



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
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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 |
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| 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 |
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| 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 |
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| LATHLIN, Amanda | The Pas-Kameesak | NDP |
| LINDSEY, Tom, Hon. | Flin Flon | NDP |
| LOISELLE, Robert | St. Boniface | NDP |
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| 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

Thursday, December 5, 2024

The House met at 10 a.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 for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk 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.

The—orders of the day, private members' business.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): Yes, if you could please call Bill 215, and also on a point of order.

Point of Order

The Speaker: The honourable government—the honourable Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

Mr. Johnson: Yes. Although we're having a great festive day here, we're all wearing some sweaters that are questionable, but all good festive spirit and jackets. But I do believe that we should still adhere to the dress code of wearing a tie. And if the member from Dauphin intends to speak on Bill 215, I suggest that you recognize our dress code, Honourable Speaker.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): It's my pleasure, on behalf of our

caucus, to join in the festive spirit here I think that we're all trying to find this morning.

And I look around the room, and I see many, as the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson) said, questionable attire in the Chamber. But I do know that there was certainly an intent to just fully celebrate the festive season and allow members a little bit more leeway in terms of the formal dress code with regards to the Chamber. But I defer to your judgment in this case.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Well, what a way to start the last day of session in such a festive and working-together mood.

Would the honourable Minister of Agriculture like to get a tie?

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture): Honourable Speaker, it would be my honour to go get my tie.

The Speaker: I thank the honourable Minister of Agriculture for that.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 215—The Specialist Wait Time Reporting Act

The Speaker: Now, back to business. As the Opposition House Leader announced, we will now do second reading of 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 second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Cook: Every year, before they can get the diagnostic test or surgery that they need, hundreds of thousands of Manitobans are referred by their family doctor to a specialist. Physician specialists, everything from an obstetrician gynecologist to an ophthalmologist to a psychiatrist or an oncologist or a surgeon, these are most often the doctors you'll see before you need a diagnostic test, a surgery, a procedure or other specialized care.

If you're a person in need of health care, your total wait time can be considered in two consecutive parts. Part one is the time you wait from the referral by your general practitioner to the specialist, and part two is the time from your consultation with the specialist to the point at which you receive the treatment you need. And in Manitoba, our system tracks and publicly reports on the second wait time segment for many diagnostic tests and procedures.

For example, if you look online, Manitobans can find the median wait times for diagnostic tests like MRIs, CTs and ultrasounds and for surgeries like hips, knees and cataracts. But that wait time is only tracked from the time the patient sees a specialist and is put on a wait-list for these tests and procedures. What's entirely ignored is the long wait that patients have to face before they even get to see a specialist and decide on treatment.

And because this wait time is not formally tracked, there's very little data available to tell us how long people are actually waiting.

* (10:10)

The Fraser Institute publishes a report that contains the only publicly available data on specialist wait times. They attempt to measure this wait time through a survey distributed to doctors, inviting them to voluntarily share their own wait-lists for consultations that have been referred to them by a GP. Their latest report found that Canadians, on average, are waiting 27.7 weeks in total wait time, from referral by a general practitioner to treatment by a specialist. But Manitoba is above that national average, at 29.1 weeks.

They also ask physicians what they consider a reasonable wait to be for care. And here's what the polled physicians considered to be reasonable: from GP referral to a specialist consultation, they think 4.4 weeks is reasonable; from specialist consultation to treatment is 8.5 weeks. So that's a total combined wait time of 12.9 weeks.

So let's compare those with actual median wait times in Manitoba. The actual wait times in Manitoba, according to this report, from GP to specialist, average 14.6 weeks, which is over three times longer than what doctors consider to be reasonable. From specialist to treatment is 14.5 weeks, which is almost twice as long as what doctors consider to be reasonable, for a total wait time of over 29 weeks, which is over two times longer than what doctors consider to be a reasonable wait time.

And we also know anecdotally that, in many cases, these wait times to see a specialist and wait times for care after the patient has seen a specialist stretch from a few months to two years or longer. I'm sure all of us in this House have heard from constituents lamenting the long wait time to see an ophthalmologist before their cataract surgery or the incredibly long wait time it takes to see a psychiatrist. We know that these wait times are too long.

For example, one of my constituents in Roblin reached out to me in September. She tore her rotator cuff and was referred to an orthopedic surgeon. She was notified that her wait time to see the surgeon would be eight to 10 months and that her surgery would be sometime after that; she didn't know. Meanwhile, this constituent is in the prime of her life, with kids and a full-time job, and she's struggling even to get herself dressed in the morning.

Another individual in rural Manitoba reached out to me just two weeks ago to tell me that his wife waited 12 months to see an orthopedic surgeon and has now been told her knee surgery will take place about nine months from now. That's a 21-month wait for care. She's now confined to a wheelchair and dealing with daily pain.

I provide these examples—excuse me, can I get some water, please—I provide these examples to demonstrate that wait times to see a specialist and to receive care are not just an inconvenience, they have real and life-altering consequences for ordinary people. And that's why it's important that we begin to make progress on reducing these wait times. Unfortunately, that's very difficult to do when we're not even tracking how long those waits are.

Tracking and reporting both wait times to see a specialist and wait times to receive specialist care will enhance both transparency and accountability for Manitoba patients. And that's exactly what Bill 215 does. Publicly reporting on these wait times helps patients to know roughly how long they can expect to wait for a specific procedure. Some patients report vastly different wait times to see different physicians within the same specialty, simply because one doctor's wait-list is longer than the other. But patients and their referring physicians have no way of knowing.

And what this really comes down to, Honourable Speaker, is that what gets measured gets managed. How can the government make progress on something that it's not even tracking? We can't say for certain how bad the problem is, so how can we make a plan to improve it? By tracking these wait times,

government can see trends, understand where the biggest problems are and develop plans to tackle them. Without this data, government is tying its own hands. By publicly reporting on it, the government is accountable for its progress or lack thereof.

And that's why this bill makes so much sense to the average Manitoban. So to give members some idea of the scope of this issue, in Manitoba, there are approximately 500,000 consultations per year, 100,000 surgeries and 600,000 diagnostic imaging tests. There are 43 specialties recognized by the college of physicians and surgeons that would fall under the scope of this legislation. So to make this really work, it would require the Province to develop a system to measure and track specialist wait times.

Which brings me to a very important related point: Manitobans' system for physician referrals is outdated. It may surprise you to know that, in 2024, those referrals are almost entirely done by mail or by fax machine. And doctors themselves have been calling for change.

Recommendation No. 4 of the joint task force on physician administrative burden stated: Common forms and tasks related to co-ordinating care or requests across providers should be streamlined and simplified, including referrals and consultations. For referrals and consultations, physicians on both the sending side and the receiving side report that the process is overly complex and time-consuming.

To quote from the joint task force report: The infrastructure to support referrals was often cited as a challenge by physicians sending and receiving referrals. Unreliable fax machines and disconnected patient apps were often mentioned as contributing to the confusion about a referral status. Feedback received from referring and receiving physicians identified specific improvement ideas around referral tools, the referral process and addressing information needs.

Many of those specific improvement ideas are expanded on in the joint task force report. And I mention this here to demonstrate that there is so much room for improvement in something as seemingly innocuous as the process of getting a referral from one's GP to a specialist. And I think we can all agree that, as much as possible, we should be freeing up doctors to do what they do best: care for their patients.

And doing the work of implementing the recommendation from the joint task force would not only reduce physician administrative burden. If done

properly, it could actually enable the government to track wait times to see a specialist.

So we're hopefully going to see some progress on improving wait-list management for surgeries with the roll out of the Surgical Waitlist Information Management service. This project, which began as an initiative of the Diagnostic and Surgical Recovery Task Force, will enable tracking and prioritization of surgical wait-list patients.

I am very hopeful that this will ultimately improve care for patients, but it's time to expand wait-list monitoring and management to the first phase of the wait and begin the process to track and publicly report specialist wait times. It's the right thing to do for Manitobans and an important step in improving transparency and accountability in our system. Manitobans want this. Patients want to know how long they'll be waiting to see a specialist before they can decide on a treatment plan.

I'm very proud of this bill. It's my second piece of legislation, and I just want to take a moment to thank the caucus staff that assisted me in the research for this bill and worked with our wonderful staff at Legislative Counsel to draft it.

I look forward to hearing other members' thoughts on this legislation and to its eventual passage.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Before we move on, I would like to acknowledge that we did have seated in the public gallery students from J.H. Burns *[phonetic]* Collegiate. There were 30 of them under the direction of Scott Bell. Unfortunately, they had to leave before we got a chance to recognize them, and they were guests of the honourable member for Southdale (MLA Cable).

