

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

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-Second Legislature**

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, November 25, 2019

*The House met at 1:30 p.m.*

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

Please be seated.

### Speaker's Statement

**Madam Speaker:** I have a brief statement for the House.

I am advised that during oral questions on Friday, November 22nd, 2019, questions were asked and answered about the tabling of the Estimates of revenue for the Province.

I would like to remind the House that this issue has been taken under advisement by the Speaker as a matter of privilege and, as such, it is not to be raised in the House until the Speaker has returned with a ruling. I thank all honourable members in advance for their co-operation in refraining from raising the issue until this ruling has been delivered.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### Bill 7—The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Leave for Victims of Interpersonal Violence)

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister responsible for the Status of Women):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development (Mr. Pedersen), that Bill 7, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Leave for Victims of Interpersonal Violence), be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mrs. Cox:** I am pleased to introduce Bill 7, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Leave for Victims of Interpersonal Violence).

This proposal will amend the Employment Standards Code to expand eligibility for the existing domestic violence leave entitlement to also include employees who are victims of sexual violence or stalking, regardless of whether or not they have an existing relationship with the perpetrator.

The changes we will also allow employees to take the leave if their child or an adult under their care and control is a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence or stalking.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Committee reports?

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I am pleased to table the following reports.

(1) Pursuant to The Statutes and Regulations Act, a copy of each regulation registered under that act after the last regulation tabled in this House and more than 14 days before the commencement of this session; and (2) the 48th Annual Report for the Manitoba Law Reform Commission for the fiscal year 2018-19.

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

#### Winnipeg Blue Bombers Grey Cup Champions

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Deputy Premier):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and pay tribute to an organization loved by all Manitobans, an organization that has been part of the fabric and the culture of our community and province for longer than most have been alive, an organization with a glorious history that is even more glorious today.

Madam Speaker, the Winnipeg Blue Bombers are Grey Cup champions once again. Yesterday's decisive

win over the Hamilton Tiger-Cats left no doubt that our Blue Bombers are the CFL's best team. It left no doubt that this year's Blue Bombers will forever rank among the best teams in CFL history.

I join our fellow Manitobans in congratulating the players, the coaches, the management and the staff of the Winnipeg Football Club. We are so proud of you and what you have worked so hard to accomplish.

I congratulate all of the Blue Bomber fans here in Manitoba and around the world, fans who have given their hearts to their beloved Blue Bombers, season after season, with the unshakeable faith that this day would come again.

Madam Speaker, the 29-year drought is over, and the Grey Cup is here at last. Today is a great day to be a Winnipegger, it's a great day to be a Manitoban and, most of all, it's a great day to be a Winnipeg Blue Bombers fan.

Go Blue.

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Madam Speaker, a few hundred Winnipeggers and myself gathered at Portage and Main last night to chant O'Shea, O'Shea, O'Shea, O'Shea. And while some of the other revelers might be feeling a little under the weather today, judging by their performance last night, I'm happy to report that the only downside at our house was my 12-year-old saying that his throat was a little sore from all the yelling and cheering.

Now, our football club had a tremendous performance last night, a dominating performance even. It started with a strong start, forcing two quick turnovers, and we really knew that we hit our stride when Andrew Harris made that touchdown catch and landed right in the middle of the Ti-Cats logo, thus striking them in their hearts.

But there was tons of other things to be proud of in addition to a hometown hero winning the most outstanding player award. We also had another hometown-raised Winnipegger, Nic Demski, played a very important role in that game.

In the end, you know, a final turnover with just 10 seconds left sealed the deal and ended the 29-year Grey Cup drought for Winnipeg, and of course we're all super happy.

But it seems that, in addition to bringing about an end to that three-decade-long quest for another championship, that this victory last night was about something more.

Lately, in Winnipeg, in Manitoba, sometimes it feels as though there's not a lot to cheer for, but finally our football club delivered and gave us something all to be proud of. I remember the last Grey Cup parade. Now I'm happy our kids will get to see the same thing.

Go, Blue Bombers.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface):** Madam Speaker, I ask for leave in and—speak in response to the minister's statement.

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

**Mr. Lamont:** It is a distinct honour and a privilege to rise today to congratulate the Winnipeg Blue Bombers on their Grey Cup triumph in Calgary last night.

