. This is the most important part to me: my family. I did—I got into politics—one of the reasons I got into politics is because I wasn't happy with what was happening and, for future generations, we need to do something. We need to look after, so what will be happening to them, I think, is important.

In Election 2019, Manitobans have given our PC party a strong mandate to continue building a stronger and more resilient Manitoba. Winning both

of the 2016 and 2019 elections with a record majority showed that the people of Manitoba have shown confidence in us and given us a mandate to continue.

Our government has made tremendous progress since forming government in 2016, but there's still a lot more work that needs to be done. We will continue moving Manitoba forward this session with initiatives that will ensure a brighter future for all Manitobans. I am sure we can all agree that we would like to see Manitoba as a province that our children and grandchildren can call home and be proud of it.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, the Throne Speech 2019 is one that gives hope to Manitobans. Coming from a business world, I know how important keeping your word is. When you make a commitment you must keep it. This is what gives you credibility. You must keep your word. It's extremely important.

* (16:00)

Our government kept its commitments from election 2016. The previous NDP government did not. They broke most of the promises they made when they were in government.

Our PC government has made a 100-Day Action Plan, and we are working towards achieving these objectives and implementing the promises we made during the election campaign.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has proposed an amendment to the Throne Speech. This amendment is nothing but old NDP rhetoric. Let's go back to the old ways of the NDP, he says. Spend more money without any results. Things haven't changed opposite. They feel that results are directly related to how much money you spend, not about how you spend it. Smart spending has always won over just spending.

I listened to several of the members opposite as they respond to the Throne Speech. They try to blame our government for the mess they created, the debt that they left for future generations to pay, and that's not fair for our future generations, our children, our grandchildren, that they will be saddled with such debt.

The NDP, all of a sudden, have found a new interest for agriculture and the challenges that farmers are facing. Where were they when they were in government? They tried killing the hog industry by bringing in legislation that wasn't based on science but on getting votes. It's all about getting votes to them. Agriculture plays an important role in Manitoba's

economy, yet it did not get the attention it deserved under the NDP.

They talk about mining and it's importance to northern Manitoba, yet they support leaving minerals in the ground. It's tough to have an economic development plan in northern Manitoba when you don't include mining in it.

The Leader of the Opposition talks about climate change. When the NDP was in government, they had a dismal record on achieving climate change targets. They did not achieve any climate change targets. Not one, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, not one.

This amendment does not offer any concrete solutions on how to fix problems, just about spending more money. They don't know what the word sustainability means. The NDP had 17 years to get it right and they did not. All they did was take hope away from Manitobans.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, the NDP are in opposition because they don't have Manitobans' trust. Our government's mandate is to implement five key guarantees to Manitobans: lower taxes, new jobs, better health care sooner, new school, and a made-in-Manitoba green plan.

Health care is important to Manitobans. We are delivering better health care sooner. Our \$2-billion health-care guarantee will reinforce front-line services, improve patient care and reduce wait times.

Change is not always easy to accept, but change is necessary to make our health-care system sustainable. The opposition knew this. They had the reports that they themselves had commissioned, but they did not have the courage to act. Again, about votes and not about Manitoban's future.

I see the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe) is getting a little annoyed at listening to the truth, but he should accept that.

We are making Manitoba open for business. We will continue to lower taxes and eliminate regulatory red tape.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, we will continue to implement our new economic development strategy with a commitment to adding 40,000 new private sector jobs during our current mandate. Manitoba is open for business and we are telling the world, and there's enough out there to show that we've attracted a lot of money into Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, we're making life more affordable for Manitobans. We will introduce legislation to begin the implementation of our 2020 tax rollback guarantee that will put at least \$2,020 back onto the kitchen tables of Manitoba families. Our government will eliminate the education portion of property taxes. The phase-out will begin the first year after the budget is balanced and will be completed over a maximum of 10 years. This will mean a savings of more than \$2,000 annually to the average homeowner.

We are making life more affordable for Manitobans. Providing proper education for our youth is critical to this province's future. Our children deserve good schools to get educated in and our government's 20 New Schools Guarantee will mandate the construction of 13 new schools over the next 10 years, in addition to the seven schools already committed. Our government launched a kindergarten-to-grade-12 review and is waiting for the final report so we can act on recommendations in order to provide better outcomes for our students.

In 2020—[*interjection*]

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe) keeps chirping—

The Acting Speaker (Andrew Micklefield): Order, please. Order, please.