Questions

The Speaker: So now a question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from another party; this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer may exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

MLA JD Devgan (McPhillips): It's another day in the Chamber and another day of the Progressive

Conservatives trying to run away from their own record, pretending like the last seven and a half years did not happen. I think most Manitobans understand that our government is fixing the damage that they did. We're providing health care where and when they need it

So my question to my colleague across the way is: If this is about wait times, then perhaps they could explain how shutting down ERs and firing hundreds of staff in the health-care system was supposed to improve outcomes and reduce wait times.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): Well, thank you to the member across the way for the question. I don't know why they're so angry. We've never seen a government as intent on division and hate as this NDP government. I just—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cook: —got up and put 10 minutes on the record of entirely non-partisan comments on the need for this bill and how it's a good idea for Manitoba patients, and right out of the gate, we're here with an attack.

So I don't understand the intent of the question at all. I'm certainly not running away from anything. But if the member would like me to put on the record some of the very good things that the previous Progressive Conservative government did, I would be happy to do that in my next answer.

* (10:20)

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I'd like to thank my colleague for being non-partisan on this issue and bringing real reform to Manitoba when it comes to health care. So thank you very much to my colleague from Roblin.

My question is: What additional capacity did the diagnostic and surgical task force, who the NDP dismissed, add to Manitoba?

Mrs. Cook: Well, thank you to the member for Brandon West for that very excellent question. I would love to put a few words on the record about the successful track record of the Diagnostic and Surgical Recovery Task Force that the NDP fired shortly after taking office.

The task force cleared over 85,000 surgical and diagnostic procedures from the backlog in Manitoba. And how did they do this, Honourable Speaker? They did it—dozens of projects that were initiated by doctors within the system to expand diagnostic and surgical capacity right here in Manitoba; projects that were

unceremoniously abandoned shortly after the NDP took office.

The DSRTF expanded surgical capacity at the Grace Hospital, opening a fifth operating room that enabled 1,000 additional hip and knee replacements. The DSRTF expanded—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): I appreciate the member opposite bringing this bill forward, and I appreciate that she's trying to stay away from partisanship, as she says in this.

The issue that I see with all this is that for the last year, she has stood on the other side and voted no against multiple initiatives that we've brought forward to bolster our health-care system.

So my question is: Why, when presented with initiative after initiative that our great Health Minister has brought forward to try to bolster staff and eliminate some of these wait times, has she voted against them?

Mrs. Cook: I appreciate the question from the member for Waverley, because it gives me a chance to talk about all the reasons that I have voted against NDP Throne Speeches and NDP budgets.

Let's talk about the NDP record on wait times. Right now, patients are facing a 25-week wait for a CT scan at Seven Oaks. That's a 15-week jump in this year alone, quadrupling from August of last year. Wait times for a CT scan at Concordia are also at 25 weeks, but that's a 16-week jump, and the highest wait times have been at Concordia in 16 years. Wait times for MRIs are up to 56 weeks at Health Sciences Centre. That's a 55 per cent increase from August of 2023.

So those are just a few examples of the things that I do vote against when it comes to the NDP.

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): To my colleague from Roblin, thank you so much for bringing this important bill forward.

I know, myself even, in sending the Health Minister email after email looking for answers, I still can't get any.

So my question is: How many times have we had to prod the NDP to update surgical and diagnostic wait times since they've taken government?

Thank you.

Mrs. Cook: Thank you to my colleague from Portage la Prairie for the question.

I think it's really important that we put this information on the record. And the answer is we've had to prod the NDP to update surgical and diagnostic wait-time data nearly every month since they took office.

These wait times are supposed to be updated monthly. Let's not forget that when the NDP took office, they quietly tried to remove the online wait-time dashboard altogether. First, they said they did it unintentionally for some weak reason, and then, after getting called out by the media, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) had to come in and say, oh, big mistake, never should have happened, sorry about that.

I think what actually happened is that they hastily fired the DSRTF, which had the staff that were tracking wait times and posting them online. So after they fired everybody, they didn't know what to do. So as a result, the NDP only update wait-times data when either the media—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Devgan: Maybe I'll change my tone and put a smile on this, because it's something to smile about.

Our government is actually doing the work of lowering wait times. We're reopening ERs, adding more staff beds to the system and adding 800 new hip and knee surgeries in Selkirk.

So I would ask my colleague across the way: Why does this bill do absolutely nothing to fix the damage that they did to the health-care system?

Mrs. Cook: I'm glad the member opposite mentioned emergency rooms, because it gives me a chance to put on the record some of the NDP's many failures when it comes to ER care in this province.

The St. Boniface Hospital ER median wait time is now 6.2 hours, up from 5.4 hours last year at this time, and one in 10 patients at St. Boniface are actually waiting upwards of 13 hours for care. Situation's not much better at the Grace Hospital, which has a median wait time of nearly 5.7 hours; that's up from this same time last year.

Two weeks ago, speaking of the Grace, I had a constituent reach out whose 72-year-old mother spent over 48 hours in the Grace ER hallway with a broken leg, waiting to be seen by a doctor.

We know that the Brandon ER is on the brink of collapse and that the NDP has—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Balcaen: You know, a government that is divisive, angry and unaccountable is one that attacks here, and we're seeing that today for a non-partisan bill that this member brought forward to help Manitobans.

So, Honourable Speaker, I'm wondering, why is adding the additional layer of accountability to our health-care system so important for Manitoba patients, if we look at the unaccountable government that is presently sitting?

Mrs. Cook: Thank you to my colleague from Brandon West for that question, because it allows me to get back to the matter of—at hand, which is Bill 215, and why we need this legislation.

The fact of the matter is—and I've said this before, and I love this phrase because it's true—what gets measured gets managed. Data is important. We can't improve what we don't monitor.

As I mentioned, you know, the wait time for care can be split into two segments, and in Manitoba, we really only track the wait time for the second half of care; the wait time from when you see the specialist to the time you get the care you need. But you may be waiting a very long time to see a specialist, and I think Manitobans expect to know and deserve to know how long that wait is going to be.

It's only when we start monitoring that and tracking it and reporting it publicly that can—we can make improvements to that wait time.

MLA Devgan: Honourable Speaker, the member from Brandon West wants to talk about hateful rhetoric and division. I would ask him to look back at his 2023 campaign, of the hate and division that they put on display for Manitobans, so the audacity of that member to talk about hate and division in this Chamber—and still they run away from their record on the health-care system.

So my question to the colleague opposite is, why are they so desperately trying to run away from their own record on health care?

Mrs. Cook: I welcome the opportunity to put on the record some of the many previous Progressive Conservative government's successes.

Let's talk about health human resources. In their recent news release, talking about health human resources, this NDP government shamelessly took credit for any number of PC health initiatives.

Who increased medical school seats? Previous PC government. Who added 400 nursing seats? A previous PC government. Who increased international medical graduate spots? The previous PC government. Who created the provincial float pool for nurses that the NDP government was touting just yesterday as a solution to nursing issues in Manitoba? Oh, it was the previous PC government. Who increased residency positions for physicians? Oh, previous PC government.

There's nothing to run—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Bereza: I think with what we're hearing today we could start a new song, who is blocking who?

Last session, the NDP rejected being accountable for their promises to Manitoba's—by stubbornly refusing to pass The Earlier Screening for Breast Cancer Act. This bill similarly requires the NDP to be held accountable for their promises to Manitobans.

Why would they refuse that accountability last session?

Mrs. Cook: My colleague is right, there are some similarities between the bill I introduced last session on earlier breast cancer screening and this bill, and the main similarity is that both would improve transparency and accountability for Manitobans.

Unfortunately, what we saw last session with the breast cancer screening bill was an incredible display of petty partisanship from members opposite. They think they have a monopoly on good ideas.

I'm starting to think, based on the tone of members opposite, that we might see the same outcome with Bill 215, and that'd be a real shame for Manitobans, Honourable Speaker. So I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage members opposite to look at the merits of the bill and to allow it to pass through to committee.

* (10:30)

The Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): On house business.

The Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader, on House business.

Mr. Johnson: Honourable Speaker, could you please canvass the House to see if there is leave to waive rule 20 from 1:30 until the end of members' statements and our practices regarding addressing members in the

House for the duration of members' statements for today?

The Speaker: Is there leave to waive rule 20 from 1:30 p.m. until the end—[*interjection*]

Order, please. Order, please.

Is there leave to waive rule 20 from 1:30 p.m. until the end of members' statements and our practices regarding addressing members in the House for the duration of members' statements for today?

Is there leave? [*Agreed*]

Leave has been granted.

