

Third Session – Forty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

Vol. LXXI No. 69 - 1:30 p.m., Monday, June 25, 2018

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 25, 2018

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

Please be seated. Good afternoon, everybody.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 34—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2018

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Bill 34, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2018, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Cullen: This bill will provide the legislative authority for the implementation of the tax, financial and other measures announced in Budget 2018.

This bill streamlines processes for Manitobans in a number of areas across government. Technical and administrative amendments are also included in this bill.

All of the measures contained in Budget 2018 and this implementation act will achieve real results for Manitobans as a—return our province to responsible and sustainable fiscal path towards balance.

We look forward to keeping our promises with BITSA 2018. Thank you.

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

Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Truth, Integrity and Trust

Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere): Truth, trust and integrity are essential qualities of good governments. Leadership is built on trust, trust is built on truth and a commitment to truth reveals the presence or absence of integrity.

The sad truth is that, under the NDP, Manitobans endured the longest wait times in Canada. This eroded public trust and despite pouring millions of dollars into our health system, things only got worse. Sadly, two years after the historic NDP loss, the NDP still demonstrate a complete lack of integrity and frequent disregard for the truth.

They disregard the truth when they claim classroom sizes are increasing when in—actually, they—when, actually, they are unchanged. The NDP ignore the truth when they assert we are reducing front-line staff. The truth is that more doctors are working in Manitoba today than in many years, and that there are 154 nursing jobs available in Winnipeg and over 100 other medical jobs also advertised.

In contrast, our government values integrity, truth and trust. Our PC government said we would reduce ambulance fees, and they are down 30 per cent, on their way to being half of what they were under the NDP. Our PC government said we would build the long-awaited Shoal Lake Freedom Road, and we are finishing it as I speak. Our PC government said we would fix the finances, and instead of the three credit downgrades the NDP received, we have reduced the deficit to almost half of what it was two years ago, and lenders are paying attention. We are committed to truth, keeping our word and building trust. That's integrity. That's our PC team at work. Truth, trust and integrity are essential qualities of good governments.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mentoring Artists for Women's Art

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Winnipeg's own MAWA was launched in April of 1984 in the effort to promote and integrate women artists into the Winnipeg visual arts community.

Mentoring Artists for Women's Art became an independent organization in September of 1980 and—or 1990, and throughout the years has provided invaluable opportunities for professional development and international networking.

Back in May of 2018, MAWA released some really exciting news: they obtained funding to exhibit the artworks of 50 contemporary indigenous women in a cross-country billboard project entitled Resilience.

Curated by Lee-Ann Martin, Resilience is the largest exhibit of indigenous women artists in Canada's history and comes as a response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on residential schools.

In inner cities and on highway—sites from which too many women have disappeared—the presence of indigenous women are now visible and celebrated through art. This project celebrates the resiliency and creativity of indigenous women through the—thousands of years and is a creative art of reconciliation running from June until August.

Today, I would like to highlight the Resilience piece Mni Wiconi, Water is Life, by local artist Lita Fontaine. Water is the focus of this image. Our water is a gift given to us by the Creator. Our lives would be endangered without it.

Lita is a Dakota, Anishinabe and Metis descent. She is a mother, sister, art educator and visual artist. Fontaine's art can be found all across Canada, including right here in Winnipeg. Fontaine believes visual art is a 'catharsis' that nourishes emotional, physical, mental and physical growth.

Please help me in uplifting and celebrating one of the 50 women displaying sovereignty and strength while combatting labels imposed by society, Lita Fontaine.

Truth, Integrity and Trust

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): It's great honour to rise today in the House to put some words on the record as it relates to truth, integrity and trust.

We have demonstrated to those who have elected us that we're open, transparent and accountable, Madam Speaker, and we continue to hold our integrity in the highest regard.

The residents of Kirkfield Park and Manitobans place their trust in the government and the members

of the Legislative Assembly to ensure they have sustainable health care, good-quality schools and reliable housing.

But, Madam Speaker, Manitobans, above all, trust us, the elected officials, to act with integrity on behalf of them, the Manitobans, to have a better place to live on everyday basis.

A deal, Madam Speaker, is an agreement entered into by two or more parties for their mutual benefit. The backbone of a deal is that—is trust, trust that you will live up to your end of the agreement. Fulfilling your end of the deal, keeping your word and doing what you said you were going to do is fundamental to this.

Madam Speaker, is—it is a key element when I was in business as well as when establishing—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order.

I must advise the member that our rules are quite clear on the scope and content of speeches when ministers are making a member's statement. Rule 27(2) states that, and I quote, a minister of the Crown may not use the time allotted for members' statements to comment on government policy or ministerial or departmental action. End quote.

So I would ask the minister to please draw his comments back into some relevant comments from his constituency.

Mr. Fielding: The people of St. James-Brooklands, when I was on council and doing things for residents of Kirkfield Park and our caucus, Madam Speaker.

* (13:40)

When I campaigned in Kirkfield Park to represent the residents of Kirkfield Park in 2017, I promised the residents that we would fix the finances, repair the services and the economy, which was a main priority and promise for those residents. After 17 years of NDP mismanagement, we have our work cut out for us, no doubt, Madam Speaker, in terms of getting these promises ahead.

Unfortunately, NDP broke Manitobans' trust every single day once they were in government. On October 4th, 2011, the premier at the point promised to not raise taxes as well as things like a PST increase—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The member is again moving into discussing government policy, government direction, and that is contrary to what the rules are for members' statements.

So I would ask the member to please conclude his statement with some comments related to his constituency.

Mr. Fielding: What's really important to the residents of Kirkfield Park is that elected officials keep their trust. This wasn't done, Madam Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Len Rolfson

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, we celebrate athletes who, through their toughness, dedication and durability, always answer the call to compete.

Cal Ripken played 2,632 straight games over 21 years with baseball's Baltimore Orioles. Brent Favre played 297 consecutive games as an NFL quarterback with Green Bay and Minnesota. The NHL's Doug Jarvis played 964 games in a row with Montreal, Washington and Hartford.

But maybe the greatest iron man of all is Manitoban Len Rolfson.

Len started and finished the first-ever Manitoba Marathon on Father's Day, 1979, which at the time took runners all the way out to Headingley. He finished the race the next year, and the year after that, and has just never stopped. His fastest marathon time was in 1981 at age 33, when he blazed through the course in three hours and six minutes. Len retired from the provincial civil service several years ago, but continues to run.

This Father's Day, wearing number 40, Len completed his 40th consecutive full Manitoba Marathon, crossing the finish line at Investors Group Field.

Training for a marathon is a major undertaking. Len has done so each year, avoiding major injuries and illness and managing life commitments. Len credits the support of his wife Trish in keeping his remarkable streak going.

Len keeps every finisher's T-shirt, every medal and every participant's race number, which he annotates with his finishing time along with the weather conditions on race day. Earlier this year, Len was inducted into the Manitoba running association hall of fame, a fitting tribute to someone who has seen every mile of the growth and development of Manitoba's largest participation sports event.

Len has run 114 marathons, including Chicago, Las Vegas, Honolulu, Toronto and the legendary

Boston Marathon, plus extreme endurance events such as the Canadian Death Race. However, Len proudly says he still considers the Manitoba Marathon his favourite race because of the hard-working staff and dedicated volunteers.

Please join me to congratulate Len Rolfson on his 40 years of the Manitoba Marathon and wish him many more successful races.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): Madam Speaker, the Sikh people around the globe are commemorating a great, rather unique historic event in this month of June, a month of extreme, excruciating heat in India, and the martyr is fifth Sikh Guru Arjan Dev Ji. The great guru sacrificed his life for the noble cause of truth, faith, liberty, equality and brotherhood of mankind in 1606 AD. The Sikhism places the utmost emphasis on human rights and the will to sacrifice one's all for the sake of righteousness.

Known as the prince of martyrs, the fifth guru also goes down in history as the builder of the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab, the holiest Sikh shrine, as well as the compiler of Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy book. The guru was a literary genius, a poet par excellence and a singer of God's glories.

Guru's verses attracted masses of all faiths, creeds and classes to his divine message of love for God and His creation: peace, harmony and service to humanity without discrimination. A great builder, he also established the leper colony in Tarn Taran, Punjab. Guru's popularity and people's affection and devotion for him enraged the rulers of that time. In a tragic way, this became the cause of his martyrdom by the order of Emperor Jahāngir.

The guru was done to brutal death by a punishment of fire and boiling water. He was made to sit on the red-hot iron plate, burning sand was poured over his head, boiled like a potato in scorching heat and finally was taken to cold waters of river Ravi in Lahore, where his body disappeared. A gurdwara memorial stands on the spot. Guru's martyrdom inspired countless martyrs to die happily for faith, freedom and human rights.

The Sikh prayer beautifully captures the spirit of Sikhism: Let, in the name of God, says Nanak, there be peace, prosperity and progress for one and all.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Point of Order

Mr. Bob Lagassé (Dawson Trail): Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I believe it was the government's turn to have a private member's statement at that point.

Madam Speaker: The member is accurate—Dawson Trail. That would be my error in allowing two statements for the opposition. So I will, with leave of the House, I will allow the member to continue.

Is there leave for the member for Dawson Trail to have a statement? *[Agreed]*

Purpose and Integrity

Mr. Lagassé: I rise in the House today not to honour a Dawson Trail hero this time, but to tell you a short story. Stories are memory aids, instruction manuals and moral compasses. So I'd like to share a story about a pencil maker.

A master pencil maker took his newest pencil aside just before he was about to pack it into a box. He imagined the pencil as a person and said, there are a few things you need to know before going out into the world. He said, the first thing you need to remember is—and this is the most important—part of you is what's inside. Next, keep in mind that you will be able to correct any mistake you make along the way.

From time to time, you will experience a sharpening, but this will only make you a better pencil. And remember this as well: upon every surface that you are used, you will leave your mark. No matter what else happens, you must allow yourself to be used.

