



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALTOMARE, Nello, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	Ind.
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 215—The Specialist Wait Time Reporting Act

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I move, seconded by the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone), that Bill 215, The Specialist Wait Time Reporting Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Cook: Right now, when a Manitoba patient needs to see a specialist, they have no idea how long wait times really are. The government doesn't track this or report the full picture publicly.

From the data that we do have, we know that wait times are too long and only getting longer under the NDP. And with over 500,000 specialist consultations taking place in Manitoba every year, Manitobans have a right to know how long they will be waiting for care.

So Bill 215 will require the minister to publicly report every six months on the average wait time to

see a specialist and the total number of patients waiting. It will also require reporting on the average wait time after a patient consults with a specialist to when the patient first receives specialist care.

What's measured is managed. Measuring and reporting on this data will improve transparency for Manitoba patients and force accountability on this government to reduce wait times for specialist care.

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

Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Honourable Speaker, I'm pleased to table, pursuant to The Statutes and Regulations Act, a copy of each regulation registered under the act under the last regulation tabled in this House and no more than 14 days before the commencement of this session.

The Speaker: Any further tabling of reports?

Seeing none.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Before we move to members' statements, I just wish to draw everyone's attention to the public gallery where we have seated with us today 10 policy staff from the Legislative Development branch.

And we welcome you here today.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Dauphin RIDE Program

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture): Honourable Speaker, today I recognize the Dauphin RIDE program, which has made a lasting impact in our community.

The Dauphin RIDE program stands for Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere.

Founded by the late John Shuttleworth and Staff Sergeant Ron Marlin, the program goal was to provide safe, sobering rides home for anybody who has been out celebrating with alcohol or cannabis.

This year marks the 32 season. The Dauphin RIDE program is one of the longest programs in Manitoba.

The success of the RIDE program is thanks to the dedication of volunteers and the ongoing support of the Dauphin RCMP, Manitoba Public Insurance and Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries.

The program is a non-profit and donations directly support the community.

The program—the RIDE program will begin on December the 6th, runs every Friday and Saturday throughout December, including New Year's Eve.

The Dauphin Friendship Centre generously provides a space of operation.

Although John Shuttleworth passed away over a year ago, his vision lives on through his daughter Sho-Sho Shuttleworth-Lafontaine, who leads the program now. For Sho-Sho, this program is more than just a legacy; it's a way to continue her father's work and keep our community safe.

Thank you to everyone involved and to all who have supported the Dauphin RIDE program. Here's to another successful year.

CHOICE Harvest

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): I am pleased to rise in the House today to recognize CHOICE harvest. CHOICE stands for Conquering Hunger Overseas is Community Endeavor.

CHOICE is a crop-growing project that brings together community individuals in support of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

The CHOICE field was started by Helen Rempel in 2009, who every year donates the 80-acre field near Elm Creek. Community members volunteer their time and efforts to seed, maintain and eventually harvest the crop from the field.

Proceeds from the crop are then donated to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank who provides funds to overcome hunger overseas.

This year, volunteers harvested on September 27 with six combines, two grain carts and two super B's. This year, the CHOICE harvest field near Elm Creek raised \$44,000, an average of 43 bushels per acre.

I am pleased to welcome to gallery today Gordon Janzen, the regional representative for Manitoba and northwest Ontario for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Thank you for your time, dedication to this initiative and for supporting the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Thank you.

Government Climate and Environment Initiatives

MLA Mike Moyes (Riel): It's my pleasure to rise today to speak about something that is important to my constituents in Riel and to people across our great province, and that is the environment. For seven and a half years, we witnessed the failed Stefanson government sit on their hands when it came to taking climate action. Instead, they greenwashed in an attempt to cover their ineptitude.

* (13:40)

We're taking a different approach. In only 14 months, we've made significant progress in making sure we are doing our part in protecting our environment. This includes creating innovative partnerships, like signing an MOU for protecting the Seal River Watershed. This initiative is Indigenous-led. It would move us 7 per cent closer to reaching our commitment to protecting 30 per cent of Manitoba by 2030. The former failed PC government only increased protected areas by less than 0.1 per cent over their two terms in government.

We've also made it more affordable to make the climate-friendly choice by bringing in a highly successful \$4,000 electric vehicle and plug-in hybrid rebate that has increased the number of EVs by a remarkable 64 per cent. This approach of making it more affordable to take climate action is also what we outlined in our Affordable Energy Plan that will see us harness our wind energy and develop district geothermal. This will ensure continued affordable hydro rates for all Manitobans, while increasing the number of clean heat homes substantively.

We are also working diligently on protecting Manitoba's treasure—Lake Winnipeg—by bringing in the first nutrient target, working to ensure the North End Water Pollution Control Centre actually gets completed, creating a Lake Winnipeg stakeholder working group, and modernizing The Environment Act that will make big polluters pay for breaking environmental laws. This can be compared to the PCs' failed approach of picking fights with different jurisdictions and dithering.

Additionally, we reinstated the funding that the former PC government cut to the grassroots environmental groups that do so much of the critical work on the ground. These groups include Climate Change Connection, the Green Action Centre and the Manitoba Eco-Network.

While there's—while we're off to a good start, there's more to do, and thanks to the leadership of our Premier (Mr. Kinew), we're going to get it done.

The Speaker: The member's time is expired.

Oak Park Youth Fundraiser for Breast Cancer Research

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): It is an honour to rise in the House today to recognize the players, coaches and staff of the 2024-2025 Oak Park High school women's hockey team, also known as the Oak Park Raiders.

The Raiders are a division 1 team in the Manitoba Women's High School Hockey League. Players on the team range from grade 9 to grade 12, and the team joins us in the gallery today.

Of course, a team relies on the support of coaches, parents and staff, but it's something these women did on their own, off the ice, this year that makes them so special.

The Raiders have been working hard raising money toward breast cancer research. The players, along with Oak Park's Youth in Philanthropy, organized and ran several activities that raised nearly \$1,600. These young women recently presented a cheque to CancerCare Manitoba, and at that presentation their captain said: We thought that breast cancer is a thing that affects a lot of women and people in and around us in our lives, so we decided to do something about it, and we raised a whole lot of money for breast cancer.

At a time when so many people have been advocating to improve access to breast cancer screening, it warms my heart to see the young women in the constituency of Roblin working so hard to make a difference to those who are fighting breast cancer in our province. The team even has a set of jerseys specifically to bring awareness to breast cancer which they and I are wearing today.