The member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Smook) does have the floor. And an appropriate amount of heckling is normal here, but I think if we could quiet it down so that everybody can hear the member who has the floor, that would be preferable.

The member for La Vérendrye.

Mr. Smook: Thank you, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, and I guess the member for Concordia's probably the only one in the room on the opposition that was here during the time, and he's the one should take responsibility for what the NDP did—[*interjection*]

We're waiting for the final report so we can act on recommendations in order to provide better outcomes for our students.

In 2020, we will be celebrating Manitoba's 150th birthday as a province. This will be a special birthday as we spell—celebrate Manitoba's history, its culture and its diversity. We have a lot to celebrate, as Manitoba was built with hard work of many who made and make Manitoba home. The settlers of—that first came to Manitoba are aboriginal—the immigrants that came here that made Manitoba home.

We will also be celebrating the future of Manitoba as we work together to make Manitoba a province where young people will stay and build their futures. Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, Manitoba has much to offer. It is a province rich in resources and we need to manage these resources for future generations to enjoy.

Our Throne Speech has much to offer Manitobans, unlike the Leader of the Opposition's amendment. Ours offers hope for Manitobans, while the amendment is nothing but the NDP blaming us for the mess they created. Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, I will not be supporting the amendment made by the Leader of the Opposition, but I will be supporting our Throne Speech. It gives Manitobans hope for a better future for them and generations to come.

Thank you.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain): I would like to put a few words on this Throne Speech that was part of the 42nd legislative Second Session. And I just want to first—first want to thank my constituency that I used to represent for the last four and a half years was the constituency of—no, it was actually five and half years—was Arthur-Virden.

And I want to say for the people that I served there, as the boundaries changed—the boundary commission came in, I lost half of my northern part to my colleague, the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt), and even including the town of Virden. And—but I retained the southern half of Arthur-Virden, which is the southern half, which would include Melita, Deloraine, Boissevain, Hartney, all in that area. And it goes from the Saskatchewan border all along the—straddles along the—Turtle Mountain now straddles across the—along the US-Canada border from Saskatchewan border all the way to Notre Dame. I always say that I represent the area between Pierson in the southwest and Notre Dame in the northeast.

* (16:10)

And it's a long, narrow constituency but what I like about the constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the constituency is really made up of a lot of agricultural great crop land. A lot of canola, a lot of wheat, a lot of corn; sunflowers are grown in the constituency.

What's unique about the constituency of Turtle Mountain is that there's many hills and it's appropriately called Turtle Mountain because the Turtle Mountains actually are both inside the—what straddles the US side to the North Dakota and the—into

Manitoba on the north side of the border, which includes the International Peace Gardens.

I'm so honoured to be part of the—being appointed by the Premier (Mr. Pallister) to represent the International Peace Gardens and there's a lot of exciting things that are going to happen going forward in this—with the Peace Gardens.

We're trying to make it so that there's initiative that we actually embrace the—what we have actually already done with the human rights museum in Winnipeg, along with the WAG—the expansion of the WAG with the Inuit museum—Inuit arts that's going to be part of that museum; and then, also, the conservatory that's being built right now at the Diversity Gardens in Assiniboine Park.

So we're hoping that we can forward that going into rural Manitoba and to the Westman; we're hoping that we can develop and renew the International Peace Gardens. I think there's a big opportunity that both North Dakota and Manitoba would like to see, so that we even have a strategy where we would have tourism that would come from South Dakota, from the Black Hills.

The governor of North Dakota right now is actually going to be putting—doing a presidential library in Medora, North Dakota for Theodore Roosevelt, so they've actually passed a bill to actually build that library and because, I think if you review history, after Theodore Roosevelt's wife passed away and his mom passed away the same day, he actually escaped and left his—the east coast to actually go into cattle country into North Dakota, which, now, the area—the Badlands that he actually stayed for many years, was named after him—actually, Theodore Roosevelt Park.

And so now, in Medora, they're making this museum of his library, and so if we can just work with North Dakota, we have the opportunity to bring tourism from—some from South Dakota all the way up to the—Medora, all the way to the Peace Gardens and eventually to Winnipeg, where we have some major assets that we can actually display to the international travellers and visitors. And we also have Churchill.

So we have a very good strategy when it comes to tourism and I know we're putting lots of money into investing into tourism. Like what the NDP did, they all—all they did was self-promotion of themselves of good jobs and steady growth. That's all we saw.