To me, this story is about purpose and integrity, an important reminder that we have been created and elected to a higher purpose. We must work with integrity to effect positive change and stay the course we've set out on.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Changes to Health Services Request to Stop ER Closures

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, Manitobans firmly believe that health care is one of our most important services. We understand the need to stand together, supporting patients, families and the most vulnerable when they are sick and require access to the best health care available.

On the other hand, the Pallister government is moving at a breakneck speed on the Premier's plans to close clinics and emergency rooms across Winnipeg. Meanwhile, citizens from across rural Manitoba are anxiously waiting to hear the future of their own ERs.

We've seen the deep cuts to health care made by this Premier in this past year.

Will the Premier stop his plan to close Seven Oaks and Concordia ERs?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, what took 17 years to break cannot take 17 years to repair, so we will work diligently to make sure that we repair the services of health care that are so profoundly important to Manitobans and their families.

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

Special Drug Program

Ms. Fontaine: The Pallister government made deep cuts to the special drug program, which provides life-saving drugs for patients, callously passing on thousands of dollars onto Manitobans while they deal with their health concerns.

The Premier indifferently cut supports for patients with sleep apnea, passing along a bill that can exceed \$500. And he still wasn't finished, Madam Speaker. The Premier cut supports for orthotics for patients.

The Premier makes it harder for patients to get the health care that they need and rightly deserve.

* (13:50)

Will the Premier stop these cuts and instead ensure no Manitoban receives a bill for essential medical treatment?

Mr. Pallister: Well, we don't need the fear and fiction of the NDP, Madam Speaker. That won't help repair health care.

What we have on our side is hope and optimism—hope and optimism that's fuelled by the aspirations of Manitobans to see a system repaired that has not been serving them well, that has been, by all measurements, last of all the Canadian provinces in terms of that.

The member speaks about paying out of pocket. The NDP promised to end hallway medicine, Madam Speaker, but they created highway medicine with a

record number of Manitobans and their family members pursuing care outside of our province in frustration and a record number walking out of emergency rooms prior to getting treatments.

That is a system that's deeply in need of repair, and I encourage the member to support us in our efforts to make sure that we get that system fixed, the system that the NDP broke.

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

Request to Stop ER Closures

Ms. Fontaine: The reason that our NDP caucus refused to pass the Premier's budget is very simple: We've seen in previous years the Premier attempt to hide his deep cuts, like cuts to transit and roads, in his budget legislation. We knew that the people of Manitoba deserve to see the Premier's budget bill before this House could agree to pass it. We're really concerned about the possibility of more cuts to our health-care services that we all rely on.

Will the Premier commit to this House that there will be no further cuts to health care in his upcoming budget bill? And, more importantly, will the Premier once and for all back off his plans to cut ERs across Winnipeg?

Mr. Pallister: I haven't been able to hide since I was in grade 5, Madam Speaker, and our government won't hide from the responsibility we must face up to of repairing what the NDP broke. And they broke a health-care system that needs to be repaired, and we will focus on repairing it.

We're making record investments in health care, but we are also refocusing those investments to achieve better outcomes for Manitoba patients.

National Pharmacare Program Government Position

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, we can all be proud of Canada's medicare system, pioneered by Tommy Douglas, our greatest Canadian.

But Tommy's work is not complete. Canada is the only country in the world with a medicare system that doesn't cover prescription drugs. One in 10 people can't fill a prescription because they can't afford to. And for many years—many, many years—New Democrats have called for a comprehensive national pharmacare program.

Federal and provincial Health ministers are meeting in Winnipeg later this week.

Can the Minister of Health advise what steps he'll be taking to push for a comprehensive national pharmacare program?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): The member is correct in his assertion. There are many other systems around the world that offer more comprehensive health-care protection than is offered under Canada's system, but very, very few systems that are more generous in terms of the benefits programs they offer than Manitoba's is.

The member knows that he was part of a government for 17 years which failed to act on this issue. We're interested in exploring discussion on the topic of a national pharmacare program, and we'll pursue those discussions as soon as we possibly can, in the next few days, in fact.

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

Mr. Swan: National pharmacare would improve the health of all Manitobans and it would strengthen our public health-care system. We know that when Manitobans get access to the medications they need, they're able to live longer and healthier lives, there's a lower risk of hospitalization and a greater chance at continuing to work, pay taxes and drive the economy. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Swan: MPs recently completed a study, and most supported national pharmacare. Only the Conservative MPs issued a dissenting opinion against an idea whose time has come, although we fear the Liberal government will be all talk and no action.

Will the Minister of Health rise above this and play a key role this week in advancing a comprehensive national pharmacare program?

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, Manitobans want a system that works better for them. That may involve discussion around a national pharmacare program, but it most certainly must involve shorter wait times for services such as diagnostic tests and for treatment in emergency rooms.

I would suggest to the member that their—the recent support of the NDP and their admission that the federal Liberal government has broken its word in terms of partnering on health-care funding is a

useful thing, and I would encourage the members of the Liberal caucus in this Chamber to do the same. We could then go to our national meetings speaking with a unified voice from all members in the Chamber in favour of restoring, at least to a reasonable level, the partnerships that wouldn't be at half the level of what Tommy Douglas was able to negotiate but nonetheless would be at a more reasonable level than they are now.

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

Mr. Swan: Well, I think I'm starting to see why Manitoba doesn't do very well at getting things done at national meetings these days.

Without a national plan, Canadians pay some of the highest drug prices in the world. For Manitobans with very serious illnesses, medications can cost them thousands of dollars every year, and despite the Premier's words today, this government actually moved in the opposite direction by cancelling the special drug program.

Under a national plan, Canada could negotiate better prices. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says pharmacare could save Canadians more than \$4 billion each year, while others say the savings could exceed \$10 billion per year while ensuring coverage for all.

Can I hear from the minister? Will he commit today to pushing for a comprehensive national pharmacare program?

Mr. Pallister: Well, Madam Speaker, in terms of working effectively with other provinces, we—and the federal government, we are proceeding to build an outlet on Lake Manitoba—which the NDP never did for 17 years—because of a partnership with the federal government and with local communities

We're proceeding with the construction of Freedom Road, something the NDP talked about but never did for 17 years. We've got productive partnerships in terms of agriculture, in terms of housing, in terms of tourism initiatives, green programming.

Working effectively with the federal government—it's what we're doing, Madam Speaker, but we'll also stand up to the federal government when they're wrong, and they're wrong on reducing funding for health care, and until some NDP premiers backed out of the deal, Manitoba led the way in organizing co-operative approaches to oppose

that change. We'll continue to oppose it because it is regressive and dangerous in the face of a growing and aging population that needs services.

We'll continue to lead in that dialogue as we will in many other issues interprovincially, Madam Speaker.

Public Services Sustainability Act Request to Withdraw Bill 28

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): The school year ends this week, but there's a big, dark cloud over teachers in Manitoba this summer. Teacher contracts will expire in just a few short days, and yet the government resists the idea of allowing free and collective bargaining in this province.

I have a letter here dated June 12th signed by the ministers of Finance and Education, which attempts to do what Bill 28 does not, which is simply to impose Bill 28 by stealth and through the back door rather than simply proclaiming the bill, as it should be.

So will the Premier do the right thing today? Will he stop attacking teachers? Will he withdraw Bill 28 and will he allow free and collective bargaining in this province that's required by the constitution of this country?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, I've referenced—and I welcome the member back to the Chamber. On health care we're reducing wait times and ambulance fees. On education we're working, as we are in health care, to make sure that front-line people, including teachers and nurses, can spend more time at work on the things they were trained to do—work with patients, work with students.

The NDP appears to want to maintain a regressive structure that has roughly 20 times as many bargaining units, forcing front-line workers away from their workplace as opposed to the other provinces in Canada, particularly, for example, in Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC, where they have less than 20 bargaining units. Here in Manitoba, close to 200.

So, Madam Speaker, while we focus on giving better job security to our front-line civil servants—no layoffs, no reopening of agreements—and we're giving them lower taxes, the members opposite offer the alternative: higher taxes, less job security, more time away from the workplace.

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

**Small Class Size Initiative
Request to Restore**

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): Madam Speaker, the Premier leaves the impression that I haven't been doing my job on behalf of the people of Fort Garry-Riverview, and he couldn't be more wrong.

He wants to suggest somehow that the federal government makes cuts in health, but when they cut education, that's seen to be an increase. This is a very, very severe contradiction in terms.

When the teachers return in the fall, they'll find that they have fewer supports for much more complex needs and a growing student population.

The government disowned the small class size initiative. Will the Premier do the right thing and restore that initiative?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, like, I would hope, all teachers, Madam Speaker, I value accurate research. The member puts false information on the record. Class sizes are the same as they were under the NDP, but funding for education is up over half a million dollars—half a billion dollars—\$500 million—plus this year alone.

* (14:00)

So the member puts—deliberately puts misinformation on the record, and I encourage him, before he asks his next question, to just engage a little bit more research.

Madam Speaker: Just a reminder to members that using the words deliberately misleading and putting deliberate misinformation on the record is not parliamentary language in the Chamber. So I would urge members to please co-operate with our rules around that issue.

Mr. Allum: Well, Madam Speaker, here's the facts on the class size initiative: through our funding—it's over \$16 million—382 teachers were hired in this province, and they're all going to lose their jobs under this Premier.

Our government made it a priority to ensure more one-on-one time between a student and a teacher. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Allum: That's what parents want. And with a simple stroke of the pen, that's what this government is undoing.

So I'm asking the Premier one more time: stop the cuts, start investing in education and give our students a future now and forever. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: Well, not only our students, but adults, Madam Speaker, will have a better future in whatever they engage in if they use accurate and honest and correct information, not the information the member just used.

So the class—as the member likes to claim credit for hiring a number of teachers, Madam Speaker, but that would be the taxpayers of Manitoba that deserve the credit. I would say the average class size is a fair indication of what class sizes are, accurately, and they were 19 students on average in the classes when the NDP was in power and 19 now.