Sportsmanship happens on and off the ice, and the Oak Park Raiders are a shining example of outstanding sportsmanship. Everyone in the constituency of Roblin is so proud of this team.

Please join me in recognizing the 2024-25 Oak Park Raiders Women's Hockey Team: Elann Carlyle, Brooklyn Davis, Jordan Dettman, Roey Foister, Maggie Hallson, Miya Hanssen, Adeline Havixbeck, Kaitlyn Hulme, Abigail Johnston, Kaylin Lins, Lily MacGregor, Ciara Martin, Kaleigh McNish, Callie Pinkerton, Leif Sanderson, Chloe Scouras,

Teagan Shapansky, Sienna Taylor, Emma Wall; their coaching staff and their managers, Roberta Anderson and Elena Scouras.

Thank you for setting such an incredible example for the many young hockey players that call the Roblin constituency home. We are all cheering for you this season.

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader): Is there leave to revert back to tabling of reports?

The Speaker: Is there leave for us to revert back to tabling of reports? *[Agreed]*

TABLING OF REPORTS

(Continued)

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): Apologies.

I'm pleased to table the report of the Clean Environment Commission for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Establishment of Washington Trade Office Call for Interprovincial Trade Task Force

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, there are situations in this Legislature when suggestions or ideas are legitimately embraced when they're seen as non-partisan.

This was the case of our call on the Kinew government to establish a Washington trade office. With threats of 25 per cent tariffs and a Premier saying we are headed into a recession, the need to work together on behalf of all Manitobans have never been more important, even with 47 days coming from the swearing-in of President-elect Trump.

Now that the Premier has seen fit to accept our Washington office suggestion, is he willing to work together on behalf of all 57 MLAs and create an all-party interprovincial trade task force?

The Speaker: Before the First Minister answers, I'd just remind the member that perhaps hollering across is not a good idea, so the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) will please stop.

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): They closed the DC office. They're complete hypocrites. Dealing with the Trump administration, you have to be strong. You have to have strength.

On the other side, they're so weak. They close the office, and then they can't even stand up to defend that decision to cut our presence in Washington, DC. It was an abysmal failure.

What would happen when important Manitoba values come up for consideration in the conversation over the next few years? Abortion, what would they say about that? Are they going to bargain away a woman's right to choose when or if to start a family?

The member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook) wants to chirp now, but, again, where does the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) stand on this important non-negotiable value for the people of Manitoba?

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

Criteria for Selecting Trade Representative

Mr. Ewasko: Once again, Honourable Speaker, I don't know why he's shouting. But, again, this proves the divisive, toxic, abusive environment that is displayed on a day-to-day basis with the NDP government.

While the details such as costs and staffing of the Washington office won't be known until the new year, there are many concerns. In particular, who will be Manitoba's representative that the Premier said, as he put, and I quote: That people from outside of our province are stealing jobs rightly belonging to Manitobans.

Now that the Premier has suggested his hand-picked trade representative may not even be a Manitoban, is the Premier suggesting that of 1.5 million people right here in this great province of ours that are—that is brimming with talent, full of world-class entrepreneurs, that he doesn't even believe a Manitoban can 'fill' the bill?

What message does this send to American politicians and business leaders when they are introduced to Manitoba's trade representative who doesn't know the difference between Portage la Prairie and Portage and Main?

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Mr. Kinew: What is the opposition doing? They closed the office in DC and we're fixing it.

Now they're coming here to try and criticize the fact that we have an effective policy, that we've been planning to work with the Trump administration for many months now? What's next? Are they going to come in and criticize us for not opening the Victoria emergency room fast enough? Are they going to come

here and criticize us for hiring all these health-care workers that they cut?

The hypocrisy is so apparent. How did they work one another up into thinking that this was a good strategy? On the eve of the first Trump administration, they closed our office in DC. We were elected with the people of Manitoba's mandate to protect their jobs, to protect our economy. That means re-establishing the position in DC that they cut.

We are repairing the damage that they caused to this province. We cannot risk our economy with interference from people with such bad judgment.

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

Mr. Ewasko: Honourable Speaker, again, the people in the gallery, the hundreds of Manitobans watching today are witnessing again the toxic behaviour and abusive behaviour of this Premier.

Manitoba has an abundance of world-class talent and we on this side of the House know it. We should not have to rely on out-of-the-province hire to represent Manitoba. How can we claim we have world-class workforce if we're unwilling to hire within?

And it's worth noting the Premier's willingness to hire a non-Manitoban wasn't a result of months of exhaustive efforts; it was literally the first thing he told media. If we are truly one people, one Manitoba, then how hard is it to find one Manitoban with the skill set to succeed? We on this side of the House know that they are out here.

* (13:50)

Why can't the Premier know this, or Honourable Speaker, has he already filled the position?

Mr. Kinew: Okay, very funny, very funny. I see what's going on here.

The member opposite is looking for that golden parachute, so after the leadership contest, he can line himself up with a new gig south of the border. Nice try. It's not happening here to the member opposite—no how, no way.

Again, how could we send anyone to Washington, DC from the other side of the House when they cut our trade representative to the United States of America at the start of the first Trump administration?

Again, we're working hard each and every day to protect your jobs in agriculture, in manufacturing, in

transportation, in aerospace, in every strong sector of our Manitoba economy.

But we cannot put this at risk by having our approach clouded by the lack of clarity, the lack of courage and the complete lack of common sense that we see from the Progressive Conservatives each and every day. They would negotiate away—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

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

Premier of Manitoba Communication with Ministers

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): So once again, the Premier stands in his place, and he's putting on the record that he's already interfering in the hiring process, Honourable Speaker. I mean, this is nothing new with you-know-who.

You know, Honourable Speaker, there's a disturbing—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ewasko: —trend across the way against the government benches. The Minister of Housing axes a housing supplement that prioritized youth exiting the child-welfare system, families fleeing domestic violence and people with mental health issues.

But what does the Premier—what does the minister not do? She doesn't even tell her boss. And still, she hid her failure. The Premier even said, and I quote, that he learned about the housing cut while listening to talk radio on his drive to work. We know he wasn't driving, but nonetheless.

The Premier has previously called—was called toxic and dysfunctional by his own MLAs, Honourable Speaker. We cannot have situations where ministers are afraid of giving their boss bad news.