It was a beautiful game that brought us together as Manitobans and as Canadians. As so often happens, people flocked to Portage and Main in celebration. Mayor Bowman may well wonder where all those people were during the referendum on opening it up.

It was a clear win and a clean win. It was impossible not to be moved by the players in their joy.

And, Madam Speaker, we know that no one has been waiting for this longer than Blue Bomber fans, and one Bomber fan in particular, Chris Matthew, who in 2001 made a solemn pledge that he would not wear pants again until the Bombers won the cup.

\* (13:40)

Madam Speaker, we live in a word-world where people are fickle, where they don't keep their word, where vows and oaths seem to be worth less than they used to be. That is why Chris Matthew's integrity and uncompromising refusal to wear pants seems as inspiring and pure as it is hilarious.

Because, Madam Speaker, beyond the suffering and patience of a truly extraordinary Bomber fan like Chris Matthew is the next-level patience of his wife Darla. She stood next to him, though she acknowledged that she knew he was an idiot. He stood next to her in front of a stadium full of screaming fans pulling on a pair of '90s-era zebra-striped Zubaz looking like a man who has truly forgotten to put on pants.

Darla said she would not have chosen those because she actually knew something about fashion. Those are horrible, she told an interviewer. When pressed further about his dedication, she said: He's such a wonderful man, you pick your battles and that wasn't one of them.

Madam Speaker, this was more than a championship game. It was a true Manitoban love story.

To the Bombers, to Chris and Darla, to everyone, thank you for making a great moment even greater.

Merci.

**Madam Speaker:** Further ministerial statements?

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

Would the honourable minister please proceed with his statement.

### **Substance Use and Addictions Awareness Week**

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, substance use and addiction is a topic of concern to all Manitobans.

It is important to acknowledge and openly discuss substance use and addictions in our communities. We know it can be a difficult topic for people to discuss, but talking about substance use and addiction raises awareness. It provides opportunity to challenge commonly held misconceptions and reduce stigma.

We recognize the importance of raising awareness and reducing stigma by proclaiming substance use and addictions week.

In the last seven weeks, our government has committed more than \$20 million toward 12 initiatives that will improve mental health and addictions services throughout the province. This morning we announced plans to add 100 supportive recovery beds to the health system in urban and rural areas to expand mental health and addictions services for all Manitobans.

This is just one of the ways in which we are improving mental health and addictions services based on recommendations made in the VIRGO report, the Illicit Drug Task Force report, as well as our Safer Streets, Safer Lives Action Plan.

Additional investments include more than \$4.2 million over three years in a two-phase project at Health Sciences Centre to enhance access to urgent and non-urgent mental health assessments and treatment for children and youth; nearly \$2.4 million over three years to expand walk-in mental health services and specialized trauma counselling;

\$3-million investment for improved mental health services and programs for children and youth with funds provided to the NorWest Youth Hub, Project 11, and allocated to the distribution of Thrival Kits to young students across the province; \$4.2-million investment in 11 additional flexible-length withdrawal management beds added in Winnipeg and Brandon to allow patients the necessary time it takes to withdraw from dangerous drugs.

Manitoba Substance Use and Addictions Awareness Week acknowledges the harms of problematic substance use and its impacts on the lives of Manitobans. Recovery is important to those impacted as well as to caregivers, family, friends and community. Recovery is possible when family and friends are engaged.

I encourage all members of the House to learn more about and become more aware of substance use and addiction.

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** Addiction is a societal issue. It affects entire families and it crosses all generational, gender, racial and class lines. We recognize Substance Use and Addictions Awareness Week in an attempt to raise awareness about the use of harmful substances within our communities.

Manitobans know the harm of substance use and addictions. A dramatic rise in crystal meth use, swiftly followed by a fentanyl crisis, has left too many Manitobans suffering. In 2018 alone, meth-related hospital visits increased by 1,200 per cent. However, we cannot forget that these numbers reflect people's lives, people's loved ones and valuable members of our communities. Actions need to be taken to protect them.

This week initiates our opportunity to formulate solutions which can enhance the health and safety of all members in our society.

Manitobans with addictions and their families are asking for help. Government has a duty to help answer that call with investments in treatment, including mental health and stronger social supports, including timely access to health and social services which meet the unique needs of those struggling. Also, investments in long-term supports for early addiction intervention and prevention are urgently needed.