So the—[*interjection*]

Order, please. Order, please.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is now open for debate on Bill 215.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): I've got to be honest, I read through this bill last night in preparation, and I was—what's the word I should—I actually—okay, I'll tell a quick story, actually, for the word that I want to use today for this bill.

I was chatting with a long-time PC member, actually, the member from Borderland, we'll know pretty well. And he was talking about the sort of rudderless and morally bankrupt state that the PCs are in right now. And ultimately, he said he was befuddled. He was befuddled by the direction.

And that's the word I would like to use regarding Bill 215. I am befuddled that this would be what was brought forward today. And you know, ultimately, I was reading through these whereas statements and the whereas delayed access to necessary health care often leads to further complications and may reduce the likelihood of a positive outcome. For sure, yes, I agree.

Here's the issue. I feel like there are a number of members from the opposite side who maybe just didn't do research on the party that they were going to be running with, because over seven and a half years, they systematically broke apart that system that was supposed to serve Manitobans in a strong way.

And so as I work through all of these clauses that have been included here, I am absolutely befuddled by what has been brought forward. I don't disagree with it, but again, like I need to go over what we've done over the last year and what has been voted against.

So if we're talking today about a bill that's supposed to help with transparency and with getting people the care that they so deserve in Manitoba, which is what we were elected to do, this new NDP government, because ultimately Manitobans did not trust the former PC Heather Stefanson-led government to take care of health care anymore.

So we brought forward an idea to hire new health-care workers. We brought forward a budget that would include an increase in making sure that we would recruit and retain workers, which would help in these delays in a tangible way. And instead of saying yes, absolutely, I agree, they voted no. They stood up. They voted no, the quick—a quick search of Hansard would show that everybody on that other side voted no, against this idea to hire more nurses, more doctors, more paramedics. They thought that was a bad idea.

But again, that would make sense coming from a party that closed ERs and fired nurses and did a number of other really damaging things to the health-care system here.

We're making investments in surgery. And we brought forward that in our budget. Again, they voted no. The member for Roblin (Mrs. Cook) who brought forward this bill voted no. And it is absolutely—I'll say it again—befuddling to me, that you would say no time and time again. No, over and over again, to all of these great initiatives brought forward by our Health Minister and then come forward with a piece of legislation which—maybe it has some merits. That's good. You know, it's always good to have transparency. It's something that we have committed to provide for Manitobans.

And so I look forward to talking about this bill more today and just more about the record of the PCs over the last seven and a half years, because it directly informs how we are to interpret this piece of legislation here in the Chamber this morning.

Emergency rooms closed under this past government. Again, we brought forward ideas for capital funding to open up new ERs, to open up the Victoria ER, an important initiative for residents of Waverley, south-west Winnipeg. It's a fast-growing area; we need that emergency room. It was closed under the PCs—and again, I know that people might start suggesting that we're straying away from this bill—but the record on health care and their actions over the last 14 months would suggest that they do not care about what we're trying to accomplish here. They're not interested.

What they are interested in doing is deflecting: trying to deflect and ignore the painful record that they have. You know, if I haven't been blunt enough, I would just say that this bill is not necessarily about transparency or accountability; it's just about deflecting attention away from their record.

And I would like to say quickly that in my time as a firefighter and paramedic, I had a lot of great relationships with people in hospital: nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians' assistants, physicians, specialists, as we're talking about today. And I remember specifically during the pandemic, going into the Grace Hospital with a patient, and we ended up having this chat with a few of the doctors and nurses who were there. And if I can be completely honest with you, the language that was used in that conversation, I won't forget it.

When speaking of the former government's decisions to cut and to make all of these health workers' lives more difficult was described as monstrous. They were monstrous decisions, absolutely despicable. And they had no connection to the people actually doing that work, those blue-collar Manitobans doing the work in hospitals as nurses, as physicians' assistants, working hard for their fellow Manitobans.

And so, again, I look at this piece of legislation, and I just wonder if the members opposite—and I know that a lot of them, they believe too that we need to make sure that we're getting good health care for Manitobans wherever they live and having it close to home—but I wonder if they have done their research in terms of who it is that they're sitting with on that side of the Chamber and what sort of work they did.

You know, in rural and northern health investments, they voted against additional paramedics, ambulances, emergency patient transport for rural and northern communities, resources that were going to be vital. And fortunately, since we're in government, we were able to pass it, and their noes didn't end up stopping that progress.

You know what? They even, in fact, voted against plastic health cards. That's how far they went. They even opposed a modern, streamlined health-card system, ultimately showing that, you know, no measure is too small for them to try to obstruct in the name of their partisan behaviour.

You know, the surgical wait-list: They rejected funding for a new wait-list database, which helps prioritize Manitobans waiting the longest and ensures

fair access to surgery. We've increased our surgery capacity in Selkirk by 800. And there are a number of physicians who are absolutely thrilled with that, and I know that a number of Waverley residents have reached out already who say how excited they are that we're able to provide more capacity.

And here's also the difference. They—there are these shots coming across the way, saying that we're patting ourselves on the back for moving things in a good direction. But here's what is not understood: We understand that these are good actions, yes. It's good that we're having more nurses and doctors and physician assistants and folks working in the system, and that Manitobans are getting better care closer to home. We know that that's good.

But this is just a start; this is a trend. We're moving in the right direction. What happened for the last seven and a half years is we were on a downward trend: firing nurses, cutting funds. It was painful to the people working there and the people who live in this province who deserve better.

And so, yes, we're happy that we're progressing in a positive direction. And we'll continue to do that work on behalf of the amazing Manitobans who voted us here to do that.

You know, I've got to say again, there's a pattern that we see over and over again from members opposite.

* (10:40)

They've consistently chosen partisanship over progress. They voted against measures to reduce wait times, against expanding surgical capacity, against rebuilding a health-care system they themselves dismantled.

And that's why Manitobans don't trust them anymore, quite frankly. And so I would hope—I would hope moving forward—that instead of continuing to make these decisions that, as one of their lifelong members who has recently actually moved over to this side, a member from Borderland, actually, who was part of the PCs and has switched sides, said: I would hope that they would stop making these befuddling decisions and get on board with some of the fantastic work that our Health Minister has done, that our whole team is doing and that our Premier (Mr. Kinew) continues to do here on behalf of Manitobans, the very fine Manitobans who voted us in.

I have to say, again, on the record, I have worked in public service for a number of years. As a firefighter

and paramedic, it was an absolute honour to serve Manitobans. And now, as the elected MLA for Waverley, I am honoured to serve the members—or the constituents of Waverley, and I promise to you I will continue to work every single day with our Premier and Health Minister to make sure that we are providing good health care close to home for every single one of you.

Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Again, many thanks to the member from Roblin for bringing this important bill forward and moving our province forward.

I heard a member across talking about working with the Health Minister. Well, I want to tell you some stories about working with patients and working with people that are waiting. I want to throw a few numbers out there: 3,500; four to five thousand. Instead of listening or trying to talk to the Health Minister, we want to listen to the people; 3,500 is the number that Shared Health has said that are waiting on a wait-list for an MRI out of Southern Health.

But when asked the question, does this include people that can't get to appointments? People that may not be able to get to appointments for one reason or other? People that have to cancel appointments in this type of weather right now because they have to drive to get somewhere in the province to get an MRI? Do these numbers include the people that are waiting for stretcher services, that are waiting for ambulances that never come to take them to their appointments? Those people aren't counted.

Forty-eight is another number; 48 emails sent to the Minister of Health and the Deputy Minister of Health asking questions such as: Why are people having to wait this long? Are these people that are on these lists, why are they having to wait so long?

But the most important part is: What about the people that haven't even hit the list yet? It's unreal. Who would have a senior of 89 years old living in Portage la Prairie scheduled for an MRI at 2 a.m. at the Health Sciences Centre? Who takes them there? What kind of anxiety does this put on the people of Manitoba to try and just get simple health care? An MRI, a CT scan, breast screening, they are proactive approaches to health care. All we're seeing is reactive; react, react, but no action.

The person that is waiting for an MRI that might have cancer, if the doctor cannot say that that is

cancer, they get pushed down and I don't know if they're on the list. But they get pushed down.

So an MRI can detect cancer at less than one millimetre. If that person needs to wait months and months and months, that cancer continues to grow. That person ends up in the hospital. That person ends up maybe losing a limb. That person maybe has to have longer health care. It's not proactive; it's reactive.