Why are the Premier's ministers so afraid of him, Honourable Speaker?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): What do I smell from the other side? Is that fear that I detect in the air? Is it fear about talking about their own failures to protect our important trade relationship with the United States of America?

Again, they were all cheerleading when Brian Pallister and Heather Stefanson cut our permanent full-time presence in the United States of America. That was absolutely shameful.

So here we are, standing up for your jobs, standing up for our economy, willing to work with Donald Trump who has won a free and fair election. And of course, part of that policy is re-establishing an office in Washington, DC.

But what do the members opposite—do they say, you know what? That was a mistake. You know what? The Premier is pursuing the right course of action.

No. They try to be disingenuous and they try to underestimate the intelligence of you, the people of Manitoba, by just trying to act like what they did never ever happened.

There's something else that I smell in the air from the members opposite—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

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

Mr. Ewasko: Just another example of classiness, I guess, Honourable Speaker. It's a shame that there's nothing new with you-know-who, the member from Fort Rouge.

Manitobans may understand that the toxic workplace over there is not just this one-off situation, and it's not. This week, we learned the Minister of Health, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) conspired to involuntarily place an Indigenous woman in prison for three months. Ms. Mason was strip-searched and forced to sleep on a mattress on the floor, missed her son's birthday and her grandson's first Halloween. And what was Ms. Mason's alleged crime? Guilty of having TB, Honourable Speaker.

What is the common denominator between these two situations? Well, we know that the Minister of Justice, Minister of Health both had multiple opportunities just like colleagues—the Minister of Housing—to give their boss a heads-up. They failed.

So, intimidated by their boss, they chose to keep an Indigenous woman in jail for three months, rather than risk his wrath.

Why was protecting the Premier from embarrassment—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Kinew: The situation involving Geraldine Mason was absolutely terrible. That's why I immediately ordered an end to the practice, and that's why we're working on a review of the situation, and that's why I will apologize to Mrs. Mason directly.

However, I encourage the members opposite to talk amongst themselves. Where were they on public health orders so recently? Did they have the ability to have tough conversations on their side of the House? Did they have the ability to ask the question about whether people should be punished in a situation such as this one?

The members opposite never had the courage to engage in the sort of leadership that we see from the Minister of Health, that we see from the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine), that we see from the Minister of Housing, Addictions, Homelessness.

My role as leader is to ensure that these folks have the necessary support to strengthen and build this province according to the wonderful skills that they have. The members opposite come in here each day to hate with no substance. They try to throw stones about matters they were completely silent on for seven and a half years in government.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

Mr. Ewasko: The only ones being divisive and toxic and showing abusive behaviour is this Premier and some of his caucus colleagues, Honourable Speaker. And you know it.

Three separate ministers keeping secrets from their boss. Government ministers making the conscious decision to either throw people out on to the street or into jail, but not informing their boss. Government MLAs describing a hostile and negative environment; Manitobans are not just inconvenienced by the NDP's dysfunction, but incarcerated.

And of course I would be remiss if I didn't mention, not a peep from the Minister of Families. Manitobans know about three incidents in the last year. How many more boondoggles were their more competent colleagues able to keep hidden?

Has the Premier engaged with his Cabinet colleagues to determine what else he's being kept in the dark about, or is he more interested in plausible deniability? Answer the question.

Mr. Kinew: You cross the line when you attack one of my colleagues. Here is the serious substance of the matter: the members opposite engaged in the worst thing that has ever happened in the history of politics anywhere in North America. They launched an ad campaign that attacked the victims of a serial killer.

They put the words stand firm, and they tried to blow that whistle.

And I'll tell you what, why do I stand up for my colleague, the Minister of Families? Because in this crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people, part of what we need are role models. Part of what we need is positivity. Partly what we need is an example of how an Indigenous woman can stand up in the face of hatred and embody beauty and intelligence and strength, and I will back her up each and every single day as a result.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

I would ask the member for Red River North (Mr. Wharton) to please quit hollering back and forth across the aisle.

Department of Families Workplace Adviser Report

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I'm not hearing a whole lot of positivity coming from staff in the—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please.

The member for Red River North will come to order. He'll quit hollering across the way, and he'll quit talking when the Speaker is standing.

Ms. Byram: I'm not hearing a whole lot of positivity coming from the Families Department. The NDP's track record for mismanagement and toxic workplace culture is well documented. Now we find out the Minister of Families had to hire a psychologically safe workplace adviser to review workplace toxicity in her department under her leadership.

The report was so damning it was redacted and not shared with employees who participated.

Did the minister read the report, yes or no?

* (14:00)

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): I want to first and foremost acknowledge the almost 1,800 amazing public servants that I have in the Department of Families who every day show up to do their jobs in a good, equitable, kind, compassionate, generous and professional way.

The work of Families is not easy. It's not an easy department. We service some of the most vulnerable and marginalized and complex needs Manitobans, and yet they show up day in and day out with compassion and heart, and I acknowledge them—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Byram: I, too, would also like to acknowledge the hard work of those people on the front line taking care of Manitoba's vulnerable people, but there are employees that fear retribution and retaliation under the Minister of Families. The culture is so bad that this report is said to include confirmation that someone has been diagnosed with PTSD from their time in this toxic workplace.

I have filed a FIPPA request because Manitobans deserve to see the full, unredacted report.

Will the minister commit to tabling the full report to Manitobans today?

MLA Fontaine: Day in and day out, members opposite stand up in the House and they put erroneous facts on the record.

Because the member's not clear about what she's asking today, let me just clarify that, in fact, we're doing a positive workplace program. This is a good thing in the Department of Families.

We care about creating a positive workplace. It's called thrive at work.

Ms. Byram: Staff fear reprisal under this minister. That alone warrants a full investigation. But to hear that a report has been done but suppressed is alarming. The report would cover much of the staff experience and how to address and fix this toxicity.

The minister has an obligation to do everything she can to empower the staff that are serving vulnerable Manitobans.

Why has this minister suppressed this report, and what actions has she taken to act on the recommendations?

MLA Fontaine: The first day that I was appointed Minister of Families, one of the first things that I did was I reached to my over 1,800 staff. That meant office visits. That meant I've done two town halls, just one last week, with folks across the province.