We need to remove the stigma around addictions by creating healthy and inclusive communities that are given the resources to identify and intervene in mental health and addictions early. We also need to address

root 'causes' like poverty, which intersects with addictions by investing in housing, employment supports and keeping our families together.

Addictions can have far-reaching and devastating effects on families, which is why we need to take vital steps to expand services to Manitobans. The health and well-being of Manitobans needs to be our first priority.

Manitobans—Manitoba must make real investments in addictions services and root causes so all Manitobans can get on a journey to recovery.

From our caucus, we thank you; we say thank you to all of those front-line workers that are supporting our families through this crisis.

Miigwech.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I request leave to speak to the minister's statement.

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

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, it is imperative that there be greater awareness of addictions and substance use and its impact on people in Manitoba, and that, of course, is why this Substance Use and Addictions Awareness Week is so important.

While it is good that the government is moving to include such awareness in the K-to-12 curriculum, it is disappointing that the government took three and a half years after it was first elected to act. All Manitobans need to understand the negative impact of poverty, of bullying and of trauma on young people so that we can work to reduce these impacts and reduce the subsequent addictions and substance use.

Outcome measures are needed, including the results of effects—efforts at prevention and treatment at various centres and communities around Manitoba. I hope the government will ensure such data is available so we can better understand what is working and what is not.

We still have a long way to go to ensure that people with addictions and substance use issues can get effective help quickly when they need it and that there is seamless support from intake through to transitioning into the community to achieve a productive life. It is disappointing that one of the successful front-line organizations, Morberg House, is not supported by this provincial government even though it has a track record of success.

Madam Speaker, Liberals will continue to push for effective and accountable action to address the crisis that we have in Manitoba at the moment and to decrease the extent of substance use and addictions in our province.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

**Madam Speaker:** Further ministerial statements?

The honourable Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage—and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

### **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister responsible for the Status of Women):** Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Earlier this month I was honoured to visit the North End Women's Centre to proclaim November as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Our government recognizes we cannot work alone to end domestic violence; community organizations and front-line workers are the heart of eliminating violence against women.

Just weeks ago I joined with community members from the North End Women's Centre, the West Central Women's Resource Centre, the Laurel Centre and James Favel of the Bear Clan Patrol where we were unanimous in recognizing we must take a collaborative approach to end domestic violence. And we are joined today by some of these very dedicated community members and front-line workers in the gallery.

Madam Speaker, domestic violence does not discriminate. Like mental illness, it affects everyone from all walks of life, regardless of their age, gender, ability, culture, religion, financial status, profession or sexual orientation.

\* (13:50)

Individuals, communities and governments must come together, side by side, hand in hand, to end family violence. The devastating effects of violence impact everyone, Madam Speaker. Women, men and children and families all across our province are affected each and every year.

Today is International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

The impacts of gender-based violence on Manitoba's—on Manitobans are far-reaching. It can affect victims' short- and long-term physical health, their psychological and mental health, their relationships, their ability to work or continue their education. It may lead to poverty or homelessness, and we know it will have ripple effects on families and communities.

Our government is committed to preventing gender-based violence, and as the Minister responsible for Status of Women, I am proud to chair the Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet. My Cabinet colleagues and I are focused on a whole-of-government approach to addressing gender-based and domestic violence.

Our government has invested in more shelter beds for survivors of domestic abuse and better crisis lines. And a few weeks ago, I was pleased to announce our government's \$2.4-million investment to expand mental health services and specialized trauma counselling for women. The executive director of Klinik called this the largest single investment in our counselling services in decades.

Madam Speaker, our government is collaborating with communities to break down silos and improve outcomes, and I encourage all Manitobans to talk about domestic and gender-based violence with your friends, colleagues and family members. Let's support one another and create an atmosphere where individuals never suffer in silence.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I ask for leave to have the names of our very dedicated front-line workers, who are with me today in the Chamber, included in Hansard: Stephanie Klassen, Nicole Chammartin, Lorie English, Denise MacDonald, Nadine Sookermany and Cynthia Drebot. Thank you for your service.