And, Madam Speaker, what I think parents care about, and I believe most students care about, is the quality of the education they receive in our school system, something that under the NDP suffered badly, where we descended from middle of the pack in most outcome—most measurements as defined by various testing mechanisms that were left after the NDP did away with most of them.

We found that we were sinking to the bottom of the pile, Madam Speaker, to 10th. So while the member is vociferous in his arguments of defence for what the NDP did, he doesn't want to take credit for getting to 10th.

**Housing, Child Care and Poverty
Request for Government Strategy**

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): The Minister of Families failed to delivered on—to deliver on important commitments he made to Manitoba families.

The minister signed a national housing agreement nearly four months ago. Under that agreement, Manitoba is set to receive \$15 billion in federal funding, but low-income families and seniors can't access that money until the minister releases a real plan to build social and affordable housing units.

The minister is months behind on his commitment, and Manitoba may lose out on the money unless he takes action.

When will he release this housing plan?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): First of all, the member is completely wrong in the fact that we have not built housing and affordable

housing and supplied money for their operating. In fact, we built over 487 new units of Manitoba Housing, provided the rent-g geared-to-income. In operating dollars, 42 per cent are social housing.

The member's also inaccurate in the fact—in terms of the National Housing Strategy. We're negotiating with the federal government on a bilateral permit which wouldn't start 'til 2019, Madam Speaker. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

The honourable member for Point Douglas, on a supplementary question.

Mrs. Smith: I said it many times in this House and I'll say it again: our government built hundreds of housing units every year. This government: zero.

A year ago, the minister signed a—federal government to create a child-care strategy. This deal saw—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Smith: —\$47 million in federal funding to build child-care spaces. The minister has failed to deliver on that promise, and Manitoba may lose out on the federal funding if he continues to ignore it.

Madam Speaker, Manitoba's shortage of child-care spaces is a—is at a critical high. We need action from this minister.

When will he release a child-care plan?

Mr. Fielding: You know what, there's times when the provincial government will not agree with the federal government, and there's times where we do. In fact, two areas that we have had substantial agreement is in terms of housing and is in terms of child care.

We recently signed a bilateral agreement with the federal government for over \$47 million in new child-care money here in the province of Manitoba. I can confirm that we as a province are—have not spent, ever—this is the historical amount in child care for the province, and that's something this government has delivered on, Madam Speaker.

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

Mrs. Smith: I sense a trend here. The minister is now six months behind on his promised poverty plan. Manitoba's child care—or poverty rates are now one of the worst in the country.

But instead of delivering a plan and making real changes, the minister simply disputes the data.

We need a strong plan to address poverty and stop Manitoba families from falling further behind. We need a minister that does more than delay reports and argue facts.

When will he release his poverty plan?
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: One thing that this government, I can tell you is a fact, wants to deliver is results. And that's exactly—*[interjection]*—so let's take a minute and measure our results versus the NDP. Let's measure in terms of child poverty. We know under the NDP they were 10th out of 10, in terms of provinces, in terms of addressing child poverty. We've improved that in terms of—we're in the middle of the pack, over five—fifth out of—in the provinces. I'd say that's substantial investments.

We've made substantial investments in things like the Rent Assist program: thousands of more people supported. We built over 450, 470 new units of Manitoba Housing. We supported things like Siloam Mission: \$3 million to support at-risk individuals.

That's what we want to do in terms of supporting vulnerable individuals.

Please have the NDP join our plan to support vulnerable Manitobans here in the province.

Northern Manitoba Communities Health and Economic Strategy

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): There's a job crisis facing northern Manitoba, but you'd never know it from this Pallister government's response. More time spent crafting complicated strategies to keep their 20 per cent salary increases than there has been finding ways to help northern Manitoba.

The Premier spends more time in Costa Rica than he's ever spent in Flin Flon, The Pas, Thompson, Churchill or anywhere in the North, and the Premier's ministers devise new ways to refuse to help communities in need like Thompson by choking off access to the mining reserve fund.

When will the Premier stop the evasions, take responsibility for growing our North?

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Well, Madam Speaker, it

is indeed unfortunate that the member and the NDP choose to criticize former chief Ron Evans, Jim Downey, Onekanew Christian Sinclair, Chuck Davidson, and, in fact, the NDP are criticizing all the people of the North for bringing forth great ideas that will help rebuild the North from the disaster that the NDP left it in.

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

Mr. Lindsey: The city of Thompson has experienced its biggest loss of jobs in a generation, but the 'preminers' and his minister refuse to help. They come up with excuses to deny access to funds that can help workers find jobs and get the training they need.

The Pallister government decided to prioritize other recipients for the mining reserve fund over helping the city of Thompson. That's not the intent of the fund, and that doesn't help the citizens of Thompson.

Will the government stop the excuses, set up a community adjustment fund for the city of Thompson?

Mr. Pedersen: Well, Madam Speaker, the criticism from the NDP continues. The city of Thompson has had a great deal of input into the one north initiative. The city of Thompson has had a lot of involvement in the mineral development protocol. The city of Thompson is involved in all these discussions, as are the people of the North.

Those who know the North best are having the input in it rather than being dictated to like the former NDP government did.

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

Mr. Lindsey: Just to remind the minister, I'm from the North.

The Minister of Health refused to attend our—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Lindsey:—health-care town hall in Flin Flon to hear about the situation in the North, but the minister did find time to order \$6-million cuts to the NRHA.

* (14:10)

The doctor shortage in Flin Flon and Snow Lake is real and is serious. It demands attention. It demands action on the part of this government.

Northerners should have access to the same health-care services as any other Manitoban.

Will the government ensure that all northerners have access to a family doctor, and will they commit to realizing the goal this year?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): The member might claim to be from the North, Madam Speaker, but his attacks lack direction of any kind.

The NDP cared so little about the North they took it for granted. The last time they went to the North before the last election was to buy delegate votes in The Pas, offering the promise—empty promise, as it turned out—of jobs at Manitoba Hydro. That's not respect. It wasn't respectful when they did it and isn't respectful now to disregard the record of 17 years that saw a lack, a total lack of preparatory work done in anticipation of what we all knew was coming.

The member speaks about caring for northern development, Madam Speaker, but he represents a political party that supports the notion that we should leave our resources in the ground. That was the notion that his leader signed onto when he signed the Leap Manifesto. So perhaps he'd like to explain to the people of his riding and the people of the North how they're going to create new jobs and opportunities in those communities by leaving resources in the ground.

HIV/AIDS Rate in Manitoba Preventative Health Services

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, prevention of sickness is vital to improve health and to reduce costs. Twice in the last week I have raised with the Minister of Health the fact that he failed to include a process to develop a province-wide preventative health service plan in Manitoba.

The incidence of HIV has risen from an average of 67 new cases a year between '96 and '98, to 84 in 2006 to 2009 and to 105 a year in the last four years. Manitoba's rate is now the second highest of all provinces.

I ask the Minister of Health today: What is his plan to prevent new cases of HIV and AIDS in Manitoba?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): When it comes to the issue of HIV, one of the challenges in Manitoba is that there—lack a proper information system in

Manitoba to do the proper tracking and ensure that people are getting the treatment that they needed.

We recently signed an agreement with the federal government to ensure that the information system that exists off-reserve will also be available on-reserve so we can have proper indications when it comes to treatment and those who may need treatment, and also to get a sense of where the challenges are and if they're growing in certain areas more than they are others.

So in working together with other levels of government and with our regional health authorities, we think that this will be an improvement on the issue, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, while HIV has been increasing in Manitoba, in British Columbia there's been a significant decrease in HIV and AIDS.

As this study, which I table, shows, the BC results provide evidence that integrated, comprehensive, free programs that facilitate testing and deliver treatment and care, including safe injection sites, can be effective in decreasing age-related mortality and morbidity, suggesting that control of and eventually an end to AIDS are possible.

Will the Minister of Health today adopt the BC model of prevention in Manitoba?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, we're always having discussions with other jurisdictions to look at best practices that exist across Canada. Those practices can sometimes be instructive to Manitoba, and often we are giving our best practices to other provinces and they're being adopted in those provinces.

I look forward to having a good dialogue with Health ministers across Canada starting on Wednesday in Winnipeg here, Madam Speaker. We have a number of issues to discuss, but all of them are geared to ensuring that we have better health care in Manitoba and across Canada.

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

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, Manitoba sadly isn't even including the latest drugs for treating HIV and AIDS under Pharmacare, even though certain of these can be less costly. Manitoba also doesn't

currently have an adequate education and screening program, let alone the comprehensive approach of British Columbia.

So far, the minister, with his lack of attention to preventing sickness, is showing his government is just as bad as the previous NDP government.

Is the Minister of Health going to continue the NDP model with no province-wide preventive services program, and without an adequate screening and prevention program for H and IV and AIDS?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, I've already indicated some of the steps that we're taking when it comes to sharing information and things that can be helpful when it comes to the issue of HIV, and we believe that they will be helpful. Certainly, when it comes to preventative care and looking at things from a provincial lens and delivering services locally, the establishment of Shared Health will be significant and important.

But when it comes to doing things no differently, Madam Speaker, the member, in the 1990s, sat in the Cabinet of a government that cut hundreds of millions of dollars to health care in Manitoba. He said nothing then, and now when the federal Liberal government is not only cutting hundreds of millions of dollars but billions of dollars to Manitoba, he still says nothing. Some things haven't changed with that member.

Curling Centre of Excellence New Facility Announcement

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Manitoba is known around the world for our province's great past and ongoing achievements in the sport of curling. To further put Manitoba on the map, we committed to Manitobans during the last provincial election that we would establish a curling centre of excellence right here in the Keystone Province, Madam Speaker.