You know who didn't do that? Heather Stefanson and Rochelle Squires not once went to go see any of their offices across Manitoba. None of them went to give even some semblance of leadership and acknowledgement to our Families staff. Who did? I did.

Safe Consumption Site—Point Douglas Consultations with Residents

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): Honourable Speaker, the Minister of Housing has kept a tight lid on the plans for the public injection site. The only reason that concerned residents know of the area it will be located, is because the federal application is transparent.

The Point Douglas Residents Committee wants more consultation with all residents. As the MLA for the area, will the minister commit to this today?

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): I want to thank the member for that question.

And what I do want to say is that our government is working on four pillars, and I'm very proud of the work that our government is doing to support those that are struggling with substance abuse. So we work from prevention. I'm very happy that we are supporting nutrition right across our province so that we can get kids to their 18th birthday, but also support parents. We know that there's an affordability crisis. So that's our first pillar.

Our second pillar is coming from a harm reduction approach so that we can get folks to treatment and recovery, something that the former government never did. And the fourth pillar is enforcement. So we are working with law enforcement to ensure that drugs aren't coming into our community and those that are in and around where our supervised—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

The honourable member for Morden-Winkler, on a supplementary question.

Mrs. Hiebert: I table the article showing the concerns of the Point Douglas residents and pictures of the site. Families are concerned. There are multiple daycares and schools within hundreds of metres of the site.

Is this approximate—is this proximity to schools and daycares why the minister previously refused to confirm the location?

Ms. Smith: We are still continuing to consult. Again, we are ensuring that there is safety and security around that area. We've been working with a lot of the front-line organizations. There's been a lot of unsupervised consumption that's been happening in this province for a very long time, thanks to members opposite.

We aren't taking that approach. We are ensuring that folks get access to supervised, supportive care. That means leading folks to treatment, leading folks to health care. And I'm going to table something, actually, from the Auditor General.

So with—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

The honourable member for Morden-Winkler, on a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Hiebert: I quote: Limiting the consultation to a select few board members of a volunteer committee about such a sensitive issue that is potentially disruptive to our neighbourhood is neither transparent nor democratic.

These are the words of the minister's constituents. Manitobans want to have a say in what the government imposes in their communities.

Does the minister believe it's democratic for her to pick and choose who gets to have a say during this consultation process?

Ms. Smith: So this is what the record was under the PCs. So RAAM clinics, they were—48 per cent were standing in line waiting to be seen. Under our government, we've actually reduced that number down to 20, 23 per cent. And I will actually table those documents.

The other thing that I wanted to talk about is, you know, we haven't buried our heads in the sand like the previous government did. We actually see the issue. We actually are working with the experts and we're actually working with the front-line organizations.

So I want to lift up those folks for the work that they've been doing, because they've been doing some heavy lifting for this—the last seven and a half years. And we are going to ensure that folks get access to the supports—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Debt Management Plan Timeline for Balanced Budget

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Speaker, over the past number of months, I've asked this Finance Minister what his debt management plan is for the Province of Manitoba, and have yet to receive a response.

Manitoba's gross debt is soaring to \$76 billion. To break it down, \$2.2 billion in debt-servicing costs; that's \$6 million a day that is going to Bay Street and Wall Street lenders. Yet, this minister has no plan to

balance the budget and no plan to pay down Manitoba's debt, no plan to lower those interest costs.

Will the minister commit today to balancing the budget by the 2026 Public Accounts, which the S&P Global said was possible?

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister of Finance): In the campaign, we committed to delivering on a balanced budget in our final year of our mandate and we are going to deliver on that commitment.

You know, members opposite dug a deep hole for Manitobans that we have to crawl our way out of because of their lack of responsibility, lack of budgeting skills, lack of everything when it comes to financial management. They left us a \$2-billion hole, Honourable Speaker.

We saw that with the recent release of Public Accounts and we know that we cannot trust Manitoba's finances with the members opposite. Fortunately, Manitobans now have a government committed to fiscal responsibility. We're going to balance that with ensuring we deliver on our commitments to make life more affordable and improve health care in Manitoba.

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

Mrs. Stone: Two balanced budgets and a \$373-million surplus that was left by this PC government. The NDP has taken seven years of credible fiscal performance and in the matter of 14 months, washed it down the drain.

We're talking about \$6 million a day in debt-service costs to Wall Street and Bay Street. Could buy—this could buy 24 more ambulances or 60 more police cars. It could fund 50 police officers. It could pay for the Portage MRI or it could build or renovate a school. It could pay the tuition of 600 post-secondary students. It could pay for a new sports facility or a hockey arena, but instead, it's going out of province to Wall Street and Bay Street moneylenders.

Why won't this minister tell us his debt management plan and will he balance by the 2026 Public Accounts?

* (14:10)

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, Manitobans know the members opposite don't have any credibility when it comes to financial management.

You know who does have credibility? DBRS, which is a major credit rating agency, which only about a month ago reiterated our credit rating. They're keeping it where

it is. Why? Because they have trust in our financial management.

We understand how important it is to deliver on our financial commitments, to be accountable, to be transparent, because we know it's only through that that we can deliver on the priorities Manitobans sent us here to deliver on: improving health care, improving affordability, investing in education.

How are we going to do it? With good financial management, something we didn't have for seven and a half years.

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

Mrs. Stone: Manitobans have heard it. They have a Finance Minister who does not even have a debt management plan. We have the chamber of commerce here, business owners, that have now heard the Finance Minister does not have a debt management plan.

Manitoba's gross debt equals \$50,000 a day for every Manitoban. In addition, every year, Manitoban is paying over \$1,500 in taxes just to Manitoba's debt servicing costs, and this number is growing every single day as Manitoba's debt accumulates.

But instead of balancing the budget by 2026 and paying down this debt, this minister is raising taxes: \$148 million in new property taxes, 17 per cent increases in school division taxes and growing spending at an exponential rate.

Can the minister tell us if he supports running balanced budgets and paying down the debt so he can—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MLA Sala: The members opposite have no credibility when it comes to financial management. They left us a \$2-billion hole. It doesn't matter how many times they repeat this mystical surplus they keep talking about. The reality is, Public Accounts came out and showed with clarity they left us a \$2-billion hole.

They don't have to take our word for it, Honourable Speaker. We had an independent, well-respected accounting firm, MNP, that came in and did a review that showed that we were in that hole as a result of their irresponsible decision making.