**Madam Speaker:** I would indicate that the names of those guests are included in Hansard, as they were also included in the minister's comments.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Today marks the start of the Domestic Violence Awareness Month, alongside the start of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence on this International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

This year's 16 Days of Activism theme is Orange The World: Generation Equality Stands Against Rape where the United Nations calls on all levels of government, NGOs, community organizations and citizens to stand against rape.

It doesn't matter what part of the world we live in, Madam Speaker, women and girls are raped at alarming and unacceptable rates; in some instances, every couple of minutes. Some research has found up to 70 per cent of women and girls worldwide are sexually assaulted or raped.

Canada is no different, where indigenous, black, trans and LGBTTTQ2S women and girls are disproportionately and exponentially more vulnerable to gender-based violence, including rape and murder.

These next 16 Days of Activism are opportunities for everyone to organize, educate, advocate, resist against gender-based violence through a range of activities.

I'm so proud of the many women-led, women-centred organizations organizing activities for 16 Days of Activism, including Chantal Lacoste with Tillie and True, who has established a public awareness campaign—social media campaign with allies and leaders, including Mayor Brian Bowman and myself, launched only this morning. I'm proud to continue to support women-led agency all across Manitoba and Canada.

Tonight at 6 p.m., Madam Speaker, the City of Winnipeg and Mayor Brian Bowman will be lighting up the Winnipeg sign at The Forks in orange in solidarity with the 16 Days of Activism. Following The Forks, CUPE's Vivienne Ho is organizing tonight's Take Back the Night rally at the University of Winnipeg, starting at 7 p.m.

I encourage everyone to attend these events or to organize your own activities in your own community across Manitoba or Canada in show—in support of and standing with survivors of rape and against gender-based violence.

Ending violence against women and girls and trans persons is no easy task, Madam Speaker. However, raising awareness, amplifying the voices of victims and survivors and empowering 'bystanderds' to speak up, we can all take those first critical steps in addressing this critical issue.

I look forward to seeing everyone this evening, Madam Speaker. Miigwech.

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to to speak in response to the minister's statement.

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

**Ms. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, November marks Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which here in Manitoba is very important as we maintain the second-highest police-reported intimate partner violence of all the provinces: double the national rate.

In 2015, almost 92,000 people in Canada were victims of intimate partner violence, representing just over a quarter of all victims of police-reported violent crime. Violence has been at the forefront of many conversations recently in Manitoba. Even in 2019, we continue to see increased rates of violent crimes, many of which can be attributed to domestic violence.

Madam Speaker, domestic violence wreaks havoc on families, especially women and children, and on the extended community. Understanding the cycle of abuse is the first step towards breaking it. The intergenerational tendency of domestic violence makes it even more important that we develop effective methods for combating abusive behaviours.

For those who have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence, you are not alone and there is help out there.

Domestic violence doesn't hold any borders or boundaries. It is incumbent on everyone to speak out against domestic violence. Victims must be fully supported as they cope with the trauma that will be carried with them for the rest of their lives.

I urge all members of the Legislature to support those who need protection by investing in safe places, education and victim services.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Richard Wozney

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** I stand, proud to be able to welcome a Winnipeg Blue Bomber–Hamilton Ti-Cat Grey Cup participant to the gallery today.

Born in Elphinstone, growing up in Brandon and getting a scholarship to the University of North Dakota, all before joining the Winnipeg Football Club in 1965, Richard Wozney has served the game of football well.

Through his career as a Winnipeg Blue Bomber, No. 30, Rich Wozney—standing at five-seven, 180 pounds—primarily served as a punt kick returner, but was also talented enough to fill in for the majority of the positions on his team.

The punt kick return position, back in the day before blocking was allowed on punts, was equated to making a living out of testing bullet proof vests and it was dubbed the suicide squad. Their job was to catch the football with a dozen 250-pound linemen bearing down on them, the—then hang on for dear life at the bottom of the ensuing pile of heaving flesh, bone and muscle. All this for a mere annual compensation of \$4,000.

Rich Wozney was part of the 1965 Winnipeg Blue Bomber Grey Cup team that went head to head against the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. Unlike yesterday, the Bombers lost to the Tiger-Cats by a score of 22-16 in the Grey Cup game on November 27, 1965, falling short of winning the CFL's top prize 54 years ago.