That money could have been put—easily put into our tourism and invested into getting more people and

more money being spent in this province instead and that's what our government's wanted to do is bringing people into this area.

And being part of the Turtle Mountains, there's a lot of lakes in Turtle Mountains. I know there's Lake Adam, Lake George, Lake Metigoshe—which is shared—that lake is actually shared both by Americans and Canadians and we get many Americans that actually have cottages, especially in the south—like, on their side of the border and we have many on our side, too.

And one, actually, person that actually has his cottage there was Josh Duhamel, who is an actor who's married to Fergie. They had a cottage at Lake Metigoshe, and so, again, it's a good promotion to this—the area. Also, we also have two—on the Pembina Valley there's a number of dams that are part of the Pembina Valley recreational. There's Pleasant Valley, there's Pelican Lake and there's Rock Lake and it's starting off really developing into cottage country.

There's good fishing in those lakes, a lot of tourism coming into the Turtle Mountain area and so we're going to continue making sure that, you know, the tourism side will grow and with the amount of investment we're going to be doing at the International Peace Gardens, this will allow these other areas, like, the towns like Boissevain, Killarney, and Deloraine to actually embrace and work together and bring more tourism into the Westman. And working with Brandon, too, would be also helpful, too.

And so this is what our government wants to do. We want to bring people to this province and we also not only want them to come into Winnipeg but we want them to travel outside that perimeter and visit different areas in the province.

And the other thing was, I would like to say is, first, you know, with my association, that many people that I would have to say that were part of my Arthur-Virden association was my president, Leigh Smith. I want to thank him. I want to thank my vice-president, Rodney Perron.

I want to thank my treasurer, Bob Cochrane, who was, from—for the five and a half years was my treasurer. His wife was also my association—Kathy Batho, who was actually my CA at first. She spent three years with me, and now she was on my association. And then I also had Cheryl Porter, who actually worked with Larry; she was on my association with Arthur-Virden.

So now that I'm not representing that half, I—those people have moved on, and I've actually—was able to retain my previous—

An Honourable Member: And they're still there.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

Mr. Piwniuk: They're still there, but I've moved on. But I'm still in my town.

So now I have to thank Allan Ransom, who became my—was my past president, now become my president again, that now he lives in the Boissevain area. I want to thank my campaign manager, Garry Williams, who is—that was the mayor of Waskada. I want to thank my tour co-ordinator, which was Ed Grenier, who's become also a good friend of mine too, and he lives, actually, in the Notre Dame area. And he was really a good source of knowing everyone there. He actually—

An Honourable Member: It's all your blue-skies members too?

Mr. Piwniuk: Yes, but—blue skies, yes.

And—but—with Ed Grenier, who was—really helped me in my campaign, was that he—his—he had two sons and a daughter that were both—all three goalies—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

We do have a member in debate here, so I would ask for everybody's courtesy, please, so that he can continue his debate.

Mr. Piwniuk: So—thank you, Madam Speaker—I would have to say, with—when I was talking to my supporter, Ed Grenier, he actually helped me in, you know, to—introduced a lot of people in that eastern part. Being that I—that was the area that I was unknown, you know, with the boundaries commission and everything that happened so quickly, it was so great to got to know people in that eastern 'plarp'.

Notre Dame was very welcoming. I know, in the past, we basically won by a few votes in that area, but this time around, I knew that I wanted to work harder there. And it paid off, you know. By getting connected to the community, we did just as well in Notre Dame than we did anywhere else—in any of the other communities.

And I want to thank the people that helped me out in that area, like the Greniers. And, like I said, they knew so many people because of hockey, connections that they had in that area, a French community. They

worked really well together. Like, I'm saying Notre Dame, for instance, is probably one of the fastest growing communities in my constituency. They have a brand new hospital. They have five doctors. Actually, deliver babies there still, and that's amazing for a small town that size. And—

An Honourable Member: In conclusion.

Mr. Piwniuk: In conclusion, I want to thank—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Piwniuk: I want to thank—I want to wish all the best to all the newcomers here, you know, all the new MLAs, my colleague from Southdale and my colleague who's neighbour to me, to Borderland. Welcome to the—Manitoba's Legislature, and I want to thank everyone.

Thanks, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, I'm honoured to rise and put some brief comments—charitably brief, for my colleagues—to add to the commentary that has been offered around the Throne Speech, to say, frankly, I endeavour never to forget what an honour it is to serve.

And want to say, first of all, thank you to you, Madam Speaker. It's good to see you back in that chair, and you do a tremendous job, and we thank you. We thank you for your work.