What do Manitobans have now? Finally, a government that is going to do the important work of focusing on good financial management, transparency, while we do the work of investing in health care and improving affordability.

Ste. Anne Hospital Overcrowding Concerns

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I'll table data obtained through FIPPA showing that, as of October, the Ste. Anne Hospital was operating at over 107 per cent capacity, a level of overcrowding that is completely unprecedented. There is a clear surge in patient overcrowding in Ste. Anne under this NDP government. This overcrowding is clearly a result of the NDP's broken health-care promises, failure to address staffing shortages and neglect of rural health care.

What is the capacity level at the Ste. Anne Hospital today, and why has it become so overcrowded under the NDP?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): Honourable Speaker, there is nothing that member can stand up and say or do that will distract Manitobans from the truth: that it was their cuts, their disrespect of health-care workers, their mistreatment of our beloved health-care system for seven and a half years that has directly led to the challenges we're facing in health care today.

That member and every single PC MLA on that side of the House only cares about cutting health care. They ran on that campaign after doing it for two terms of government.

We are fixing the mess that they created and we're doing that work on behalf of all Manitobans.

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

Mrs. Cook: I received a call from a front-line health-care worker at Ste. Anne Hospital this morning. They described chaos: patients being crammed into labour and delivery rooms, cast rooms and observation areas, anywhere that had free space. Many patients are staying in the hospital longer than necessary because there aren't enough home-care or personal-care home options after the NDP cut them. Health-care workers are overworked, and patients are left without even the dignity of proper rooms in the facility.

Hallway medicine is back in full force under—
[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cook: —the NDP.

What immediate steps is this minister taking to address the crisis situation at Ste. Anne Hospital?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, that member and the failed PC administration cut over 500 beds from our health-care system. In rural Manitoba, what did they do beyond cutting beds? They cut the fund that recruited and retained doctors to Ste. Anne Hospital.

Honourable Speaker, that member and PC MLAs on that side of the House cut the services in rural Manitoba that have directly led to the challenges they're facing today. On this side of the House, we've invested in more capacity in rural Manitoba. We restored the recruitment fund for doctors, and we're making sure that we have more capacity on the front lines, not less.

We'll take no lessons from that member or any member on that side of the House.

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

Mrs. Cook: The sudden surge in occupancy at the Ste. Anne hospital is just the latest evidence of the NDP's broken promises on health care, and that evidence keeps piling up. Surgical and diagnostic wait times are soaring, Grace Hospital and Brandon ERs are in crisis. Nurses fear for their safety at work and our rural hospitals are overwhelmed when they're not closed due to NDP—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

The member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle) will come to order.

Mrs. Cook: The NDP can spin excuses and point fingers all they want, but Manitoba patients are facing reality; the reality that the NDP promised them all kind of fixes in health care, but the data is proving that they're failing.

How much longer will the NDP force Manitobans to suffer through their broken promises?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I was a nurse on the front lines of our health-care system. I was there, and I suffered alongside my colleagues while the failed PC administration cut our services, cut our beds, cut the people we stood shoulder to shoulder with to deliver care to Manitobans.

We adding back capacity, we're listening to health-care workers, we are making sure our health-care system will be stronger for future generations. We are doing the work of fixing the incredible damage done by Heather Stefanson and the failed PCs. We're doing that work every day. We're going to keep listening to

Manitobans, and I'm going to take any lessons from that member on health care.

Trade in Manitoba Government Initiatives

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): Honourable Speaker, when Heather Stefanson and the MLA for Lac du Bonnet took office in 2016, they fought every day to reduce trade to the US.

They cut infrastructure spending and watched our trade routes decay. They took us from the second best mining jurisdiction in the world to the 32nd in just five years. They hated trade with the US so much that they removed our trade office in Washington, DC.

Now, our government is fixing their mess, Honourable Speaker. *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Dela Cruz: We're rebuilding Manitoba's highways, we released a critical mineral strategy, we're reopening the trade office in Washington, DC that they cut.

Can the Premier update the House as to how this government is working to reverse their cuts and protect Manitoba trade?

Hon. Wab Kinew (Premier): Whoa. Whoa. Is Manitoba's youngest MLA also the 'fiercest' MLA in this Chamber? I mean, wow, my partisan heart aside, I almost feel bad for the members opposite after they just got torched by the member for Radisson.

And here's the thing: we're doing the important work of standing up for you. We're standing up for your jobs in the ag industry, manufacturing, aerospace, transportation, you name it. And it's because we have a strong team of MLAs united that we'll be able to work in this era of the Trump administration two point oh. We'll be able to work with our provincial partners. We'll be able to work with governments at every level around the world.

But here's the thing: we succeed. We can move mountains as Manitobans when we work together. So let us remain united, let us remain committed and let us serve you, the great people of Manitoba.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Manitoba's Justice System Government Management Record

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Honourable Speaker, I'll quote, we will stop violent crime. There is zero ambiguity in the failure of this commitment,

and there has also been zero action on the NDP justice plan.

Manitoba RCMP have investigated 55 homicides in 2024. Sergeant Paul Managire of the RCMP said, and I quote, it's just unheard of, the numbers this year. We're on pace for over 60, and that's double the average. End quote.

* (14:20)

Including all police agencies in Manitoba, the homicide rate under this failed NDP government is up 25 per cent. That's just in their first year, Honourable Speaker.

Why has this Minister of Justice failed to protect Manitobans from violent crime, as he promised?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Honourable Speaker, you know, we're standing up for victims, we're standing up for folks in rural Manitoba. We know that keeping folks safe and, especially when it comes to violent crime, homicide is a top priority of this government.

But members opposite need to be honest with the people of Manitoba. They need to be honest about the situation that they left this government in. We know that in the last year of their failed government, there was a—over 40 per cent increase in the homicide rate in rural Manitoba. And that was the largest jump in the entire country. That was the largest increase anywhere in the country.

And what did they do? They continued to cut funding for law enforcement. They continued to ignore the issue. They continued to not—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable member for Brandon West, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Balcaen: Honourable Speaker, Manitobans have never witnessed a government so intent on division, hate and partisanship than this Kinew government.

The Justice Minister's words have not made Manitobans feel safer. His strategies have not made Manitobans feel safer. The Justice Minister is failing Manitobans.

Police throughout Manitoba do not have the resources required. Manitobans with TB face longer jail sentences than violent criminals do. Manitobans want jail, not bail.