The reason why we have no beds, no health-care people to do the work, is because we're being reactive. On this side, we've introduced bills. We have tried to get answers and we can't get them. What was finally the answer I got back from the Deputy Minister of Health on to finally one of my 48 emails? Deleted and not read. That's what this side is saying to the patients of Manitoba: We will delete you and forget about you. Well, as long as I'm in this Chamber, as long as it takes, we will be here to work for Manitobans, for proper health care, for proper MRIs, for proper CT scans, so that we can be more proactive.

Why do people such as David and Judy Jeffries have to go out of the province, spend money out of their own pocket for travel, spend money out of their own pocket for MRIs and go to Quebec because it was suspected that David Jeffries' cancer had come back. But he couldn't even get on a wait-list for an MRI to see if it had come back.

Fortunately, Mr. Jeffries is not like a lot of other Manitobans. He was able to go out and spend his own money in order to get the diagnosis. That diagnosis came back before they were even back from Quebec. Cancer has returned. If he would have waited here, would he still be alive? We don't know.

When we hear that there is an MRI being put up in the North in Thompson, we heard that in last budget speech. Still not there. We—when we talked about the MRI here, what did we—what did we hear? Not enough staff. But what did—but in the North, there's an RFP out right now that is looking for staff to run a diagnostic machine.

In southern Manitoba, why can't we do that here? Because you know what, we don't need to. Because there is currently people waiting right now to take the courses in order to be able to run the MRI.

The other thing that this government won't listen to, won't meet with, won't talk to, the—they have rejected the community of Portage la Prairie. Said no, we don't need your money, \$5-million minimum announcement from the Portage la Prairie hospital foundation to put in an MRI. The nice part about that

is—should that \$5 million not free up more money to put more MRIs in places like the North or other places because right now, we're sitting on over 24,000 people that are on a waiting list. How many people are not even on this waiting list?

We've reached out to the head of statistics with Shared Health. His name is Dr. Sikora. The response I got back from Dr. Sikora is that I must get back—I must go to the Health Minister in order to get that information.

* (10:50)

Again, what was the only email I got back? Deleted email and not read.

I'm sure some of these people would like to provide Manitobans with the actual numbers that are out there, because it is much higher. When I look at some of the communities around—just around Portage la Prairie: Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay, Swan Lake First Nation just to name a few.

Dakota Plains, the chief from Dakota Plains has said less than 10 per cent of the people in his community have a driver's licence. Can anyone on this side of the House tell me how they get to an MRI appointment? Because I don't know how, but if we build MRIs closer, as what the Health Minister's mandate letter says, health care closer to home. Is that only—mean for certain people at certain times? Because again, we're not seeing it. I don't understand why we have to do that.

Honourable Speaker, I stand up to say yes to this bill and let's move it forward.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The honourable minister of something new—the honourable Minister of Innovation and New Technology.

Hon. Mike Moroz (Minister of Innovation and New Technology): I appreciate—thank you, Honourable Speaker, I appreciate being introduced as a minister, regardless of what the title is that you give me.

I want to put a few words on the record in relation to this bill as well. And I want to use a word used by my friend from Waverley, because I love the word and it seemed to entertain the opposite side of the House a little bit. And that word is befuddling.

And the context in which I want to use the word is in relation the astonishing transformation that sometimes occurs when former government members

make the long journey across the aisle to the other side. The things that mysteriously become really important to them that didn't appear to have any relevance whatsoever in their past lives, okay?

I want to read a couple of phrases from this bill that you would not have heard from those members prior to 2023. And they're great, here they are: whereas Manitobans are entitled to timely access to health care that is appropriate and responsive to their needs. Not a phrase that we would have heard from some of the members opposite in their previous incarnation as government.

This is another one that I really like that seems to have just occurred to some members on the opposite side: whereas delayed access to necessary health care can often lead to further complications and may reduce the likelihood of a positive outcome. Again, a phrase we would not have heard from some of the members in the opposition benches prior to 2023.

History matters. It makes—the history of health-care policy in this province is relevant to the discussion that we're having today. It's critically important that we find out, how did we get to this point? So let's have a little look at some of that, shall we?

When Manitobans elected us in the fall of 2023, they understood that it would take time for us to rebuild the health-care system that had been systematically eroded over the course of the previous government's life span.

The PCs left Manitoba families waiting for surgeries and appointments through funding cuts and failed initiatives. And it feels very much like they're currently using high wait times as a political ploy and ignoring the mismanagement and cuts of their government.

They had seven and a half years to bring the measures they're talking about today into force as government. Did they do that? No, they didn't. But again, it's that long arduous journey across the aisle that suddenly makes some of these points relevant.

According to the CBC, October 2023, the NDP inherited some of the worst year of wait times in the country from the previous government. The worst wait times in the city were over 10 hours. The lowest wait times were five. One in three patients who sought care in hospital in 2023 left without being seen.

The PC record on health care is demonstrably poor. *[interjection]* It was, actually, almost as good as befuddled. PC government cut funding, fired nurses,

closed ERs, okay? From 2017 to 2019, the cuts left Manitobans worse off and left them with the highest wait times in the country.

The PC government shuttered five of six clinics that were intended to reduce overcrowding in emergency rooms. Misericordia Health Centre's urgent care, which supplied essential mental health and drug use medical support, was closed. The Mature Women's Centre and the St. Boniface family centre were also closed. We've promised to reopen the Mature Women's Centre which is a vital service to get women the health care they need.

Additionally, PC budgets slashed health governance and the regulation authority WRHA by \$36 million in 2017-2018. What impact do we suppose that had on wait times in Manitoba?

Honourable Speaker, \$300 million was cut to fund a new cancer-care facility, and they broke their 2016 election promise that they would introduce 1,200 personal-care-home beds over eight years. What impact do we suppose that has on current wait times?

These are examples of how the PC government left us a significant mess to clean up. The higher wait times people are facing today are the direct result of cuts and mismanagement from previous governments. And it is a shame that the opposition would use this bill as an opportunity to score political points. So Manitobans asked us, in the fall of 2023, to rebuild the health-care system, and we're doing that.

We're ensuring more Manitobans can get the care they need close to home, starting with 800 new hip and knee surgeries at the Selkirk hospital, cutting down the wait-time list. We're currently working on bringing down ER wait times additionally by opening 201 new fully staffed beds in Winnipeg, Selkirk, Brandon and Dauphin since April. We're continuing the practice of seven-day-a-week discharge, getting patients home sooner, and again, lowering wait times. And here's one of my personal favourites: we've added 873 net-new health-care workers to the public system, including hiring specialists to do what? Correct: Lower wait times.

It's the freedom from uncertainty that no matter what happens, Manitobans and their families can get the care they need close to home that will reduce wait times.

* (11:00)

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hour being 11 o'clock, when this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have two minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 1—Calling on the Provincial Government to Reverse Recent Amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation

The Speaker: The hour is now 11 o'clock and the time for private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is the resolution No. 1, Calling on the Provincial Government to Reverse Recent Amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation, brought forward by the honourable member for Spruce Woods.

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): I move, seconded by the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko),

WHEREAS the Provincial Government has recklessly amended the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act, significantly lowering the standards for educational excellence and subject-area expertise required for teacher certification; and

WHEREAS ensuring that teachers have strong backgrounds in the subjects they teach is essential for maintaining high-quality education, fostering well-rounded learning experiences, and preparing Manitoba students to succeed in an increasingly competitive world; and

WHEREAS these changes have eliminated all subject-area requirements for teacher certification, including teachable majors and minors and subject-specific standards for early-middle years education, effectively gutting the professional rigor expected for Manitoba's education system; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Government failed to consult parents, post-secondary educators, and business leaders before implementing these reckless amendments, demonstrating a troubling disregard for transparency and accountability; and

WHEREAS weakening teacher certification standards undermines the integrity of Manitoba's education system and compromises the future success of students; and

WHEREAS alternatives exist to address teacher shortages while upholding rigorous subject-area standards; and

WHEREAS more than 1,000 Manitobans have voiced their opposition to these reckless amendments and signed petitions calling on the Provincial Government to reverse the changes and reinstate the requirements, reflecting widespread public concern about the Provincial Government's educational policies.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba condemn the provincial government for lowering teacher training standards in Manitoba and urge the provincial government to immediately reverse the reckless amendments to the teaching certificates and qualifications regulation.

Motion presented.

Mr. Jackson: It's my pleasure to put a few words today on the record with regard to this resolution, brought forward by our Progressive Conservative caucus, but it really wasn't brought forward by us alone. This has been a topic of discussion in the public space for a number of weeks now, including on social media, in community, with educators, academics, parents, et cetera.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

A number of people—thousands, really, have reached out to MLAs across political spectrums with deep concerns about the change that this NDP government has made to the teaching qualifications regulation. And you're no stranger to this, honourable Speaker. We've been reading petitions regularly for the last two weeks, raising this topic with the signatures of hard-working Manitobans who are deeply concerned about the impact that this is going to have on their children's education.