I want to say thank you to the people of Manitoba for the incredible support that they've offered us—the largest back-to-back majority governments in the history of our beautiful province, Madam Speaker, in 149 years. That's an incredible accomplishment.

And I also say I am tremendously proud to lead a political organization that is reliant not on subsidies from taxpayers, who may or may not choose to support us, but rather, that relies on volunteer support.

And to say that we thank—through you, Madam Speaker, we thank our many volunteers who are so generous with their time and their contributions in various ways to our party and to the cause of the things we believe in. We thank them sincerely for their contributions.

* (16:20)

But I also want to say congratulations to the new members of the Chamber. It's just been a few weeks, but I have been impressed with their commitment to speak for the things they believe, and I thank them and I congratulate them for their election.

I do believe sincerely, Madam Speaker, though we have—though we may have different ways of getting there, I think that in many ways our destinations are shared destinations. We all want to see better security for the people of our province. We saw expressions of that today. We may disagree about the mechanisms and methods; none of us have any disagreement at all with the shared desire to see people able to work with confidence and security in the workplaces of our province. And we want to see all of our people in this province feeling secure in their homes and neighbourhoods around the city of Winnipeg and in other cities.

We just saw, and it saddens me to repeat it, but the Maclean's article that all of us are familiar with, highlighting a number of communities in our province that have seen increased instance—incidences of crime and some violent crime as well. And so we must focus together on addressing these issues.

And I sincerely offer to members opposite and to all members in this Chamber the genuine encouragement to come forward with ideas, to come—whether they emanate from you personally or from people in your community, community groups that we have consulted with on a regular basis. We'll continue to do that because we are getting good, positive suggestions as a result of the extensive consultation we've introduced as a government.

Newer members may not be aware, but in terms of the prebudget consultation alone, we have changed the practices of the past to include thousands of Manitobans. We actually—we've actually had over 50,000 Manitobans participate in the prebudget consultations of the last two years prior to this year's budget year; I hope that many more participate this year.

But we do really like to see that participation. I encourage all members of the House to do prebudget consultations. I'm sure the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) will make available—there's a kit with a formatted presentation that you can use, and then you can offer—get input and share it with the Finance Minister and with the government. It's a good opportunity to encourage the—to make democracy work and to make the communities of our province feel empowered and be empowered in offering solutions.

You know, we were elected with some challenges in front of us, and we accepted those challenges as Manitobans wanted us to. To face the challenges

head-on was what I think the good character of Manitobans would have us do.

And so we have done so. And whether it would be to fix the finances of our Province—and we have certainly focused on doing so—to repair the services, to rebuild the economy of our province, we are succeeding to some degree in each of these categories.

It's never enough and it's never fast enough, Madam Speaker. For us, we all desire perfection. We all do. But it is progress we're achieving.

I mean, in terms of the financial circumstances, the bond raters that gave the previous government two credit rating downgrades which cost us tens of millions of dollars that goes to happy moneylenders instead of the deserving people of Manitoba in terms of better services, we've replaced that with the first positive bond rating commentary in almost 20 years.

And I would mention to all my colleagues here that that saves literally tens of millions of dollars not just in provincial coffers but for our municipal partners as well, because our credit rating reflects on their costs of borrowing. That's a positive thing: freeing up those dollars for the real priorities of Manitobans.

I think, too, in terms of services, Madam Speaker, moving away from being dead last in terms of addressing poverty to see us making some progress, and, again, it's never enough, nor is it ever fast enough. But we continue to stay focused on moving forward, and I think that's why we were re-elected, because we were committed to moving forward, not backward, not away from the challenges, as some would advocate.

I mean, while we were committing to investing \$2 billion additional over our next term in health care, frankly, the member for—I believe it was Osborne or Fort Rouge, I think we call it—Fort Rouge was instructing—offering toonies for parking and encouraging people to cheat on their parking bill. This is not the solution to addressing the health-care needs of Manitobans. We have a good system with great people working in it, but they need to get health care sooner.

And so I am pleased to share with the House, as we have, that we are the only province that has reduced emergency wait times in the country of Canada over the last three years.

We've also encouraged economic growth by partnering, not obstructing, not shutting down agriculture as the previous NDP government chose to

do, but encouraging agricultural investments, and not only agricultural investments, but other focused investments in a beautiful place to invest.