How is this minister willing to jail someone convicted of no crime for three months but unwilling to jail somebody for stabbing for no more than three hours?

Mr. Wiebe: Honourable Speaker, this is why members opposite lack credibility. They use over-the-top rhetoric while ignoring the issues that are real to Manitobans and taking specific action in this House to actually vote against real dollars and real support for law enforcement.

What did that look like, Honourable Speaker? It was a 28 per cent increase in Budget 2024 that the members opposite voted against. That means \$500,000 they voted against for the city of Portage la Prairie; \$130,000 for Swan River, \$800,000 for Steinbach, \$2 million for Brandon. And then, when we baked in an additional 2 per cent escalator going forward working with municipalities, the members opposite called that a pittance and refused to stand to with law enforcement.

That's the reality. So the rhetoric doesn't match the reality and that's all that the members have.

Affordability Measures Fuel Prices

Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry): Fourteen months into this Premier's (Mr. Kinew) mandate, he seems to be all out of ideas when it comes to making life more affordable for Manitobans.

The Premier told Manitobans he would hold the gas companies accountable, he would stop the anti-competitive behaviour. The Premier promised Manitobans he would stop prices going up every long weekend. He would bring in regulation to stabilize gas prices in Manitoba and he would make sure that Manitobans didn't get gouged at the pumps.

There have been 10 long weekends since the Premier got his mandate and 10 times that the gas prices have spiked. No action from this Premier.

Why does this Premier continue to choose big oil over Manitoba families?

Hon. Tracy Schmidt (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): Under the leadership of our Premier and under the leadership of our incredible 'fiment'—Finance Minister, we are bringing affordability back to Manitobans.

Budget 2024 had 21 new ways to save. We delivered on our gas tax holiday, we delivered on the home-owners affordability tax credit and we've been

bringing back renters tax credits after cuts—after cuts and cuts and cuts under the previous failed government.

I want to thank the member for Fort Garry for doing his part on affordability, allowing our Premier (Mr. Kinew) to live rent-free in his head.

The Speaker: The honourable member for—*[interjection]*

Order. Order. Order.

The member for Kildonan-River East (Mrs. Schott) will come to order. *[interjection]*

Order.

Mr. Wasyliw: I will table the Premier's promise to Manitobans.

We've seen a troubling pattern from this Premier. When Donald Trump threatened our economy, the Premier panicked and immediately told Manitobans we needed to surrender and give him whatever he wanted. When rents skyrocketed in Manitoba, this Premier surrendered to big landlords and failed to protect Manitoba renters. When the grocery stores' prices spiked, this Premier surrendered to big grocery store chains and failed to protect Manitoba families.

Now this Premier is surrendering to big oil companies. Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, PEI all regulate gas prices.

Manitobans deserve action from a premier, not weak leadership; why does this Premier refuse to stand up for Manitobans?

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Schmidt: We are taking action on grocery store prices. We've taken action on the price at the pump.

I just want to take a moment to talk about how proud I am to serve on this team. I'm proud to serve as the MLA for Rossmere, proud to serve Minister of Environment and Climate Change, extremely proud to serve as the acting Minister of Education.

And I want to give a shout-out to the country's best Minister of Education, the member for Transcona (MLA Altomare), who is bringing transformational change to this province, a \$30-million school nutrition program, which we are going to legislate so members opposite can never take it away.

The Speaker: The time for question period has expired.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: And before I have a ruling for the House, I want to introduce some guests first. *[interjection]*

Order, please.

I would like to draw attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us today Perry Nickolychuck from The Pas. He has served as president and vice-president of the Carrot Valley hall, an important social and cultural community centre for The Pas, OCN and the RM of Kelsey. He is the guest of the honourable member for The Pas-Kameesak (Ms. Lathlin).

And we welcome you here today.

And, as a note, he's got a pretty good moustache too.

Speaker's Ruling

The Speaker: And I have a ruling for the House. *[interjection]*

Order, please.

During petitions on November 22, 2024, the honourable member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) rose on a matter of privilege alleging that during oral questions earlier in the same sitting day, the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) had accused her of intentionally misleading the House.

Further, the member alleged that government members had been allowed to conduct themselves in a manner that didn't conform with the rules of decorum, including being allowed to cast aspersions on the honesty of other members, while members of the opposition were not, and that this infringed on their ability to carry out their duties as members. The member concluded her remarks by moving that the Minister of Finance retract his comments, apologize to this House and the matter be referred to an all-party committee.

The honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration (MLA Marcelino) also spoke to the matter before the acting Deputy Speaker took it under advisement.

As the House knows, for a matter of privilege to be ruled as a prima facie case, the member must demonstrate that the issue has been raised at the earliest opportunity while also providing sufficient evidence that the privileges of the House have been breached.

* (14:30)

On the condition of timeliness, the minister stated that: it must be timely, I have sought some research on this matter and I'm back less than an hour later. This test is met.

I would note for the member that while she stated that she could not have checked Hansard as the incident had just occurred, Manitoba Speakers have consistently allowed members a reasonable amount of time to check Hansard or the procedural authorities before raising a matter of privilege.

I would say, in this case, that the member would have been well served to check Hansard, and I will come to the reason for that in a moment. On the main point, though, I am willing to say the member met the test of timeliness with her submission.

Regarding the second condition of whether a prima facie case was demonstrated, during her submission, the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) stated: Earlier today in question period, the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) accused me of misleading 'intentionally' in his remarks in question period.

This is a term that we all know to be unparliamentary. The member went on to say: We are an Assembly governed by precedent and specific rules. Members on the government benches might not like it, but they have to follow the same playbook. She also asked: How can I fully participate in this House when I am held to a different and fully arbitrary standard?

There are a number of issues with the member's submission that must be addressed before I give my ruling. First, it is well-established in this House that concerns regarding unparliamentary language are matters of order, not privilege.

On page 623 of the third edition of House of Commons Procedure and Practice, Bosc and Gagnon state that any member who feels aggrieved by a remark or allegation may also bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Speaker on a point of order.

Many Manitoba Speakers and Deputy Speakers have reinforced this point, including Speaker Driedger and the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Piwniuk) serving as Deputy Speaker, who ruled on May 22, 2019, and November 30, 2017, respectively, that unparliamentary language is a matter of order, not privilege.