I'd like to begin just by thanking educators, a number of whom are here today with us in the gallery, students, post-secondary faculty, parents who have gone above and beyond in their work to try and change this fairly obstinate NDP government's mind in terms of this decision. We haven't seen any willingness on their behalf, but we hope that this debate will change their mind today and they will walk back this terrible decision. So thank you to the folks who have taken time out of their busy schedules to make sure that we have these petitions signed, we have the research and the ability to bring this forward.

Thank you very much.

As you know, honourable Speaker, the NDP has deleted all required core subject area courses for those individuals who are pursuing a career in education in this province, as well as teachable major and minor

subject areas. This is a decision that was brought in by a previous NDP government, of which the member for Dauphin (Mr. Kostyshyn) as well as many other members there were a part of. They supported it then, not a—no clear answer from them as to why they don't support it now.

Now, there's a litany of bad research, falsehoods and erroneous data that the acting Education Minister has put on the record as to why they believe, falsely, that this is a good decision. It's not. It's a bad one. And Manitobans are not fooled. Thousands of petition signatures, emails, phone calls, et cetera, trying to push this government to change their mind and to make better decisions for Manitoba students.

In addition, honourable Deputy Speaker, the minister is quoted in this Chamber using research by a particular University of Manitoba education professor to support this decision, which was also published in an op-ed in the Winnipeg Free Press. There were a number of errors in the assertions put forward by this one education faculty member, which the NDP has based their entire policy change on.

And to make that clear to the members, a number of highly respected academics in this province saw fit to ask that professor for her research, which she provided, and they have now published a 45-page document systematically debunking every claim that she made, as well as the 22 sources that she cited as backup for her research. And I will table, when I'm completed, this document for all NDP members to read.

Here is the executive summary of this research document. In a Winnipeg Free Press article, Mathematics education of Manitoba teachers should be based on research, published November 13, 2024, Dr. Martha Koch, an associate professor at the faculty of education at the University of Manitoba, made several claims about recent amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation under The Education Administration Act. These amendments significantly reduce the subject area expertise required for teacher certification.

Koch used the phrase research shows 15 times in her article. Some key claims that she put forth in the article include: No. 1, the recent changes mean that Manitoba's teacher certification requirements are better aligned with current research in mathematics education; No. 2, notably, research shows that early and middle years, teachers grades K to 8 who have taken more undergraduate university courses in mathematics are not more effective teachers of

mathematics—that is, their students do not have better outcomes in mathematics; and No. 3, in some—in fact, some studies have shown that K-to-8 students actually have lower achievement in mathematics if their teachers have more undergraduate courses in mathematics.

Since Koch's statements seemed dubious, she was asked to provide supporting evidence. She responded by circulating an eight-page research synopsis referencing 22 articles and books. After reviewing all 22 references, we, the nine academics that have debunked this research, we have found that none credibly support the above claims and some even contradict them.

Additionally, Koch made statements about research on mathematics knowledge for teaching, MKT, in her Winnipeg Free Press article. The references she provided contain repeated, unambiguous statements emphasizing mathematical subject content knowledge as a necessary component of MKT an important detail omitted by Koch.

The potential consequences of relying on claims that appear to lack evidence are significant. Particularly given their possible influence on public policy affecting Manitoba children. Our main findings:

Number 1, faculty—faulty premises and conclusions not aligned with evidence. Koch implied that pre-service K-to-8 teachers are being required to take standard, undergraduate math courses, similar to those designed for physicists, mathematicians and engineers, even though all Manitoba math departments offer specialized courses tailored for K-to-8 teachers. In several cases, Koch appeared to draw conclusions that are not supported by the articles.

Number two, lack of supporting evidence. Not one article provided by Koch concludes that the K-to-8 students achieve lower outcomes when their teachers have more math courses.

Number 3, serious 'methodological' issues. Several studies clearly lacked proper design or reported result that lacked statistical significance, making causal inferences impossible.

Number 4, disregard of contradictory evidence. Several studies omitted by Koch indicate a positive correlation between math content courses taken by teachers and improved student achievement.

Their conclusions, and I'll leave the rest of them for the NDP to read: No. 1, our detailed review discusses

each of the cited papers, demonstrating that none appear to substantiate Koch's claims.

Given the serious implication of Koch's statements and their potential impact on public policy, we make the following recommendations: No. 1, a retraction of the article; and No. 2, the Manitoba government should consult more broadly and exercise greater caution when relying on educational research to inform policy decisions.

In addition, honourable Deputy Speaker, one of the sources Koch used to justify this government decision with this NDP minister has relied on actually recommends, if you read the entire source material, the source she cited actually recommends six credit hours of core subject areas if you read the full article, which is exactly what this minister has just erased.

* (11:10)

So it's clear that this minister didn't actually read any of the evidence out there, any of the academic research. Didn't check the sources and made sweeping policy changes on a whim, which will degrade the quality of education that Manitoba students receive. In addition, educators required—one of the claims the minister has made is well—math rates haven't improved.

This was put in in 2015. Students who were required to take these courses didn't start graduating from education until 2021 or 2022, which means they've only been in the classroom for a couple of years. There's 40 years' worth of teachers who weren't required to have these course requirements to get their degrees that are still in the classroom, so this change takes time.

In addition to that, another debunked statement of this minister's is that this change brings us in line with other provinces. I will table a cross-jurisdictional analysis which says that British Columbia has three credit hours of math, science, Canadian studies and six credit hours of English or French required. Nova Scotia has six credit hours required of math, English, French, science, social studies. Ontario has a math proficiency test required for teachers. Alberta has six credit hours required for math, English, science, physical and health education, social science. Saskatchewan three hours—credit hours—of math, science, English, social studies. Ontario, math proficiency test. New Brunswick three credit hours of math and English. PEI six credit hours of English, science, social studies, three credit hours of math.

It goes on and on and we have systematically, thanks to the help of these fine professionals in the gallery today, debunked not just this issue but this entire acting Minister of Education. She's failed and she needs to reverse this policy immediately.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party; any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties—*[interjection]*

Order.

Each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): I'd like to thank the guests in the gallery for your heartfelt work in lifting up young people, lifting up your students. It doesn't go unnoticed by this side of the House, the devotion that you pour into your craft.

Honourable Speaker—honourable Deputy Speaker, prior to this role I represented the University of Manitoba's Students' Union as president and supported faculty, supported educators, when the member for Lac du Bonnet's (Mr. Ewasko) government illegally froze their wages, forcing them to strike, threatened to cut their operating grants by up to 30 per cent, and actively worked against their academic freedom.

And so my question for the member opposite is: Why do they think that they can pick and choose when to support educators?

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): Honourable Deputy Speaker, No. 1 that question has absolutely nothing to do with the content of this resolution; No. 2, the collective—single collective bargaining unit is transformational in terms of the collective agreement that was just signed with educators. So that's how our government continued to act as is supporting educators, which has resulted in a historic wage increase for teachers.

But let's get back to the point. That member and her entire government have removed and made us have the lowest standards required for educators in the country. That member and the rest of her government needs to answer for that.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): I'd like to thank the MLA for Spruce Woods for this wonderful resolution today.

And so I know as well as many of the educators, the teachers on the NDP side know that this is going to absolutely be concerning for our students, our teachers moving forward and our professors that have to continue to educate our—teach upcoming new teachers.

So by lowering these standards, why is it so concerning for the hundreds of Manitobans that are watching today on the stream today, honourable colleague?

Mr. Jackson: I think we, on this side of the House, understand that it's just plain common sense as well as well backed up with academic research that if teachers have stronger knowledge and confidence in core subject areas, they will be able to better supply and teach their course and not pass on math anxiety and other issues to their students when they get in the classroom.

It just makes sense, honourable Speaker. If you're comfortable in a topic area, you can speak confidently about it and you can educate students. That's what we believe, that's what the research shows.

Why doesn't this NDP government get on board?

MLA Dela Cruz: Honourable Deputy Speaker, our new government knows that in education, kids come first. I am proud that we have the fearless member for Transcona (MLA Altomare), who's devoted his life's work to young people, as our Minister of Education, because like the guests in the gallery, he gets it.

Manitobans were fed up with the PCs. They didn't—they failed to help more kids reach their full potential. They cut funding, they tried to cut local voices with bill 64, and the minister I am seated thought that the school nutrition program was a hashtag bad idea.

So my question for the member opposite is: Does he still stand firm with these views?

Mr. Jackson: Once again, that question has absolutely nothing to do with the topic at hand here.