Can the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage please update the House on how our PC government has taken one step closer to making this commitment a reality?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): I'd like to thank the—my colleague from Lac du Bonnet for that very exciting question. Manitoba has been, for very long, known as the epicentre of curling here in Manitoba. And we are very proud that we have produced many, many Olympic curlers and many provincial champions,

champions such as Jennifer Jones, who is a world-renowned Olympic curler, and a curler such as Kaitlyn Lawes, who just recently curled with John Morris and was the 2018 provincial—or the 2018 Olympic mixed curling champions, and also a provincial champion such as our Premier (Mr. Pallister), who actually won the 2000 mixed curling champion. Very proud of those individuals.

The International Curling Centre of Excellence will be an extraordinary opportunity to develop our Manitoba curlers and many other curlers from around the world. Under the leadership of ICCE, we will develop a vision—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Natural Protected Areas

Government Record

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Last week, I documented the atrocious record of the Pallister government when it comes to protected areas. We're actually going backwards, not forwards, in meeting our international obligations of protecting 17 per cent of the province.

Now, I would love to be able to table a document for members opposite so they know a better way is possible—13 park reserves, 25 wild management areas, 20 parks, heritage park, almost a dozen ecological reserves and four traditional use planning areas—but I can't because the document, Places to Keep, has been removed from the government's website.

Will they please re-post it so the public knows what is possible—maybe with a new title: what we're not going to do but should do for future generations?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): I know this member; he likes his alternative facts when it comes to the good work that our government is doing, but the reality is our government is moving forward on a strategy to enhance our protected area space.

What we will not do is what the members opposite did, where they contributed to 99 per cent destruction of the Grass River Provincial Park, and they also, with no consultation, had disclosed that they were going to slap a protected area space on the—part of our northern part of our province without any consultation, setting us back by many years. We're not going to take that disrespectful approach of members opposite.

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

Fishing Industry Royalty Scheme

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Well, the minister's greenwashing attempt notwithstanding, the score on protected areas right now is 70 for the NDP and minus two for the Conservatives. That's not the only instance where the Pallister government has implemented a bait-and-switch strategy.

* (14:20)

Let's just talk about the fishers for a moment. Turns out you don't actually have to pay fishers for their catch, you can force them to ship their fish caught in Manitoba out of the country in contaminated containers, and there will be no repercussions for it. And, in fact, the Province will weaken the very few protections that were there in the first place.

Now we're hearing from fishers that this government wants to impose a royalty scheme on them. Is this going to be used to pay for the minister's 20 per cent salary increase?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): You know, Madam Speaker, I'd like to just table a copy of a press release from the member opposite good friend Eric Reder that says the NDP have clearly signalled that the—that they value money more than wildlife. In five years, the ore from this mine will be exhausted, the jobs will be gone, but the caribou herd will be decimated.

That's members opposite's record on protected spaces. [*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

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

Transit Services BITSA Funding

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Well, Earth to minister, there was a topic change there. We moved from protected areas to fisheries where Frank Kenyon, one of the few people that come to committee and speak in favour at the time of this government's legislation now says they are going to lose hundreds if not thousands of votes from Conservative people because of what they've done to the fishery in Manitoba.

To close off, I would like to ask the Premier, the centre reason why all of this is going literally to hell in a handbasket, the BITSA legislation is where he hid cuts to transit last year. That's why transit users across this province have to pay more for a declining service, and their buses aren't even electric yet.

Will the Premier please assure us that in this year's BITSA there will be no further cuts to either public transit or to active transportation strategies to help us move to the green future our kids bloody well deserve?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

The member, in his questions, used a couple of words that are not considered acceptable in this House and I would ask the member—in terms of the language, he should certainly know better, and I would ask him to withdraw those final comments in what he said.

The honourable member for Minto (Mr. Swan)—oh, pardon me, the honourable member for Wolseley.

Mr. Altemeyer: Ever since I cut my hair.

I'm not sure where I crossed the line, but wherever it was, I apologize, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. I appreciate that from the member.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, that's why Greg Doer made Cabinet and that member didn't. *[interjection]* Yes.

And, Madam Speaker, that is the trouble with the member. He's—he was there for—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Pallister: —most of 17 years, Madam Speaker, and he understands that the hell in a handbasket reference could have applied even better—

An Honourable Member: Direct your question through the Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, I will continue my comments in this manner, and the rookie members of this Chamber need to understand that the rules of the Westminster Parliament allow comments to be directed through the Speaker but not the gaze of every member. And so they need to review the

British House of Commons and get familiar with the rules of debate.

The member for Wolseley referenced hell in a handbasket. That's what the Auditor General's report on the NDP's environmental strategy could have been called because they had no idea what they were doing, proceeded to post a plan and then were told that it wouldn't work within weeks and refused to upgrade it for over six years, Madam Speaker.

No plan for the environment then, no plan for the environment now, just fall-mouthed, false accusations from the member for Wolseley.

Good luck in his next career.

Recreational Facilities

Funding Commitment

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): It took weeks of public pressure to finally force the Pallister government to co-operate and turn the water on for the people of south Winnipeg.

We are so thankful—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Marcelino: —to the many people of Bridgwater who forced this government's hand. However, residents shouldn't have to raise public pressure to get the services they deserve. The taps should have been turned on in the first place.

Why did the Pallister government engage in months of brinkmanship and keep the taps off to south Winnipeg residents?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): What I find ourselves on this side of the House doing is always answering questions of how we actually solved solutions. And although we have come to an agreement—I personally had a conversation with mayor—the mayor to get this addressed, we think it's important, but we also know that we're not being taken advantage of as the developer.

We've been running the fountains as well as some of the structures there for well over five years. We've hit the requirements and we wanted to make sure that the water did turn on. The City has a responsibility to take over those properties, and we have met all those obligations.

I also had an opportunity to actually tour the fields. I'm not sure if the member did tour the fields as well as the fountain to make sure it's there.

We think it's important to solve solutions on this side of the House.

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

Ms. Marcelino: The Bridgwater debacle is part of a larger trend to the Pallister government: they don't work well with others.

Transit funding has been frozen, as has funding for community infrastructure. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Marcelino: Manitobans expect access to quality recreation facilities, but it's getting harder because of the actions of the Pallister government.

Will the minister change course and put additional resources forward to keep building for our communities?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Municipal Relations): This is a great opportunity, as well, for this side of the House and our government to put some facts on the record, because I know the members opposite have issues with facts, Madam Speaker.

Just a couple of quick facts related: Community Places, 11 per cent increase in program funding in Budget 2018, Madam Speaker—11 per cent higher than the NDP ever did in Community Places.

And the member from Kirkfield Park mentioned about meeting with the mayor. You know what, Madam Speaker, on this side of the House we are a team. We work together as a team to ensure that issues with not only municipalities across Manitoba, but the City of Winnipeg are dealt with in a timely and fair and transparent fashion.

Where they get it wrong, we'll get it right.

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

Ms. Marcelino: Good to know, good to hear that the minister had met with the mayor of the City of Winnipeg because, Madam Speaker, the mayor once complained he can't meet with the Premier.

Anyway, Madam Speaker, the minister can demonstrate a commitment for our community infrastructure by putting forward the necessary resources. Our community pools and other recreation

need significant resources, but the Pallister government is pulling back from this financial assistance.

For example, the Norwood pool is slated to close at the end of the season, and the City has said that new recreational—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the member on her advocacy for the splash pad and on the splash pad issue. We were proud to get good results, and partly, I think, the member deserves the credit for raising the issue, so I wanted to congratulate her on that.

And because we are results-oriented, Madam Speaker, we are also magnanimous in sharing the credit when good results come, and so I would encourage the NDP to advocate for shorter wait times for health care as well. I'd encourage them to advocate for better results in education as well. I'd encourage them to advocate for better results in terms of economic growth and development. And I'd also encourage them to advocate for lower taxes for working Manitoba families and seniors.

If they would join us in advocating for each of those things, Madam Speaker, they could take some credit for those things, too. Otherwise, we'll just have to take the credit for ourselves.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Seven Oaks General Hospital Emergency Room

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

* (14:30)

The background to this petition is as follows:

The provincial government has announced the closures of three emergency rooms and an urgent-care centre in the city of Winnipeg, including closing down the emergency room at Seven Oaks General Hospital.

(2) The closures come on the heels of the closing of a nearby QuickCare clinic, as well as cancelled plans for ACCESS centres and personal-care homes, as Park Manor—that would've provided important services for families and seniors in the area.

(3) The closures have left families and seniors in north Winnipeg without any point of contact with front-line health-care services and will result in them having to travel 20 minutes or more to St. Boniface Hospital's emergency room or Health Sciences Centre's emergency room for emergency care.

(4) These cuts will place a heavy burden on the many seniors who live in north Winnipeg and visit the emergency room frequently, especially for those who are unable to drive or for low income.

(5) The provincial government failed to consult with families and seniors in north Winnipeg regarding the closure of this emergency room or to consult with health officials and health-care workers at Seven Oaks to discuss how this closure would impact patient care in advance of the announcement.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reverse the decision to close Seven Oaks General Hospital's emergency room so that families and seniors in north Winnipeg and the surrounding areas have timely access to quality health care.

Signed by Raquel Blado [*phonetic*], Mary Jane Cristelral [*phonetic*] and Simeon Cristelo [*phonetic*] and many, many other Manitobans.

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

Vimy Arena

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The residents of St. James and other areas of Manitoba are concerned with the intention expressed by the provincial government to use the Vimy Arena site as a Manitoba Housing project.

(2) The Vimy Arena is in the middle of a residential area near many schools, churches, community clubs and seniors homes, and neither the provincial government nor the City of Winnipeg considered better-suited locations in rural, semi-rural or industrial sites such as the St. Boniface industrial park, the 20,000 acres at CentrePort or existing properties such as the Shriners Hospital or the old Children's Hospital on Wellington Crescent.

(3) The provincial government is exempt from any zoning requirements that would have existed if the land was owned by the City of Winnipeg. This exemption bypasses community input and due diligence and ignores better uses for the land which could and would be consistent with a recreational area.