Both rulings cited Joseph Maingot on page 254 of the second edition of Parliamentary Privilege in Canada, who wrote that language that impugns the integrity of the members would be unparliamentary and a breach

of order, contrary to the standing orders, but not a breach of privilege.

Second, in reviewing Hansard from that day, the comments from the Minister of Finance read as follows: I want to take the members opposite back to July 28, before the election, when they came forward to Manitobans with a Q2 update where they failed to reflect the actual state of affairs financially. They misled Manitobans intentionally.

The minister was not referring to the member for Midland in this remark; he was referring to the previous government as a collective. For the information of all members, there's another well-established practice regarding unparliamentary language, which distinguishes between comments directed at an individual sitting member and comments directed at a group, such as a caucus or a party.

In our practice, language directed at a group is given much more leeway than the language directed at an individual member. Additionally, the minister's comments were directed at the former government, many of whose members are no longer MLAs in this House, and are therefore outside the scope of these restrictions.

Given this information, it is clear to me that a prima facie case of privilege was not established in this matter. I would also urge the member to take more care in the future when raising such matters, including waiting to review Hansard before proceeding.

I have some thoughts to share with the House regarding the member's assertion that the government and the opposition are held to different standards in this House. This statement is inaccurate on two counts.

First, as noted, there were valid procedural reasons why the language the member objected to was not called out of order during oral questions, as I have just explained. To be clear, if the language had been directed at the member for Midland, as she asserted, it would certainly have been called out of order.

Second, as your Speaker, I endeavour to treat all members fairly and without bias. Presiding over this House can be challenging, but I always strive to serve all members of this House equally. If any member has a problem with the way this House is operating and how I am doing my job, I invite you to meet with me in my office. Not only would such meetings provide a better forum for these discussions, they would also help members to avoid reflecting on the Chair. As a reminder to members on that point, I will share a

passage from page 323 of the third edition of House of Commons Procedure and Practice:

When in the Chair, the Speaker embodies the power and authority of the office, strengthened by rule and precedents. They must, at all times, show, and be shown, the impartiality required to sustain the trust and goodwill of the House. The actions of the Speaker may not be criticized in debate or by any means except by way of a substantive motion. Reflections on the character or actions of the Speaker—an allegation of bias, for example—could be taken by the House as breaches of privilege and punished accordingly.

As I said, I am open to feedback from all members, but it is inappropriate and out of order for any member of this House to reflect on the Speaker, or any presiding officer, while serving in this Chair. This has been the practice of this House for over 150 years—regardless of who is in government and opposition and regardless of who is sitting in the Speaker's chair—and it is a practice that must be respected. This is not about me as your Speaker, this is about the Office of the Speaker and the integrity of this institution.

I thank you all for your attention to this ruling.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Respectfully, Honourable Speaker, I'd like to challenge your ruling. *[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

The ruling of the Chair has been challenged.

Voice Vote

The Speaker: All those in the House in favour of sustaining the ruling, please say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

The Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Johnson: Like to request a recorded vote, please.

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

* (15:30)

Order, please.

The one hour for the ringing of the bells has expired, so I am therefore requesting that the bells be shut off and the House proceed to the vote.

So the question before the House is: Shall the ruling of the Speaker be sustained?

Division

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

Ayes

Asagwara, Blashko, Brar, Bushie, Cable, Chen, Compton, Cross, Dela Cruz, Devgan, Kennedy, Kostyshyn, Lathlin, Loiselle, Marcelino, Moroz, Moses, Moyes, Naylor, Oxenham, Pankratz, Redhead, Sala, Sandhu, Schmidt, Schott, Simard, Wiebe.

Nays

Balcaen, Bereza, Byram, Cook, Guenter, Hiebert, Jackson, Johnson, Khan, King, Lagassé, Narth, Nesbitt, Perchotte, Schuler, Stone, Wharton, Wowchuk.

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Ayes 28, Nays 18.

The Speaker: The ruling of the Chair is accordingly sustained.

* * *

* (15:40)

The Speaker: We will now move to petitions.

PETITIONS

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

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

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

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

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

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

(4) The federal government has selectively removed the carbon tax off of home heating oil in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, but has indicated they

have no intention to provide the same relief to Manitobans heating their homes.

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

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

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Cindy Alexander, Jeff Alexander, Alyssa Buscemi and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Carbon Tax and Rising Food Prices

Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) In 2022, according to Statistics Canada, there was an 11.4 per cent increase in food prices.

(2) Staple food products such as baked goods, margarine and other oils, dairy products and eggs have seen some of the largest price increases.

(3) Agriculture and the agri-food sectors contribute close to 10 per cent of Manitoba's GDP.

(4) There are increased costs added at every step of the process for Manitoba's agriculture producers. In order to make 18 cents from one bread loaf worth of wheat, farmers are paying carbon tax at every stage of production to grow the crop and get it to market.

* (15:50)

(5) Grain drying, fertilizer and chemical production, mushroom farming, hog operations, the cost of heating a livestock barn, machine shops and utility buildings are all examples of how the carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels cost farmers and consumers more each year.

(6) In food production there are currently no viable alternatives to natural gas and propane. The carbon tax takes money away from farmers, making them less profitable and hindering rural agricultural producers' ability to invest in upgrades and improve efficiency while reducing emissions.

(7) The provincial government neglected farmers in the six-month fuel tax holiday until the opposition critic and local stakeholder groups called for their inclusion.

(8) Other provincial jurisdictions and leaders have taken action on calling on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax and/or stop collecting the carbon tax altogether.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to call on the federal government to remove the punishing carbon tax on natural gas and other fuels and farm inputs for Manitoba agriculture producers and the agri-food sector to decrease the costs of putting food on the table for Manitoba customers.

Honourable Speaker, this petition was signed by many, many Manitobans.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This is signed by Charlene Boyachuk, Harmonie Peters, Haley Wilson and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

Provincial Trunk Highway 34

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

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

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

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

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

(3) A new bridge is currently being constructed over the Assiniboine River at PTH 34, north of Holland, in the RM of Victoria. The bridge serves as an important south link over the Assiniboine River between the Trans-Canada Highway and PTH 2.

* (16:00)

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Martin Zacharias, Brad Driedger and Bev Young and many other Manitobans.

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

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

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

(2) Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with a high-efficiency furnace, the carbon tax is costing the

average family over \$200 annually, even more for those with older furnaces.