Here's what we do stand firm with, is we believe that math and science and English and French and history should be required course work for those going into a classroom and teaching those subject areas themselves. So that is what this side of the House believes, that's what the research shows.

The NDP government should get on board, reverse this decision and make sure that students—who, by the way, with this policy decision, will be negative impacted—are put first. Put these requirements back in so that they have highly educated teachers getting into the classroom.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): Does the member believe that the ability to balance a bank account or have financial literacy is a life skill?

Mr. Jackson: I appreciate the colleague—my colleague from Springfield-Ritchot's question.

We absolutely believe that that's important. And how do we get students graduating from post-secondary—or graduating from secondary school, grade 12, who are comfortable in those subject areas that he talks about? That's by putting highly educated teachers in the classroom who don't have math anxiety, who are comfortable in their subject areas that they're being required to teach.

Let's get them in the classroom. The NDP need to reverse this decision and make sure that these courses are back to being required before the post-secondary faculties have the chance to change the requirements, bringing us back in line with the rest of the country.

MLA Dela Cruz: Honourable Deputy Speaker, seven and a half years of underfunding in education has resulted in a teacher shortage. A teacher shortage that the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle) understands, that the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) understands, that the member that—of many constituencies on this side of the House understand. And that's why we're taking action to add more teachers into the system, so that kids can get the critical one-on-one time that we know is important for outcomes.

So can the member opposite tell us why his former government failed to do anything to add more teachers to the system and instead drove many away?

Mr. Jackson: Once again, we have an NDP minister that's standing up and making—or an NDP member that's standing up and making claims with no factual basis to any of the claims that she just made on the record. So, honourable Speaker, I'm not going to respond to that.

What I am going to respond to is the fact that this NDP government now has a 45-page research document authored by nine highly respected nationally academics, debunking every single claim that they

have made publicly on the record in this place and outside of it in terms of this policy decision.

And so the question that they should be asking that I'll ask for them and I'll answer it is: Why won't they stand up for Manitoba's students and reverse this policy decision? Is it because that their—

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

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Lowering requirements for teachers will have an adverse effect on student outcomes. In a desperate attempt from the NDP government to fill vacancies, they've used this approach.

What happens when this approach happens in our surgeries and our—and educators and firefighters and other things? Who's at risk then?

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Springfield—oh, sorry, Spruce Woods.

Mr. Jackson: Great colleague—or great question from my colleague from Selkirk. And the important point here is that they are putting students last with this decision. That's absolutely a fact. And he's quite right to bring up health-care professions, because we've seen it—they do it with health-care professions too.

* (11:20)

The Minister for Health has now rammed through a decision that paramedics are no longer required to take A and P courses as part of their paramedic training, because why would you want a paramedic who's taken anatomy and physiology? Honestly, you can't make this stuff up.

So students are last with this NDP government; they're going to suffer because of this decision. The NDP should reverse it today. I hope they get to work as soon as we rise for lunch at noon. Reverse this decision; it's only a quick reg change; put them back in place—

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

MLA Dela Cruz: Honourable Deputy Speaker, they just said the quiet part out loud. They clearly oppose everything that the MTS does. The member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Jackson) even said himself that after seven and a half years, Manitoba has persistently, stubbornly low success rates in the area of math. Well, the member fails to acknowledge that he was complicit in these outcomes. He worked in these very

halls. He sashayed from office to office for the failed government.

So my question for the member opposite is: Does he acknowledge that his PC caucus colleagues, his water-cooler buddies, now speech writers, failed kids in schools?

Mr. Jackson: I certainly sashayed around supporting quality requirements for educators in this province. You're darn right I did. Our—the NDP previous government instituted them. We supported them for seven and a half years.

It's the member for Radisson (MLA Dela Cruz) and her entire government that's deleted the entire qualification. They believe in lowering standards to get teachers into the classroom; we believe in higher quality standards for teachers so that our students have better outcomes.

Why won't the member for Radisson and every other NDP member get on board?

Mr. Schuler: Does the member believe that the ability to read a financial statement or financial literacy is an important skill?

Mr. Jackson: Again, another excellent question from my colleague from Springfield-Ritchot. Absolutely, we believe that those requirements are very important for students coming out of our K-to-12 education system.

Do you know what results in that, honourable Deputy Speaker? Teachers who don't have math anxiety, who are comfortable teaching math, science, English, French, history, geography in the classroom. How do you get that? By ensuring that they had to take a high-quality level of academic course as part of their education requirements to get their degrees.

We believe that this is exactly what the NDP have cut in their changes to the teachers' regulation. The acting minister should take a page out of the document that I just tabled, reverse her failed decision, apologize for it and make sure that this is reinstated so that Manitoba students—

The Deputy Speaker: And the member's time has expired.

And, unfortunately, the time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: The floor is now open for debate.

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): I'm very proud to rise and support what our government is doing in terms of education and making sure that teachers are in the classroom where they belong. I spent 18 years in Manitoba's education system. I don't think it's coincidental that we have six members on our team who are teachers. For those who don't remember, bill 64 was an attack on educators. It was an attack on students; it was an attack on our education system, and that is what the PC record is about.

I'm going to talk a little bit about the work that I did in the classroom, what my teachables were, and the classrooms that I've taught in across the province. I worked for nine years as an educational assistant. That meant that I worked in classrooms grade 6, 7 and 8, over and over and over. I've seen what teachers can do in a classroom. I know what teachers do in a classroom every single day. Some of the things that I can attest to is that they're innovative, they're creative and they're focused on ensuring that students achieve the learning outcomes that are set out in the curriculum.

Gone are the days of kids sitting in rows and desks, quietly copying notes from a board. We don't teach that way anymore. Students don't sit in these desks. They aren't asked to memorize facts. They aren't asked to memorize processes. What we focus on is understanding, making sure that students understand the meaning behind math, not just to memorize and solve a problem and then forget about it later.

I have a great deal of respect for all educators, whether it be in the public school system, whether it be at our universities and colleges across the province—we all work incredibly hard as educators to make sure that our students meet the necessary outcomes.

I want to take a moment to do a shout-out to my very, very good friend, Minister Altomare, who I know is watching from home today. The member for Transcona (MLA Altomare)—excuse—apologies.

An Honourable Member: Or Minister of Education?

MLA Cross: Or Minister of Education. My apologies; I corrected myself. So what I want to say to the member from Transcona: I want to thank him for his

years of service as an educator, and I want to remind everybody that, as an educator, he puts students at the centre of everything he ever did in the classroom, in the office and now in this building. He knows what students need and he makes sure that their needs are met.

We began working together back in 2006 at John Gunn middle school, where I was an educational assistant. And I'm sure he'll remember one of our colleagues, who was teaching grade 8 math at the time, actually taught math in a way that children had to expense—experience some real-world ways of using math. So, for example, this teacher knew that when doing measurement, you can't just do it in a standardized way. *[interjection]*

An Honourable Member: Keep going.

MLA Cross: Keep going? Okay.

So what this teacher would do is actually not just have the students measure with a ruler—calculate measurements: he gave them tape measures, he gave them tools to measure things with—string. He would ask them to use—*[interjection]*

Honourable Deputy Speaker? *[interjection]* No, I'm going to wait.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order. Yes. Order.

I would—all members in the Chamber need to come to order when the Speaker asks for order, and also when he stands and asks for order.

So I would like to hear what the member for Seine River has to say, so member for Seine River.

MLA Cross: I appreciate that.

As I was saying, the Minister of Education and I spent time in a middle school together where teachers who taught math in that school did it in so many different ways. They made sure that students knew how to use math in real-world applications.

As a teacher in my own classroom and in early years classroom, I was required to teach not only math; I taught science, I taught social studies, I taught English, I taught health, I taught the true history of Canada. I find it ironic that members are so upset about one subject area when they completely ignore another subject area.

We don't see them standing up demanding that Manitoba's students learn the true history of Canada; learn about pre-contact life; learn about the experiences that Indigenous peoples were put through because of colonial processes. I don't see them standing up and defending that. They pick and choose what they defend.

Now, when I was in a classroom not too long ago and they introduced bill 64, this is how uninformed they are when it comes to education. Their Education minister at the time, Cliff Cullen, went out in the newspaper and called out a project that I was working on in a school with some other teachers, and said that learning about government has no place in the classroom—in a grade 9 classroom. That is one of the outcomes in grade 9, that you teach this in social studies. They don't have a clue what's in the curriculum. I'd be surprised if they ever opened a document and actually read it.