(4) There are no standards that would one would expect for a treatment centre. The Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living has stated that the Department of Health had no role to play in the land acquisition for the Manitoba Housing project for use as a drug addiction facility.

(5) The Manitoba Housing project initiated by the provincial government changes the fundamental nature of the community. Including park and recreation uses, concerns of the residents of St. James and others regarding public safety, property values and the way of life are not being properly addressed.

(6) The concerns of residents of St. James are being ignored while obvious other locations in wealthier neighbourhoods, such as Tuxedo and River Heights, have not been considered for this Manitoba Housing project, even though there are hundreds of acres of land available for development at Kapyong Barracks or parks like Heubach Park that share the same zoning as Vimy Arena site.

(7) The Manitoba Housing project and the operation of a drug treatment centre fall outside the statutory mandate of the Manitoba Housing renewal corporation.

(8) The provincial government does not have a co-ordinated plan for addiction treatment in Manitoba as it currently underfunds treatment centres which are running far under capacity and potential.

(9) The community has been misled regarding the true intention of Manitoba Housing as the land is being transferred for a 50-bed facility even though the project is clearly outside of Manitoba Housing responsibility.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to take necessary steps to ensure that the Vimy Arena site is not used for an addiction treatment facility; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the preservation of

public land along Sturgeon Creek for the purposes of park land and recreation activities for public use, including being an important component of the Sturgeon Creek Greenway Trail and the Sturgeon Creek ecosystem under the current designation of PR2 for the 255 Hamilton location at the Vimy Arena site, and to maintain the land to continue to be designated for parks and recreation active neighbourhoods and community.

This has been signed by Gwen Lanoway, Sheila Lee, Kevin Kernowski [*phonetic*] and many other Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Medical Laboratory Services

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The provision of laboratory services to medical clinics and physicians' offices has been historically and continues to be a private sector service.

It is vitally important that there be competition in laboratory services to allow medical clinics to seek solutions from more than one provider to control costs and to improve service for health professionals and patients.

Under the present provincial government, Dynacare, an Ontario-based subsidiary of a U.S. company, has acquired Unicity labs, resulting in a monopoly situation for the provision of laboratory services in medical clinics and physicians' offices.

The creation of this monopoly has resulted in the closure of many laboratories by Dynacare in and around the city of Winnipeg. Since the acquisition of Unicity labs, Dynacare has engaged in anti-competitive activities where it has changed the collection schedules of patients' specimens and charged some medical offices for collection services.

These closures have created a situation where a great number of patients are less well served, having to travel significant distances in some cases, waiting considerable periods of time and sometimes being denied or having to leave without obtaining lab services. This situation is particularly critical for patients requiring fasting blood draws as they may experience complications that could be life-threatening based on their individual health situations.

Furthermore, Dynacare has instructed that all STAT's patients, patients with suspicious internal infections, be directed to its King Edward location. This creates unnecessary obstacles for the patients who are required to travel to that lab, rather than simply completing the test in their doctor's office. This new directive by Dynacare presents a direct risk to patients' health in the interest of higher profits. This has further resulted in patients opting to visit emergency rooms rather than traveling twice, which increases costs to the health-care system.

Medical clinics and physicians' offices service thousands of patients in their communities and have structured their offices to provide a one-stop service, acting as a health-care front line that takes off some of the load from emergency rooms. The creation of this monopoly has been problematic to many medical clinics and physicians, hampering their ability to provide high quality and complete service to their patients due to closures of so many laboratories.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to request Dynacare to reopen the closed laboratories or allow Diagnostic Services of Manitoba to freely open labs in clinics which formerly housed labs that have been shut down by Dynacare.

To urge the provincial government to ensure high quality lab services for patients and a level playing field and competition in the provision of laboratory services to medical offices.

* (14:40)

(3) To urge the provincial government to address this matter immediately in the interest of better patient-focused care and improved support for health professionals.

Signed by Sabrina Naayen, Nicole Pacheco and Kyndrielle Fehr and many others.

Madam Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call the government motion in respect of the sessional order?

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the House will now consider the government motion on sessional order.

GOVERNMENT MOTION

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine),

THAT the following sessional order applies until the conclusion of the Third Session of the 41st Legislature, despite any other rule or practice of this House.

Specific Provisions

1. The Standing Committee on Rules of the House shall meet on Thursday, September 6, 2018, at 1 p.m., to consider amendments to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. The date of this meeting may be adjusted only with the written consent of all House leaders.
2. At 4 p.m. on June 25, 2018, the Speaker or Chairperson shall interrupt proceedings to put all remaining questions necessary to conclude steps four, five and six of the main and Capital Supply procedure as identified on page 84 of the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.
3. The spring sittings of the House shall conclude at the usual adjournment hour on June 25, 2018.
4. By 12 p.m. on August 15, 2018, the Minister of Finance shall provide written notice to the Clerk of the Legislature for immediate distribution of The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act to the caucus offices and the legislative offices of the independent members.
5. During the fall sittings period between—beginning on October 3, 2018, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, the bill, shall be debated according to the following terms:
 - (a) The question shall be put on the second reading motion no later than 4 p.m. on October 11, 2018.
 - (b) Subject to section 11 of The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Act, the bill shall be considered in the Committee

of the Whole for a total of nine hours, to be concluded by 4 p.m. on November 1, 2018.

- i. On days when the House is sitting in Committee of the Whole to consider this bill, the House shall rise at 6:30 p.m.
 - ii. If the nine hours of debate has not occurred by 3 p.m. on November 1, 2018, the Speaker shall interrupt proceedings to resolve the House into Committee of the Whole to begin or resume debate of the bill, with the House not to see the clock until the debate time has elapsed and all questions have been put to conclude consideration of the bill and have it reported back to the House.
6. At 4 p.m. on October 11, 2018, the Speaker or Chairperson shall interrupt proceedings to put all remaining questions necessary to conclude all steps of the main and Capital Supply procedure as identified on pages 84 and 85 of the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

General Provisions

Priority of actions to be taken

7. Where:

- (a) these sessional orders require the Speaker or a Chairperson to take any action at a specified time; and
- (b) at the specified time, a point of order or a matter of privilege has been raised and is under consideration by the House or committee;

The point of order or matter of privilege is to be set aside, and no other point of order or matter of privilege may be raised until the required action has been taken and all matters relating to the required action have been resolved.

Interruption of proceedings

8. Where these sessional orders require the Speaker or a Chairperson to interrupt proceedings to take any action:
 - (a) the interruption is to take place, and the action is to be taken whether or not the orders of the day have been called;
 - (b) the House will not adjourn on that day until the Speaker has put all the applicable questions on all items;

- (c) if by 3:30 p.m. routine proceedings has not concluded, the Speaker must terminate routine proceedings and proceed to orders of the day;
- (d) at 4 p.m. the Speaker will interrupt debate and put all questions with no further debate or amendment, except for item 6(b)(ii.); and
- (e) recorded divisions cannot be deferred.

Amendments

- 9. After adoption by the House, this sessional order may be amended only by:
 - (a) passage of a subsequent sessional order by the House or
 - (b) written agreement of all House leaders in the— if the House is not sitting.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Cullen), seconded by the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine),

THAT—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense?

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: All those in—*[interjection]*

THAT the following sessional order applies until the conclusion of the Third Session of the 41st Legislature, despite any other rule or practice of this House.

Specific Provisions

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- (a) The question shall be put on the second reading motion no later than 4 p.m. on October 11, 2018.
- (b) Subject to section 11 of The Fiscal Responsibility and Taxpayer Protection Act, the bill shall be considered in the Committee of the Whole for a total of nine hours, to be concluded by 4 p.m. on November 1st, 2018.

- i. On days when the House is sitting in Committee of the Whole to consider this bill the House shall rise at 6:30 p.m.
- ii. If the nine hours of debate has not occurred by 3 p.m. on November 1, 2018, the Speaker shall interrupt proceedings to resolve the House into Committee of the Whole to begin or resume debate of the bill, with the House not to see the clock until the debate time has elapsed and all questions have been put to conclude consideration of the bill and have it reported back to the House.

- 6. At 4 p.m., on October 11, 2018, the Speaker or Chairperson shall interrupt proceedings to put all remaining questions necessary to conclude all steps of the main and Capital Supply procedure as identified on pages 84 and 85 of the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

General Provisions

Priority of actions to be taken

- 7. Where:
 - (a) these sessional orders require the Speaker or a Chairperson to take any action at a specified time; and
 - (b) at the specified time, a point of order or a matter of privilege has been raised and

is under consideration by the House or committee;

The point of order or matter of privilege is to be set aside, and no other point of order or matter of privilege may be raised, until the required action has taken—has been taken and all matters relating to the required action have been resolved.

Interruption of proceedings

8. Where these sessional orders require the Speaker or a Chairperson to interrupt proceedings to take any action:

- (a) the interruption is to take place and the action is to be taken whether or not the orders of the day have been called;

* (14:50)

- (b) the House will not adjourn on that day until the Speaker has put all the applicable questions on all items;
- (c) if by 3:30 p.m. routine proceedings has not concluded, the Speaker must terminate routine proceedings and proceed to orders of the day;
- (d) at 4 p.m. the Speaker will interrupt debate and put all questions with no further debate or amendment, except for 6(b)(ii.); and
- (e) recorded divisions cannot be deferred.

Amendments

9. After adoption by the House, this sessional order may be amended only by:

- (a) passage of a subsequent sessional order by the House or
- (b) written agreement of all House leaders if the House is not sitting.

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Saran), to adjourn the House.

Madam Speaker: Order. The member's out of order.

The honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Cullen). The honourable Government House Leader.

For the record, then, the honourable Government House Leader has indicated that he did—does not wish to speak to the motion.

Mr. Fletcher: I move, seconded by the member from The Maples, to adjourn the House.