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

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

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

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

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Honourable Speaker, this petition is signed by Peter Jackson, Teren Wilton, Ryan Buss and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Phoenix School

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Phoenix School, a kindergarten to grade 5 school located in Headingley, has experienced consistent enrolment growth over the last several years. Enrolment is expected to reach 275 students in the next two years.

(2) Because the school is now over capacity, the school division has had to install portable classrooms on site as of fall 2024.

(3) For several consecutive years, the top capital priority of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division has been the renovation and expansion of Phoenix School.

(4) In 2022, the Phoenix School expansion and renovation project was approved to proceed to the design phase. The project included, among other amenities, a new gymnasium, two new classrooms, a multi-purpose room and room for 74 child-care spaces.

(5) In June 2024, the school division received notice from the provincial government that the project has been deferred. There is no guarantee if, or when, the project will move forward.

(6) There are currently hundreds of children on a wait-list for child care in Headingley. The daycare operator in Phoenix School has been told that they will continue to have space within the school for the 2024-2025 school year only, that further expansion of child-care space within the school is not possible and that space may be reduced moving forward due to the shortage of classrooms. If new space is not constructed as planned, many families may be left without child care.

It is critical that the expansion and renovation of Phoenix School proceed as planned in order to support the needs of students, teachers and families in the growing community of Headingley.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to proceed with the planned renovation and expansion of Phoenix School without further delay.

And this petition is signed by Alyssa Mitchell, Tatiana Derfel, Jade Alexander and many, many other Manitobans.

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

* (16:10)

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

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by Gillian Henry, Alisha Penner, Christine Stoykewich and many, many Manitobans.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support investment and placement of an MRI machine in the

Portage regional health facility in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

This petition has been signed by Maria T. Mack, David E. Mack, Kristina Taylor and many, many other fine Manitobans.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

* (16:20)

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition has been signed by many, many, many Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Teaching Certification

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): I wish to present—if I can get the staple off—this following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

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

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

An Honourable Member: What a unique idea.

Mr. Jackson: I know.

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teacher certification.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early- and middle-years requirements which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas; and

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

This petition has been signed by many, many fine Manitobans.

Louise Bridge

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

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

(1) Over 25,000 vehicles per day cross the Louise Bridge, which has served as a vital link for vehicular traffic between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown for the last 113 years.

(2) The current structure will undoubtedly be declared unsafe in a few years as it has deteriorated extensively, is now functionally obsolete, and therefore more subject to more frequent unplanned repairs and cannot be widened to accommodate future traffic capacity.

(3) As far back as 2008, the City of Winnipeg, also City, has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

After including the bridge replacement in the City's five-year capital budget forecast in 2009, the new bridge became a short-term construction priority in the City's transportation master plan of 2011.

* (16:30)

(5) City capital and budget plans identified replacement of the Louise Bridge on a site just east of the bridge and expropriated homes there on the south side of Nairn Avenue in anticipation of a 2015 start.

(6) In 2014, the new City administration did not make use of available federal infrastructure funds.

(7) The new Louise Bridge Committee began its campaign to demand a new bridge and its surveys confirmed residents wanted a new bridge beside the current bridge, with the old bridge kept open for local traffic.

(8) The City tethered the Louise Bridge replacement issue to its new transportation master plan and eastern corridor project. Its recommendations have now identified the location of the new Louise bridge to be placed just to the west of the current bridge, not to the east as originally proposed.

(9) The City expropriation process has begun. The \$6.35-million street upgrade of Nairn Avenue from Watt Street to the 113-year-old bridge is complete.

(10) The new City administration has delayed the decision on the Louise Bridge for a minimum of one year, and possibly up to 10 years, unless the Province steps in on behalf of northeast Winnipeg residents and completes the overdue link.

(11) The Premier has a duty to direct the provincial government to provide financial assistance to the City so it can complete this long overdue vital link to northeast Winnipeg and Transcona.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier to financially assist the City of Winnipeg on building this three-lane bridge in each direction to maintain this vital link between northeast Winnipeg, Transcona and the downtown.

(2) To urge the provincial government to recommend that the City of Winnipeg keep the old bridge fully open to traffic while the new bridge is under construction.

(3) To urge the provincial government to consider the feasibility of keeping the old bridge open for active transportation in the future.

This petition is signed by Kaylie Specula, Julianna Roberts, Brett Johnson and many, many other Manitobans.

Teaching Certification

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

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

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

(2) The recent amendments by the Province of Manitoba to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act have significantly lowered the standards for subject-area expertise required for teacher certification.

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning to reverse recent amendments to

the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation that weaken subject-area requirements for teacher certification and to reinstate teachable majors and minors and early-to-middle years requirements which are essential for ensuring teachers have strong knowledge in core subject areas.

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

This petition is signed by Michelle Esmandari [*phonetic*], Judith Noumash [*phonetic*] and Yvonne Neil [*phonetic*] and many, many Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Breast Screening

MLA Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

* (16:40)

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

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

(5) Every other province and territory in Canada has already lowered the breast cancer screening age, or announced their intentions to do so. Other provinces in Canada have already commenced the work of

expanding screening programs and hiring additional technologists to their public health-care system.

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition is signed by Allison Chimponski [*phonetic*], Katelynn Frank and Sadie De Jaer [*phonetic*] and many other Manitobans.

Provincial Road 275

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

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

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

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

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

(4) Due to only having patchwork and minor repairs, the highway has 'deteriated' and is covered with large potholes, posing a significant threat to vehicles and passengers. Number three, or—

(5) The roadway and shoulders on PR 275 are extremely narrow, leaving large ditches that have not been properly cared for, which has caused poor drainage. The Town of Swan River and the Municipality of Swan Valley West have inquired with MTI for a

drainage solution over the past several years. This ditch is not graded properly and is full of bulrush, willows and cattails.

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows: to—

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

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

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

This has been signed by Richard Mosiondz, Darlene Mosiondz, Brenden Pierrepont and several other Manitobans.

* (16:50)

Green Valley School Expansion

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

This petition has been signed by Rich Prideaux, Jason Wyoyha, Brad Friesen and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Breast Screening

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

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

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

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

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

* (17:00)

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hour being 5 o'clock—*[interjection]*

Order, please.

Seeing as the member did not finish reading their petition, they will have to return it on—to return to it on another day.

The hour being 5 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

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<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>