Now let's look at math. When we talk about the math curriculum, in particular, I wonder if they even realize that it's separated into four strands: we focus on number, we focus on patterns and relations, shape and space, stats and probability. Now let's talk about what that means, and we're doing this from K to 9. Let's look at the big ideas.

* (11:30)

When you talk about number, we're talking about counting. Counting tells how many or how much; numbers, how they're related to one another and their relationships they have with each other. Quantities can be estimated by using references. That's just one part of number strat. Shape and space, students are learning about area, length, volume, mass, time, angles, 3D objects, 2D shapes. Younger kids are learning what shapes are, learning how to count.

Members are pretty riled up today because they're so worried that teachers in this province will not have the proper educational background to teach in a classroom. However, they are not standing up, furious, that in rural Manitoba, when they need a substitute, they will bring in folks who don't have any kind of teaching degree to look after a classroom. Why are they not upset? Why are they not getting up fixing that problem? Because they caused that problem.

Teachers in a classroom is the most important thing. You can't tell me that someone who's never spent time in a university getting a degree has the ability to substitute in a classroom, manage children.

They have no idea about classroom management, they have no idea about processes, nothing.

But they're pretty quiet right now because they know I'm right. They're more worried about my education as a teacher and my abilities to teach in a class.

Now, I'm not taking anything away from professors who teach math in your first degree. I have a B.A.—I have a B.Ed. from the University of Winnipeg. In the B.A. portion of my degree, I was required to take math classes. One of the subject areas that I was required to take in that math class was learning about the Mayan number system, and I can tell you, as an educator for 18 years, I never had to teach that to children.

So how did that prepare me? It didn't. What did prepare me were my curriculum instruction and assessment courses I took during my education degree. Those are the courses that taught me how to read the curriculum documents, how to teach those kind of subjects, how to teach math in a classroom, how do you teach to a kindergarten student versus how you teach to a grade 8 student.

Members on this side have never been in a classroom—maybe some have, I actually will retract that, I do know some have—but most haven't. They don't have a clue the way a school works. They don't know what it's like in a classroom setting.

And so not all professors have taught in classrooms; most professors in—I will correct that—have not taught in an early years classroom. Many of the professors I had taught at a higher level. It is a completely different scenario. When we're talking about pedagogy in terms of teaching, you have to meet the students where they are at. I cannot teach at a high level to kids in grade 2.

While I understand the importance of math and every subject area, I think that we need to trust in the educators in our province to know. They're professionals. They take on professional development opportunities every chance they get. In fact, when I worked in Seven Oaks School Division, part of our Teacher Talk Time was, we focused on the math curriculum for two years to strengthen our pedagogy. We are not giving teachers enough credit.

Thank you to all the educators out there and thank you to the Minister of Education for doing this. Well done.

Introduction of Guests

The Deputy Speaker: Before we move on to the next speaker, I just want to direct all honourable members' attention to the public gallery.

We have, just entering now, students from Miles Macdonell Collegiate, 28 of them, grade 9 students under the direction of Stephanie Fredricson. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Elmwood (MLA Maloway).

* * *

The Deputy Speaker: And with that, the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko).

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): I thank you for the heartfelt introduction to my next 10 minutes that I'm going to have to be able to put on the record in regards to the wonderful resolution brought forward by my colleague, the member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Jackson).

Well, the previous 10 minutes the speaker, unfortunately, you know, even though received a 'rouning' applause from their colleagues, probably within the first three minutes, possibly should have stood up and asked the member to maybe start putting some facts on the record instead of having to put something on the record and then retract it.

But, you know, in today's—today, during this debate, I'm thrilled to see that we're joined by some students and we're also thrilled to be joined by some professors in the gallery because they're here to witness—and it's unfortunate that the students in the gallery had missed the first few minutes of our debate today, because they would have very—been witness to another huge example—this is three days in a row, but this happens on a day-to-day basis here in the Manitoba Legislature where the NDP government, the Kinew government, led by the MLA for Fort Rouge, continues to show on a day-to-day basis disrespect, a dysfunctional team over there, not much of a team, a toxic workplace and environment, shouting inappropriate things back and forth, too, throughout this Chamber, honourable Deputy Speaker.

And I respect the role that the Deputy Speaker has to play and knowing that it's not an easy job. It's much like a job of a teacher, where there is some classroom management. And I know, Deputy Speaker, that, you know, being part of the NDP government, we've seen signs and we've heard many things come out from MLAs that the toxic environment within that

NDP caucus is widespread and we've seen some misinformation be put on the record today as well.

And again, the member for—that just spoke previous to me, the member for Seine River (MLA Cross)? The member for Seine River said, well, no longer are students to memorize any facts. Well, you know, I don't think it's a bad thing for students to know some facts. Actually, it would serve many of the teachers that are in here on the NDP side and the teachers on our side, plus colleagues, because we're here to do a job as MLAs: represent Manitobans. And so we need to be able to put facts on the record, not misinformation.

So I would like to give a bit of a shout-out to my friend and colleague, the current Education Minister who I know may be watching today. And from the PC team, we wish the Education Minister all the best in the future, upcoming holidays, Christmas, and all the best in 2025.

The members across the way on the NDP side, the government side, they're now mentioning the member for Transcona (MLA Altomare). And they are trying to deflect and dodge some of the very important topics and decisions that this government, under this acting Education Minister, and then put it on the member for Transcona.

An Honourable Member: Point of order. Point of order.

Mr. Ewasko: I know that if I'm looking at the—

Point of Order

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable Health Minister, on a point of order.

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care): The Minister of Education, the MLA for Transcona, is highly respected I think by all members of this House. On this side of the House, we mention our beloved colleague because he's done transformative work for education. He's a decades and decades-long educator and contributor to education across this province and in this House, start to finish, full stop. We treat his name and his role and his work with the utmost respect.

And I would ask the member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, to take that approach in his remarks as it pertains to the Minister of Education.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you for that. That is not a point of order, so we will continue on with the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

* * *

Mr. Ewasko: Again, honourable Deputy Speaker, as I was saying, I have a lot of respect for the Education Minister, the MLA for Transcona. We have many friends across this great province of ours that we have both worked with and I know hold him and myself in high regards, and so with that, there was nothing ever said.

* (11:40)

But that does point to another fact where we've got the Deputy Premier (MLA Asagwara) stands up in their place and doesn't really—they don't really know the rules, Deputy Speaker. This goes to that factual thing that the MLA for Seine River brought up, so the professors in the gallery today had actually put together a document that is titled, Fact-Checking Research Claims About Math Education in Manitoba.

I strongly encourage the members on the NDP side, the NDP government, to maybe read the document. I strongly recommend that the acting Education Minister—heavy on the acting—because I take a look around there, and they do have—they do—they have elected a few teachers over on that side.

And so I guess what's going to happen today, and many of the teachers that are on the other side in the NDP government who are backbenchers or possibly serving some additional roles, I'm doing them actually a favour by getting up and talking today because I do believe that when the Premier (Mr. Kinew) does a Cabinet shuffle, one of those teachers will actually get the role of Education Minister sometime in the future. If there is a Cabinet shuffle, honourable Speaker.

So with that—*[interjection]*

Honourable Speaker, do I have to—*[interjection]*

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The—order.

Point of Order

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable Health Minister, on a point of order.

MLA Asagwara: Deputy Speaker, I'm going to stand up, and I am standing up again. In my last point of order, I was, I think, pretty clear. Every member of this House respects the Education Minister.

However, at this point, not every member of this House seems to be reflecting that respect in their

commentary, and I would ask that the Leader of the Opposition be very mindful of his remarks when referring to the Minister of Education and his role as the minister and as a colleague in this House.

That member watches the proceedings in this Chamber, as do others, and I would strongly request that that member consider the impacts of his behaviour and his language in regards to our colleague.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you for that. That was not a point of order, but, again, we do expect the utmost respect be shared and conveyed to all members—yes, all members. I'll leave it at that.

* * *

Mr. Ewasko: You know, again, people in the gallery are witnessing, and you—anybody watching at home, and this is what I've been saying for the last 10 months in this role that I've had the honour to serve in as the interim Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. I have said many times to people out there—*[interjection]*

And I know that the acting Education Minister wants to get up and put a few words on the record. And hopefully, what the acting Education Minister who put in the regulations to get rid of the majors and minors in the teaching profession will now retract their point in these regulations on how we move forward on teacher education.

What I'm continuously getting from the acting Education Minister that is off-camera and off-mic, of course, is the fact that it continues to be with the toxic, dysfunctional workplace that they have come to experience in the NDP caucus, and it's unfortunate that they continue to shout down members who actually have the time given to them to be part of the democratic process and bring forward information to Manitobans.