Madam Speaker: The member for Assiniboia has made a motion before the House, seconded by the honourable member for The Maples, that the House do now adjourn.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied.

I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

An Honourable Member: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

I declare the motion lost.

Mr. Fletcher: Madam Chair, I'd like to challenge—no, I guess I can't—yes, I'd like to call for a division, a vote.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have support of three people to support his request?

The member does not have support. Leave has been denied.

Mr. Fletcher: I move, seconded by the member from The Maples, an amendment to the motion. *[interjection]* It'll be there right away.

In writing, the motion says: moved by myself, seconded by the member from The Maples, that the provision in this motion dealing with the rules committee either be struck from the motion or include independent members in the committee. *[interjection]* I beg your pardon. *[interjection]* Okay, so the—thank you. I'm getting clarification.

I move, seconded by the member from The Maples, that the provision in this motion dealing with the rules committee for September 6th, 2018, the standing committee include independent members of this Chamber.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Assiniboia, seconded by the honourable member for The Maples,

THAT the motion be amended by adding that the rules committee include independent members as members of the standing committee.

The amendment is in order. Are there any members wishing to speak to the amendment?

The honourable member for—the honourable member cannot speak to the amendment because he's already moved the amendment so the member has lost his ability to debate the amendment.

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): It's very important, having independent members the same opportunity as the other members have.

And I think CBC Radio aired a special program on April 27th with the topic, should MPs represent their constituents or their party. It was regarding many politicians preferring to side with the—their constituents more than remaining as blindly loyal to parties [*inaudible*]

So it is very important that we can have the same opportunity all the other members, because otherwise—we are talking about equal opportunity, no discrimination out of this House, and we are passing laws over here. But, on the same time in this House, it's happening the same thing that particular discrimination is being exercised against the independent members.

And they have been elected by the constituents just like in other—in any other area. So we should have the same rights, as independent members, as the members in the parties. That's why I'm mention about CBC Radio special program where the program highlighted the fact that politicians are generally [*inaudible*] speaking their minds mostly when voicing their constituents. At times, this may see MPs chaffing against party policy. However, the House Speaker has clearly ruled they have the right to be heard.

The debate is neither new nor unjust. I believe this deserves the serious thought of us. The MLAs, in general, the House, when we talk about democracy, transparency, accountability and good governance, politicians need to speak their conscience, their need to question suppression, intimidation and unfairness.

* (15:00)

So I think, speaking in those terms about that radio special program, it is the same thing: having the independent members equal rights as the other members over here. So I would say, in this special committee meeting, independent members should have a say, and they should be able to bring about their ideas and also talk about their rights.

But at this point, these rights are just in the hands of the House leaders, and we are left out of that loop. Why we should not have the same right to sit on those committees, to have the equal opportunity to talk about our rights? And therefore, it's very important we are allowed to sit in this committee on September 6th and also have our say and the same kind of veto power as otherwise it should have been.

To eliminate that power will make independent members slaves of the House leaders, and this is not fair because—especially when you come from a visible minority and there is lots of pressure on you to bring those issues. But when these House leaders, they have their own prejudices about particular groups, you won't be able to speak up—your mind. You won't be even able to get there—a chance.

That's why I think, in this House, we must—have to have equal opportunities when we talk about equal opportunities out of this House, when we are preparing laws, and every day bring over here even sometimes not—just trivial issues, but not so urgent. And, on the other hand, when a person like me comes from a visible minority, who are misunderstood, many times their culture is not properly understood when they are putting—in a different situation and—but at the same time, at least they should have their say.

And it's very tempting for some people to become heroes and put some kind of blame, conspire, and then they take away your rights to speak. So those rights should be allowed and people should have—be allowed proportionately. That's why we must—have to be on the special committee, where we can talk about it, and also, at the same time, we can have, simply, veto power, as anybody else has at this point. To change that, it will take away the rights, and it will diminish the democracy further.

We already don't have democracy in this House, in that sense, but to get that right—similarly, when I talk about there are 17 opposition members. We don't get the 17th question. We don't get that privilege to stand up and ask the question, so individual members—independent members should have that

right. So they should be sitting on that special committee where they can raise their issues there where they can take rights.

And the—in the CBC program, a number of western politicians and political science professors spoke aloud against the question whether MPs are to represent the interests of their constituents or the interests of their party under whose banner they were elected. So we are talking about whether they should speak or they should speak under the party banner. But, on the other hand, independent members, they don't have those rights at all one way or the other. Why we don't think about—in terms of how to enhance the democracy instead of how to limit democracy?

I think people should have—MLAs should have the right to bring forward their own constituents' issues instead of sticking to the party values or party—particular party [*inaudible*]. That's why we need people—independent members sitting on that particular committee. And not only particular, that's—should—they should have veto rights to enhance the democracy.

So I think—we emphasize that on September 6th, we independent members should be included, and we should have veto powers the way we have now so that we can protect our rights so in future, any independent member should not have—suffer the way we are suffering now.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Are there any further speakers on the amendment?

Point of Order

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): A point of order, Madam Speaker, and I just think it's important in terms of clarification. The independent members would have, as I understand it, full rights to attend the meeting, to speak at the meeting and to be heard at the meeting.

There is no single member or two members who would have veto power over decisions of the committee. And historically, although we don't have a lot of recent experience with the Rules Committee, the committee has had the ability to have—to listen and to incorporate the views of various MLAs.

I think that it would be important that the independent MLAs have the ability to have access to proposed changes ahead of time, but I rise on a point

of order because I think this clarification is going to be vital both for the independent members and for others to make sure that the operation of the Rules Committee and procedures would be well known by all.

Madam Speaker: I would point out to the member that he does not have a point of order. It is a point of debate and it is putting different information on the record. But I do thank him for raising that point, however.

* * *

Madam Speaker: Are there any further speakers to the amendment?

If not, is the House ready for the question on the amendment?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

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

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear noes. So the amendment is defeated.

Mr. Fletcher: The Maples—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

—Assiniboia specifically asking? Okay, the honourable member for The Maples.

* (15:10)

Mr. Saran: Madam Speaker, I move, and seconded by the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher), that the motion of—amended to say June 27th, 2018, should be moved to August 15th, 2018—[*interjection*—should be moved to June 27th instead of—rather than August 15th, 2018.

Madam Speaker: We were in the middle of a vote on the amendment. [*interjection*] Oh, the amendment was defeated. So is the member rising, then, on another amendment?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Okay. The honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Saran), to please repeat.

Mr. Saran: Yes, Madam Speaker. I move, and is seconded by the member for Assiniboia, that the motion amended to say June 27th, 2018, rather than August 15th, 2018.

Madam Speaker: I would ask the member for The Maples—or if the member for Assiniboia wants to do it, as he's—[interjection]—oh, he can't because he's already put an amendment forward.

Okay, the amendment has to come from The Maples, but it has to be properly worded in the amendment—the honourable member for The Maples.

I would point out that the amendment is out of order. It's incorrectly written, and so we are going to move on.

Mr. Fletcher: On a point of order.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: On a point of order.

Mr. Fletcher: Madam Speaker, if the amendment is somehow written incorrectly—

Madam Speaker: It's been determined to be out of order.

Mr. Fletcher: Oh, but—well, then, the member should have the opportunity to write the amendment in such a way that it is in order. He has that right.

Madam Speaker: Then the member should do that and was requested to do that twice already.

So, if the member wants to put forward an amendment, the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Saran) will have to put it forward correctly in writing.

Mr. Saran: I would like to get help from the Clerk so I can write it properly.

Madam Speaker: It is not the role of the Clerk to help members write their amendments, so I would ask the member if he is wishing to put forward an amendment, he's got a couple of seconds right now to properly write it down and put it forward, but that's all we're going to give him because he's tying up the House.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for The Maples has to repeat the motion.

Mr. Saran: I move, seconded by the member from Assiniboia, that the date in specific provision 4 be amended to say from August 15, 2018, from June—to June 27, '18.

Madam Speaker: Just for clarification for the House, the member did make a motion that the date

and specific section 4 be amended to say from August 15th, 2018 to June 27, 2018.

The amendment is in order. Is there any debate on the amendment?

Mr. Fletcher: I appreciate that there was a—and I want the House to understand that we're—writing these motions is not an easy thing to do, especially when, in one case, one cannot write and the other, when English isn't the first language. So thank you for accommodating that difficulty.

Madam Speaker, the reason for the date change in the motion from August 15th to June 27th, 2018, is to illustrate the fact that we don't have a budget. Why don't we have a budget? It's ridiculous. Which—when has there ever been a budget delayed until almost the fall? Why don't we just get the budget right away, say we gave—this motion gives 48 hours to bring forward the budget.

Introduce the budget. That's all. That's all the motion is asking. But, for some reason, the government and the official opposition and, with all due respect, the independent MLAs from the Liberal Party have seemed to forgotten why Parliament exists in the first place, and that is to pass legislation to govern public expenditures and revenue collected from the public. That's the point. That goes right down, right back to King John and the Magna Carta.

Now, I have been in place every single moment for the entire session except for June 4th, which was supposed to be the conclusion of the session. I was finishing up a course with the U of T that day, and it was supposed to be royal assent; seemed like a reasonable day not to be here. I'm declaring myself absent on that day. Imagine my surprise when came out of my course to find out that there's an emergency session called.

* (15:20)

So, on June 6th, we all come and—for this emergency session. Like, is there a budgetary crisis, financial meltdown? Maybe there was a crisis—a forest fire crisis in the North or maybe some sort of a crisis with the people who are stranded in Churchill. No, it wasn't any of those things, and it wasn't about the budget. We came back to talk about hunting. That was the emergency. For three weeks, that was the emergency.

Now, in the letter that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) sent to justify the emergency session, it—and it's in Hansard—and it was quote, unquote, for financial

reasons, and other urgent matters for the Province are in that text. But here we are. We still didn't talk about the budget in any meaningful way. And for some bizarre reason, which still isn't clear, the two main parties had some sort of disagreement, a he-said, she-said situation, I suppose, and for three weeks, they've been pointing at each other, saying, Madam Speaker, we're here because they made us be here. That's what they've done for three weeks. Members' statements, in question period, that's what we have heard.