This is the lowest cost jurisdiction in central North America in which to locate a small-business enterprise, and more and more small businesses are looking to locate to Manitoba or expand in Manitoba, such that we have led the country in private sector capital investment per capita in each of the last two years. That's never happened before.

And now—that investment leads to job opportunities for families. The best way out of poverty, in my personal experience, and I think in the experience of many of us in this House, is a good job opportunity, career opportunity.

And that training, and the—that leads to employment, gives a person the self-esteem and confidence and the physical ability—fiscal ability to support themselves and their family.

That—this is a beautiful place to live and work, Madam Speaker, and, you know, it's a beautiful place to raise your children. And I've had the privilege of doing that with my wife, Esther, for many years, but I've also had the privilege of living in another part of the country when I served as a parliamentary representative for my constituency here in Manitoba, and that was Quebec.

And I want to thank, sincerely, every member of this House for supporting our resolution yesterday, for joining hands together. I want to thank all members for doing that, because it is important. Whether these rights that are being eroded and threatened in the province of Quebec are rights that are germane to us as individuals is not the key thing.

It is critical we stand to defend the rights of others when they're threatened. We must do that, and we do that together; then we can genuinely expect that others will rise and defend ours when they're threatened, too.

We join hands—hand-in-hand together yesterday in the House. It was a proud moment for me to see that, just as it was when Eric Robinson stood and offered the NDP government's support for resolution to support indigenous women's rights in our country. We stood together at that time.

And I want to say thank you to the House leader opposite, too, for her representation and work with our House leader. And I think we owe them both. It's not an easy job. I think someone compared it once to

herding cats. I don't know if we're all cats, but I think it's possible that we need to be herded occasionally.

But I do think that we have made this progress because of our committed focus. We can't do all things, but the things we can do, we must focus on doing, and we have done our best to do that, to listen, to fix these finances because they are Manitobans' finances too, because we don't just work with our money here.

Some governments lose sight of that fact and think it's theirs. It is not. There's not a dollar that we control in spending that doesn't come from a hard-working Manitoba family, an individual who has been asked to contribute: to contribute to health care.

And I wish the new member for Transcona (Mr. Altomare) all the best as he experiences the health-care system, and I hope enjoys retirement.

We see the challenges and we know they're real. We turn. We face them head-on. We—I encourage us all to do that together as much as we can. We see the challenges of northern communities. We must face those challenges together. Job opportunities and careers, that's what the people of the North want.

The historic mining protocol agreement that was just reached with one of our indigenous communities, Manto Sipi, is, I hope, the forerunner to many, many others, and I think those opportunities are there. I believe the North. I believe the Golden Boy faces north for a reason, and I believe the opportunities are there in our North.

And I know our northern communities want to succeed and they want to find those opportunities. And we're committed to working together with northerners to achieve those goals.

In terms of Education, the reforms that are necessary to make the system work better are under way. We will look forward to the report and we will be looking forward to acting on it. We make sure that we deliver on the process of a better education for our students and our children in this province. It is the best way out of poverty.

As my mother, the 42-year teacher, always said: The best education you can get is the best investment you could make, son. And I agree. And so we continue to invest more in education, but it must be focused and focused on better outcomes.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I have never been more enthused about the future of our province, never more excited about where we are going. I believe that

the only thing better than today in Manitoba most certainly, with the support of all of us and all Manitobans, is going to be tomorrow in Manitoba.

* (16:30)

Madam Speaker: The hour being 4:30 p.m., pursuant to rule 47(3), I am interrupting the proceedings to put the questions necessary to dispose of the proposed motion of the honourable member for Southdale (Ms. Gordon), that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne and all amendments to that motion.

Therefore, the question before the House is a proposed subamendment of the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont), that is, a subamendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the subamendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the subamendment?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a yes.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the subamendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

I declare the subamendment lost.

Recorded Vote

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, I request a recorded vote.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have the support of three other members for a recorded vote?

The member does not have that support.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The question now before the House is a proposed amendment, moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition

(Mr. Kinew) to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a yes.