So, once again, to Manitobans who are watching, and invite people into the gallery so that, when the cameras are off, when the microphones are off, what type of dysfunctional, toxic workplace we are actually experiencing here in the Manitoba Legislature, and it is probably 99 per cent coming from the NDP government.

Why do I say 99 per cent? Because I look to the professors in the gallery, I look to you, Deputy Speaker. The reason why you say 99 per cent is because there's always that 1 per cent of potential

mathematical error. But they on that side might not know that.

Now, honourable Deputy Speaker, myself, I had the pleasure of being a teacher with a major in mathematics and a minor in Canadian history. Taught many grades, from grade 2 to grade 12. Had the pleasure of taking various different administration courses as well.

And, you know, I guess one of the points is why I decided to run for politics in the first place, back in 2011, was that because when the NDP took over—took power in their 17 years of total disfunction—not quite as toxic as this, but their last couple years were—we were actually third in the country, in the early 2000s, we were actually third in the country in numeracy and literacy. And then when science started to get tested, we actually were third in science across the country.

Now, under 17 years under NDP governing, we went from third in the country to dead last, so 10th. And what did they do? So we went to 10th in numeracy, literacy and science, and what did they do? They doubled down on that during their tenure, and all of a sudden we actually went—fell further behind ninth.

I'm proud to say that after seven and a half years of Progressive Conservative government, we actually had moved to sixth and seventh in numeracy, literacy and science.

And what worries me, honourable Deputy Speaker, is the fact that, under this acting Education Minister, by changing these regulations to teacher certifications, we're actually going to backslide again.

Manitoba students, Manitoba parents and guardians, Manitoba teachers can't afford what the NDP are doing. Call an election.

The Deputy Speaker: The—[interjection] Order. Order. Order.

I would love to hear more members' thoughts on this resolution, which requires me to acknowledge another member, which requires folks to simmer down.

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Unfortunately, I actually am rising on a point of order, Deputy Speaker.

Point of Order

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Waverley, on a point of order.

MLA Pankratz: Yes, Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order to address remarks made by the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), which I believe are inappropriate and call into question the impartiality of the Chair. Earlier in his remarks, they're not keeping in rules of this House or its long-standing traditions of respecting the Office of the Speaker.

And it's well established in parliamentary procedure that the impartiality of the Speaker must not be questioned. And Beauchesne's parliamentary rules informs as well as our own standing orders make it clear that such comments are out of order.

I respectfully ask that the member withdraw their remarks earlier on in their statements, which they made regarding impartiality and eluded to impartiality within the Speaker's Chair, in the spirit of respect for the Speaker and parliamentary decorum.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader, on the point of order.

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): I was going to speak to that point of order. That's obviously not a point of order, but if he wants to reflect and question the Chair and call for a vote for a new Speaker, I guess so be it, if that's what he's asking.

* (11:50)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

So we are going to take some time to review Hansard. So we'll take this under advisement and the Speaker will come back with a ruling.

* * *

Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): Honourable Deputy Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand today to put—in your famous, favourite phrase—put a few words on the record.

First of all, I know the member from Transcona is watching and I just want to uplift you and say you are very missed, and your legacy of being a tremendous educator and a tremendous principal and somebody who knows kids is sorely missed right now. And we will do all we can to continue to push forward your big, beautiful agenda.

And, honourable Speaker, as the Minister for Advanced Education and Training, many of my conversations on a daily basis have to do with access and representation in spaces, and particularly in the

field of education, and talk a lot about how we can break down barriers for folks who want to become educators, how students will fare better in classrooms with better representation. Because we know that the greatest indicator of success in post-secondary, and actually in earlier years as well, is a sense of belonging.

And I appreciate very much the debate about curricula related to mathematics, and I know that, at the core of it, is a very important idea about student achievement. And I just want to weigh in with a few words about what we know about student achievement.

And again, when we have classrooms where students come to school with full bellies and have folks working at the front of their classrooms who reflect their values, who make them feel safe, who are inclusive, who do not misgender them, who celebrate all of the diversity and beauty that is being a young person, we know that students are successful.

And on this side of the House, when we look at the education of a young person, we take into consideration everything—from the curricula that's provided to the teachers to the skills that the teachers are using in education facilities. There are phenomenal programs across the province in every post-secondary that's training—that are training teachers.

I'm proud to say that we have teachers that are graduating from Yellowquill College with teacher certification now, that they will be in classrooms across our province teaching young people. We also know that the U of W's faculty of education offers several off-site access programs.

And what does that mean? It means that students who have faced probably more barriers than most people in this Chamber have ever faced, but who have a deep burning desire to teach young people and who know that they are able to guide and shape young people into productive adults, to give them the opportunity to be able to be in classrooms, and to be the role models that young people need.

We have programs—I know that my colleague, the member from Seine River is a CATEP grad, and she was able to complete her teaching degree while also working as an educational assistant.

So she not only learned all of the curricula in a deep and meaningful way, but she was also—had the advantage of doing hands-on work with students every day in the classroom, while being able to support her family.

Not everybody has the privilege of being able to just go to school. So many students, that's not an option. There aren't—you know, not everybody's family can put away money to send them to post-secondary. Not everybody has a stable home life or a roof over their head where they are able to only focus on their education.

And so, when we think about teaching and specifically educators of the future, we need to consider all facets of it. And I agree that curricula needs to be strong, and our—the folks that are in front of our classrooms need to be the best of the best to make sure that we bring up the next generation in the best way possible, but I have faith and confidence that the experts that we have on—in government and in the education ministry have taken those pieces into consideration.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I had the privilege of meeting with grade 9 students today from J.H. Bruns. So grade 9, you'll recall, is the age at which we are going to bring in math and financial literacy.

And I was thrilled to chat with these students because they are keen to learn, and they're already advocating for things in their neighbourhood, and they want to know how government works, and they want to know how they can access post-secondary.

So I had the utmost privilege of talking to them about the expansions in loans and bursaries that they have. It's our job as government to ensure that students get to the education that they need. If you, as a young person, decide that you want to be a teacher, we're going to figure out how to make that happen for you.

And I just want to, once again, uplift the incredible work of the Minister of Education in recognizing that, whether it be math, science, social studies, français, whatever subject, that if you don't come to school with food in your belly, you're not going to learn.

You're not going to do your best learning, and you're not going to reach the levels that we need you to reach to be competent and to be able to successfully graduate from a high school in our province.

So this universal meal program that has been introduced and brought in is going to be transformational, and when we talk about achievement levels and where people are going to be at, I would put my house on the fact that improvements—we will see improvements in all subject levels and competencies across the board because people are given the

opportunity to learn with a full belly, and they're coming to school because they can have a meal with their friends. This is not only ensuring that they can learn, but it helps build community.

And, honourable Deputy Speaker, with all of the challenges that we see in the world right now, those moments of building community are foundational. And they will help ensure that in five years, 10 years, 20 years, when somebody else stands in this seat as the member for Southdale, that we will be having conversations about things that are different, that the room will be more representative of the people around us, and that we'll be talking about even bigger ways to expand education opportunities.

And bigger ways to help ensure that every person has a good, solid future in our province.

Once again, I want to uplift the educators in the room and, you know, I would be remiss if I had the floor and I didn't mention the challenges that are—we're facing post-secondary institutions under the previous administration.

So I know that, you know, we're talking now with this motion about curricula of post-secondaries.

And I'm pleased to be here to debate curricula and not be talking about the massive cuts that came under the previous government, and to not have faculty marching outside of our front doors because of government interference in their bargaining.

I am pleased to be able to stand up and talk about enhancements to the Manitoba scholarship and bursary fund, to increases in funding at every institution in the province, and to be able to talk about expansions in seats. And I really—I'm so grateful to be—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have one minute remaining.

The hour being 12 p.m., this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 5, 2024

CONTENTS

| ORDERS OF THE DAY | | Resolutions | |
|---|-----|---|-----|
| PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS | | Res. 1—Calling on the Provincial Government to Reverse Recent Amendments to the Teaching Certificates and Qualifications Regulation | |
| Second Readings—Public Bills | | Jackson | 375 |
| Bill 215—The Specialist Wait Time Reporting Act | | Questions | |
| Cook | 365 | Dela Cruz | 377 |
| Questions | | Jackson | 377 |
| Devgan | 367 | Ewasko | 378 |
| Cook | 368 | Schuler | 378 |
| Balcaen | 368 | Perchotte | 379 |
| Pankratz | 368 | Debate | |
| Bereza | 368 | Cross | 380 |
| Debate | | Ewasko | 382 |
| Pankratz | 370 | Cable | 384 |
| Bereza | 372 | | |
| Moroz | 373 | | |

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