So come to last week, few days before the—before a summer weekend, and everyone is conspiring to get out except for the member from The Maples and myself.

You see, Madam Speaker, it is the independents that seem to take the role here in this Chamber seriously. We want to represent our constituents, and we want to talk about issues that bring us here. And the No. 1 issue is the finances of this province.

So not only did we not get a budget, which is just an absurdity—an absurdity—we had an emergency session—lots of time, but still no budget. And what's so special about August 15th? We should have had the budget three months ago.

Now, we've heard, well, we don't know what the revenue's going to be from cannabis. That's the reason. Like, give me a break. Like, that's not a reason to delay a \$10-billion budget. Revenue from cannabis? So that's October—so three months of revenue? Three months of revenue? Wait, wait, yes. Let's see here—October—two and a half months of revenue. That's delaying the budget? Or maybe it's an expense. Like, that is not even a—like, you go to the ninth decimal place—the ninth decimal place.

What would happen in the real world, of which this Chamber sometimes seems to be exempt—in the real world, you would book zero and plus or minus—whether it's going to be plus or minus, say, at maximum, \$5 million, maybe \$10 million, over \$10 billion. Gosh, the government wastes that much money in five minutes. How much money does it cost with the Hydro fiasco, which mainly falls on the NDP side but now is a shared boondoggle, unfortunately.

Where are the Conservatives? What kind of—please, government. Please, my friends. Let's do something Conservative. Let's bring forward a budget that deals with the structural deficit, that deals

with taxation—and, by the way, Madam Speaker, there's a claim that taxes are going lower. That was certainly the plan in the PC Party platform, but for some reason the PC Party caucus is increasing taxes.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

That's right, they're increasing taxes. It's the made-in-Manitoba carbon tax. And there's some sort of bizarre rationalization that by charging \$25 a ton, that—which is 250 times what Ottawa is asking—but doing that in the future, that that's going to save Manitobans money in the long run. It doesn't make any sense. It'll cost Manitobans a lot of cents, this kind of ridiculous logic.

Now they say, well, Ottawa made us do it. No, Ottawa did not make you do a carbon tax 250 times what was asked. And, by the way, if the current Liberal government federally is re-elected, they would 'oppose' the \$50 a ton anyway, so Manitobans will end up paying the full amount, plus a whole bunch more.

But what is even more offensive about all this is that the made-in-Manitoba carbon tax runs on the assumption that the Liberal government will be re-elected. That's the assumption. How can anyone in the Conservative Party caucus agree with that assumption on a taxation issue—on a taxation issue—when we ran as a party to reduce taxes?

It—this is a bad, bad situation, and we already see that carbon tax is not going to do anything to reduce GHGs—greenhouse gasses, but we do know it's going to be a tax on the level of the PST—one point on the PST. Yes, it's that order of magnitude, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

So back to, you know, outside of this Chamber, everyone, regardless of their party, is against the carbon tax and they're against the made-in-Manitoba carbon tax. And that goes for the grassroots members of the PC Party of Manitoba, of which I'm a member.

You see, Madam Speaker, Conservatives don't raise taxes. And, when they do, it doesn't end well. But it's not too late. I'm hoping, I'm pleading with my colleagues, my friends in the PC Manitoba caucus, to do what Doug Ford is doing in Ontario with his new government, and that's taking—getting out of this ridiculous carbon tax—or, price on carbon that doesn't do anything to reduce carbon.

* (15:30)

Now, there are ways to reduce carbon, but the carbon-pricing proposals in Alberta or Manitoba or Ontario don't do that. It's just a revenue grab. And, when look at the preliminary numbers that were presented; it's a—you know, that it goes straight into consolidated revenues. What does that mean? It—they say the deficit is reduced. Well, maybe, but it's because they're collecting almost \$300 million in carbon tax, at least that's what they predict—260, actually. But it's a—but it costs Manitobans a lot more because it might—like, we don't know. Is that—is the carbon tax going to be applied before the PST and GST or after? In any event, we may have a tax on a tax on a tax. I've heard of double taxation. Triple taxation? Like, people are going to hit the roof when this tax comes in, when they go to the gas station and they see that they're paying, what, \$1.50 a litre? People thought it was bad eight years ago when oil hit \$10 a—or \$100 a barrel; it's now \$60 a barrel, probably go up to \$70, plus you add this carbon tax. Oh, Ottawa made us do it. No, Ottawa did—like, Ottawa—the people will deal with Ottawa, but Manitobans should stand with the united PC party in Alberta, led by Jason Kenney, the Sask Party, led by—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

The member is moving off the relevancy of what the amendment is. The amendment is about whether to change the date of when BITSA is to be distributed. It is not about whether or not there should be a carbon tax.

So I would ask the member to please focus his remarks on whether or not the date for BITSA should be changed as the amendment says.

Mr. Fletcher: That's a fair comment, Madam Speaker.

I—my point is this: we are here—the No. 1 reason that there are parliaments and legislative assemblies is to pass the budget, pass budget legislation in a timely manner. Now, for bizarre and unexplained reasons, they're not—the government is not bringing forward—like, it's not even—they're just making available to the opposition on August 15th, according to the motion, but we don't know if that's public, and we don't know when that's going to be passed because the Leg. doesn't come back until October. So we're talking about a budget that may not be passed until October, maybe November. Well, we don't even have—how are they going to get ready for the budget in 2019 if they can't get the budget in 2018 sorted out?

And, Madam Speaker, that goes to why we need to have the budget. Regardless of your political affiliation, we need to do our—fulfill our responsibilities. And for all the parties, except for the independents, to somehow conspire to, first of all, fight about, like, nothing and then to demand that the session end before the budget is introduced makes a mockery of the whole system, a mockery. And perhaps people think that, well, people aren't paying attention, and June 27th or August 15th, who cares? And the public probably won't care; the media probably won't even cover this issue. But I care. The member from The Maples cares. And so will the taxpayers.

So, to kick the can down the road, which is what has been happening with Hydro for a decade and a half because no one—which affects our budget—to do that and then to be in this situation shows a—like, the government should have the budget ready. If you don't have the cannabis revenue or expenditure figured out, put zero on the line item and get on with it so we all can do our jobs.

Every other province has a budget and passed a budget. Every other province—and as far as I know, every other province, every year since Confederation, gets their budget done, especially if there's not an election. Why can't this government?

Madam Speaker, no doubt the motion is going to fail because the two main parties are obviously working together on this motion. How can they do that when it is the primary function? Maybe I expect that from sort of socialists, but I don't expect that from people who claim to be Conservatives. And, actually, I know the members, the vast majority, to be Conservative.

So what is going on? And I don't think it—I actually don't think it has anything to do with the PC caucus, in fact. But somebody has to take responsibility. And that, rightly or wrongly, falls on the shoulders of the Premier (Mr. Pallister). And when you run on lower taxes, growing the economy, you need to have a budget, and that's why we need to know by June—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I would indicate to the member that he is, again, straying from the relevancy of the amendment, and I would please ask him to bring his comments back to the amendment that has been put forward.

Mr. Fletcher: The reason I talk about the budget in the way I do is I'm trying to highlight and make the

connection between June 27th and some future date. The reason why it's very reasonable to ask for the budget on June 27th is because we should have had it by April 27th. Just a fact. Why—how is this possible?

So what the member of Maples and I are doing is we are calling out the main political parties in the hypocrisy—the hypocrisy of this extension, the hypocrisy from any perspective. This motion will fail because the parties want to minimize the hypocrisy. They don't want to—the government doesn't want to introduce—show us the budget within normal time. They extended time. They still don't want to show us the budget. And there's some sort of ridiculous motion to bring in the budget in August.

* (15:40)

Now, no doubt, the government will succeed, along with the help of the NDP, but the NDP have no responsibility for budget matters, really, that they can hold the government to account. That's what they're supposed to do. But the government is accountable and responsible, and how can anyone hold the government to account if they don't respect timelines? And the end of June for a budget bill is more than reasonable. It's very generous, in fact, and it's ridiculous that the government—and I don't care which government it is—it's just ridiculous that the government has not introduced a budget by the end of June, and for no good reason.

There must be a budget. The government must have it. There's no reason—you know, we know what the transfer payments are for this year. We know what we know. There's always a little bit of doubt in every budget, but that doubt doesn't delay the passage of a budget because if you tried to eliminate all doubt you would never have a budget because that just doesn't work.

It's just like your household, Madam Speaker. The average person pays their bills at the end of each month. June 27th is the end of the month. Why can't the government tell us what the bills are going to be at the end of the month? Actually—it's actually six months, because it's the calendar year.

So, January to present, or the fiscal year from April to present, we have no idea. We don't know what the government is spending, and we don't know what our taxation is going to be, and this motion is simply a request, a signal, a modest request, to have the budget in a reasonable amount of

time, very reasonable request, very conservative, very responsible. And, by the way, there are socialists and NDPers who have been known, from time to time, to be fiscally responsible. I'm sure that's true. And part of being fiscally responsible is paying your bills and knowing what your income is in a reasonable amount of time. And when you have elected representatives and the entire government behind you, like the thousands of people, to help you put together a budget it's very reasonable to ask for it within a normal time span.

But the government with—who's accountable, wants to delay this budget vote to October, maybe November. Maybe they'll kick it into the following session. Like, that is why you need to have the budget passed in the spring. That's the way it works. But in this Chamber, time literally can be changed and ignored, and this motion says no—no.

MLAs, regardless of your political stripe, get your act together. Do your job. Get the budget in so you could either advocate for it or critique it, whatever, but hiding it is not the way it is supposed to be.

And, Madam Speaker, this motion is designed—simple, just a change of date—is there so the MLAs on all sides cannot hide.