The amendment is as follows:

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

But this House regrets that the provincial government has:

- (a) continued to freeze funding for municipalities, forcing large communities like Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson, Dauphin and Selkirk, and smaller communities like Gimli and St-Lazare to make difficult decisions on cuts to public services and programming that keep communities safe and welcoming; and
- (b) broken the health-care system that Manitoba families and seniors rely on by closing emergency rooms, firing hundreds of nurses, privatizing life-saving services for rural and northern communities, eliminating more than 130 hospital beds in Winnipeg, ending obstetric services in Flin Flon and failing to build a single personal-care-home bed in its first term; and
- (c) failed to acknowledge cuts that have caused numerous cancellations of cardiac surgeries and exacerbated emergency room, hip, knee and cataract surgery wait times; and
- (d) continued to ignore Manitobans by proceeding with its health-care overhaul, which will cut critical services and close facilities relied on by rural and northern families; and
- (e) refused to address the public health crisis by failing to provide long-term investments to community organizations and harm reduction initiatives, which help Manitobans dealing with mental health and addictions get the help they need and reduce blood-borne diseases; and
- (f) presented no comprehensive plan to help reduce poverty and end poverty, which in turn fails to address the root causes of crime; and

- (g) failed again to present any commitments to build new social or affordable housing, despite having promised to do so in its first term, and made the situation worse by selling government housing units, even though a housing first strategy has been proven to move people out of poverty; and
- (h) continued to put the long-term success of Manitoba students at risk by laying the groundwork for cuts with an internal mandate review, as well as education commission's report, having already eliminated small class sizes, slashed support services, cut education funding and frozen teachers' wages; and
- (i) continued to increase tuition for post-secondary education while interfering on the academic freedom of post-secondary institutions by tying operating grants to student outcomes; and
- (j) interfered with Crown corporations numerous times, specifically: agreements signed by Manitoba Hydro; offering online service delivery with Manitoba Public Insurance; projects with Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries; and the delivery of Efficiency Manitoba's strategic plan, all of which caused chairs and full boards to resign; and
- (k) failed to listen to Manitoba producers who have overwhelmingly said that their approach to leasing Crown lands will cause irreparable harm to family farms in Manitoba that are already dealing with serious challenges due to climate change, while also failing to provide them with insurance supports during a time of need; and
- (l) broken its commitment to budget over \$500 million per year on highways annually, and underspent highways infrastructure by hundreds of millions of dollars, while also continuing to pursue the privatization of infrastructure services; and
- (m) failed to make any clear commitments to address the Manitoba Human Rights Commission order for a no-sex-designation option on all government identification; and
- (n) cut supports for French language services at the Université de Saint-Boniface, Santé en français and Translation Services, and eliminated the assistant deputy minister for the Bureau de l'éducation française; and
- (o) failed to meaningfully—meaningfully consult with indigenous leadership regarding the Lake St. Martin outlet channel and other initiatives that affect indigenous rights; and
- (p) failed to implement a living wage, and instead made it more difficult for employees to unionize, and instituted an unconstitutional wage freeze law that is now being legally challenged; and
- (q) ignored the needs of the northern communities who have lost hundreds of mining jobs by putting families into poverty and contributing to a rise in crime by the failure to release funds in the Mining Community Reserve Fund; and
- (r) failed to make any clear commitments to evaluate the challenges in the northern justice system, particularly those in Thompson, that have negatively impacted individuals from all northern communities; and
- (s) failed to take any meaningful action on climate change by not making any commitments to put a price on carbon, substantively reduce Manitobans' greenhouse gas emissions, grow the clean energy sector of Manitoba Hydro, or invest in infrastructure projects such as the North End treatment plant that would benefit all Canadians by helping to curd emissions and reduce pollution; and
- (t) continued to freeze operating funding for public child-care centres, making it difficult for facilities to offer day-to-day programming during children's most critical years, and to attract and retain quality early learning and child-care workers, while also failing to address the growing wait-list for public, non-profit centres, and instead focusing on moving towards a private operating model; and
- (u) failed to offer any supports to newcomers in this diverse and inclusive province.

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

The question now before the House is the proposed amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew).

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

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Recorded Vote

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): A recorded vote, please.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been called, call in the members.

* (16:40)

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew), that is, the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yeas

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliw, Wiebe.

Nays

Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Gordon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 20, Nays 32.

Madam Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The question now before the House is the motion of the honourable—[interjection]

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable member for Southdale (Ms. Gordon), that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the motion read?

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Recorded Vote

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): A recorded vote, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been called, call in the members.

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable member for Southdale, that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yeas

Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Gordon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliw, Wiebe.

Clerk: Yeas 32, Nays 20.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Madam Speaker: I am prepared to accept a motion to adjourn the House, if somebody so wishes to make that motion.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, could you canvass all members of the House to see if it is the will of members to call it 5 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to call it 5 p.m.? *[Agreed]*

This House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 28, 2019

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