The member for The Maples (Mr. Saran) and myself seem to be the only ones that want to see the budget, do our job as MLAs. We will sit here as long as it takes. But no one else will because everyone, it seems, wants to go to the lake or enjoy their summer in some way. Well, Madam Speaker, people work in the summer. Normal people work. And, if it need be, we should work to have the budget passed. And we can do it on August—oh, pardon me, starting June 27th. That's what this motion says. It catches the—but it's going to be defeated because none of the MLAs, with the exception of myself and the member from The Maples, want to acknowledge the hypocrisy of their respective parties.

And, by the way, I think the MLAs by and large are simply doing what they are told because everyone in this place knows or should know the primary function of the Legislature, which is to pass the budget, to tell Manitobans what the revenues are, what the expenses are and how much it's going to cost individual households to run this place, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Are there any further speakers on the amendment?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, it's eminently reasonable for the government to be able to put forward this by June the 27th. This government has given lots and lots of excuses over a lot of time. This amendment is actually quite reasonable.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question on the amendment?

An Honourable Member: Question.

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

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a yes.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

I declare the motion lost.

* * *

Mr. Fletcher: I'd like to call for a recorded vote.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have support of three other members?

The member does not have support, so there is no ability for the member to do that.

We will now move to the main motion—the question on the main motion.

An Honourable Member: Madam Speaker, on a—

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Assiniboia.

Mr. Fletcher: On another motion.

I would like to—

Madam Speaker: Can the member indicate what motion he is—?

Mr. Fletcher: Sure. We'd like to move a motion to adjourn the House.

Madam Speaker: The member has put forward a motion for the House to adjourn.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adjourn the House?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: The motion has been denied.

Mr. Fletcher: On a point of order.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: If the member is putting forward a point of order, he needs to put forward very specifically what that point is.

Mr. Fletcher: Okay. Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

It seems the government has not introduced the budget, and I ask if you could direct the government to bring forward the budget so we can do our jobs.

* (15:50)

Madam Speaker: The member does not have a point of order. He has not indicated a breach of a rule or practice of the House, and points of order are not to be used for debate purposes.

* * *

Madam Speaker: I think we've heard enough at this point on all of this, and we are going to move forward now with the vote on the main motion.

The honourable member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher)—and he's coming very close showing some disrespect to this Chair and this House. So I would urge some real caution by the member, that he is not holding the House hostage and I would encourage him to be very, very careful with what he's trying to raise.

Mr. Fletcher: On a—I'm simply following the rules, as they are.

Madam Speaker: Can the member indicate what the rule is then? If he's raising a point of order, he has to clearly state the rule, and the rule has to be a breach of practice or a breach of a rule of the House. So he has to be clear what that rule is.

Mr. Fletcher: I'm raising a—on rule—the rule's in the—I believe it's the—in the 50–51, sections 1, 2, 3, 4.

Madam Speaker: The member has to state clearly what the breach of the rule is.

Mr. Fletcher: The issue I am bringing forward deals with decorum in debate. I cite rule 54(1), 54–55, rule 56(1), rule 56(2) and rule 57.

Madam Speaker: Can the member please indicate what those rules are that he's indicating are being broken?

Mr. Fletcher: Sure. This is in the section dealing with conduct during putting a question. Fifty-four one, when the Speaker is putting a question, no member shall enter or walk out across the House or make any noise or disturbance. That is clearly occurring.

The next one is no interruption, except on a point of order, 55. When a member is speaking, no member shall interrupt, except to raise a point of order or a matter of privilege. Maintenance of order, 51(2)–56(2)—pardon me, 56(1): when any matter is being debated, if a member rises to speak on a subject not at time under discussion or interrupts a member while speaking, except to raise a question of order or privilege, or 'transguest'—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

The member's just citing some rules. He has not indicated where the breach of the rules are. He is just reciting rules that he has found and I do not find that there have been any breaches of the rules in terms of the debate today. So I would ask the member to be very, very careful about what he's trying to raise here and how he is trying to hold this House in a certain holding pattern while this House is trying to do business.

So, if the member has a legitimate rule that has been broken, I would hear a legitimate rule, but I will not hear false allegations of rules being broken just to rag the puck here and try to find some time to hold back debate. I think it's important that members have the opportunity to have the debate that is before the House. In fact, it's very, very critical.

And if the member has a legitimate point of order to raise, I would hear a legitimate point of order, but not just a recitation of rules of the House.

Mr. Fletcher: The rule I just described—57, no member shall engage in private conversation—that is

clearly occurring. We—just look around, and that occurs every day. And I think it's time that it stops.

So that, I think, is a legitimate point of order, and the audio record will demonstrate that there is conversations going on while we're conducting business in this House. That is the point of order. And we can check the record.

Madam Speaker: I would indicate to the member that there is no breach of order. For 150 years, what has been going on in this House is happening now. So the member does not have a valid point of order.

And I would indicate that the rule does not say no conversations. It talks about interrupting the House with conversations. And I would indicate that the member is out of order and he does not have a point of order.

And the member, I would also point out, needs to raise a point of order at exactly the time a rule is broken. He can't invent something that might have happened two hours ago and indicate that it is a current broken rule.

So the member does not have a point of order. *[interjection]*

The member needs to indicate exactly what he is calling out right now.

An Honourable Member: On a matter of privilege.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

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

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, the matter of privilege relates to the fundamental rights of individual members in this Chamber. The right is being violated by the motion that has been presented. It is taking away the right of members to even bring up matters of privilege or points of order. It is—this motion is taking away the ability of members to participate in even the rules of this place, the independent members. We will have no vote. And no doubt we will be—the independent members will be sidelined. And that is a matter of privilege because all the members have to protect them from the tyranny of the majority are the rules of the Chamber. That's it.

So, Madam Speaker, this whole motion is out of order because it denies fundamental rights—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

I will indicate right away to the member for Assiniboia, I would like to inform the House that a matter concerning the methods by which the House proceeds in the conduct of business is a matter of order, not privilege. Joseph Maingot, in the second edition of Parliamentary Privilege in Canada, states on page 14 that allegations of breach of privilege by a member in the House that amount to complaints about procedures and practice in the House I—are by their very nature matters of order.

He also states on page 223 of the same edition, a breach of the standing orders or a failure to follow an established practice would invoke a point of order rather than a question of privilege.

On this basis, I would therefore rule that the honourable member does not have a prima facie case of privilege.

GOVERNMENT MOTION

(Continued)

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is the government motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Assiniboia—oh, pardon me. We are in the middle of a motion. So we have to continue with the motion.

So I heard an agreed, and I'm assuming there's a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

An Honourable Member: Nay.

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

I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Mr. Fletcher: On a matter of privilege, Madam Speaker.

* (16:00)

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

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

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): What happened just now was clearly—the Chair did not recognize, on a legitimate point of order—before the motion was called, the Chair ignored a member of this place, and that is against the rules and against the fundamental rights of the members. So, Madam Speaker, this is a prima facie case because it just happened.

Madam Speaker: Order.

The hour being 4 p.m., all proceedings are to be interrupted to put all remaining questions necessary to conclude steps 4, 5 and 6 of the main and Capital Supply procedure.

I would point out that at this point, the points of order and matter of privilege are to be set aside.

So we will now, because the motion has been passed and the motion has been passed, we will now move to put the question necessary to conclude steps 4, 5 and 6 of the Main and Capital Supply.

And I would point out to the member who keeps yelling at me across the floor, when the Speaker is speaking—very rudely—and I will read what has just been passed in this House: The point of order and matter of privilege is to be set aside and no other point of order or matter of privilege may be raised until the required action has been taken and all matters relating to the required action have been resolved.

So the member is out of order with any points of order or matter of privilege at this time. I'm following the rules. I would ask him to do the same and stop disrespecting the Chair and this institution.

Now we will now resolve—the House will now resolve itself into Committee of Supply.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

CAPITAL SUPPLY

Mr. Chairperson (Doyle Pivniuk): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

Given the sessional order adopted early today, it's—provides that at 4 p.m. the Speaker and the deputy—and the Chairperson, shall interrupt proceedings to put all remaining questions necessary to conclude steps 4, 5 and 6 of the main-Capital Supply procedure.

The hour now being 4 p.m., there will be no—now no further debate or amendments to the questions necessary to complete steps 4, 5 and 6.

Is the committee ready for the—the question before the committee is the concurrence motion moved by the Government House Leader (Mr. Cullen).

Shall the motion pass?

Some Honourable Members: Pass.

Mr. Chairperson: All those in—okay, the motion is accordingly passed.

That concludes the business for the committee and committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

An Honourable Member: Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

Madam Speaker: I have just read the rules to the member, there are no points of order or matters of privilege to be raised at this time. He would be breaking the rules if he tried to move in that direction.

Committee Report

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted a motion regarding concurrence in Supply.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson), that the report be—reported to the committee—be received.

Motion agreed to.

Concurrence Motion

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Sustainable Development (Ms. Squires), that this House concur in the report of the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

Motion presented.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, a recorded vote, please.

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

The question before the House is concurrence in the report of the Committee of Supply.

* (17:00)

Division

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

Yeas

Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Ewasko, Fielding, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Mayer, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Pivniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Squires, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Yakimoski.

Nays

Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Lamoureux, Lindsey, Saran, Smith (Point Douglas), Swan,

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 28, Nays 9.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The hour being past 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned—okay, I have to revert to a little message.

As the House is adjourning for the summer, I would encourage all honourable members to remove the contents of their desks now. I would further encourage members to recycle as much of the material as possible.

The blue bins here in the Chamber are designated for recycling of Hansard only.

Any other material you would like to recycle may be placed in the larger recycling bins in the message rooms located just outside the Chamber.

I thank you, everybody. Have a great summer reconnecting with your constituents, your families, your friends, and we'll see you in the fall.

The hour being after 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until October 3rd or at the call of the Speaker.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 25, 2018

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<http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>