The game was informally dubbed the wind—dubbed the Wind Bowl because of windy conditions that day. The CBC announcer called it the windiest Grey Cup game ever as wind gusts blasted off Lake Ontario.

\* (14:00)

Madam Speaker, standing alongside his lovely wife, charming daughter Kendra, his wife Kathryn, colleagues of the Legislature, please help me congratulate the Wizard of Woz, Rich Wozney, on his successful football career.

*1965 Grey Cup Roster. Winnipeg Blue Bombers. Players: 23, Billy Cooper, FLB; 63, Wayne Dennis, DT; 44, Paul Desjardins, C; 71, Farrell Funston, OE; 53, Herb Gray, OG-DE, captain; 61, Roger Hamelin, DT; 22, Barrie Hansen, DHB; 32, Henry Janzen, DHB; 60, Monte Kiffin, OT-LB; 29, Leo Lewis, OHB; 26, Dennis Liebrecht, FB; 66, Mario Mariani, DE; 31, Al Miller, LB; 54, Phil Minnick, CLB; 21, Ken Nielsen, OE; 12, Brian Palmer, QB; 35, Art Perkins, FB; 64, Cornel Piper, OT; 77, Ernie Pitts, DHB; 11, Ken Ploen, QB; 27, Dave Raimey, OHB; 70, Norm Rauhaus, OE-DHB; 67, Frank Rigney, OT; 43, Paul Robson, LB-C; 58, Ted Rodosovich, OG; 56, Morley Rolhiser, OG; 72, Bob Taylor, DE; 14, Dick Thornton, DHB-QB; 55, Sherwyn Thorson, CLB; 24, Ed Ulmer, PT-DHB; 65, Norm Winton, PK-DT; 30, Dick Wozney, DHB. Bud Grant, general manager and head coach; Terry Hind, team manager;*



*John Michaels, assistant coach; Neville Winograd, president; Joe Zaleski, assistant coach.*

*Hamilton Tiger-Cats. Players: 37, Mel Anthony, FB; 61, John Barrow, DT-OG, captain; 16, Willie Beathea, OHB; 44, Gene Ceppetelli, C-DT; 19, John Cimba, CLB; 24, Dick Cohee, O-DHB; 11, Frank Cosentino, QB; 28, John Counts, OHB; 75, Stan Crisson, OE; 63, Bill Danychuk, OG; 18, Tom Grant, FLB; 26, Garney Henley, D-OHB; 72, Steve Hmiel, DHB; 73, Zeno Karcz, CLB; 54, Ellison Kelly, OT; 14, Bob Krouse, DHB; 32, Bobby Kuntz, LB-FB; 50, Billy Ray Locklin, DE; 65, Marty Martinello, MG; 20, Gerry McDougall, OHB; 48, John Metras, C; 68, Angelo Mosca, D-OT; 60, Bronko Nagurski, OT; 15, Ted Page, DHB-CLB; 23, Herb Paterra, LB; 77, Hal Patterson, OE; 29, Jim Reynolds, CLB; 22, Don Sutherin, PK-DHB; 70, Dave Viti, D-OE; 52, Chuck Walton, OG; 39, Billy Wayte, DHB; 9, Joe Zuger, PT-QB. Len Back, team manager; J.G. Gaudaur, president and general manager; Kelley Mote, assistant coach; Joe Restic, assistant coach; Ralph Sazio, head coach.*

### **Library and Community Centre Funding**

**Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry):** Madam Speaker, Fort Garry has fallen on some hard times recently. We have lost our emergency room, our rehabilitation and physiotherapy clinic, our blood and medical test lab. The uncertainty of what's going to be cut next worries Fort Garry residents every day.

One of the bright spots in south Winnipeg is the Fort Garry Public Library. In 2014, the library was renovated to meet the demands of our growing community. It is only one of two libraries in the south end and the only one near the rapid transit line, and with programming for all ages, community gathering spaces, meeting rooms, computers, printing, in addition to many other services, the library is a hub of the community. The library is a safe space for students to study, for children to learn to read and for seniors to make connections.

Today, the City of Winnipeg is facing some tough choices. With provincial operating grants frozen since 2016, funding is not keeping up with inflation. This has led to a loss in public services for Fort Garry residents, such as a reduction in free drop-in recreation programming and fewer open hours for Margaret Grant Pool.

Families rely on these programs. For many, free programs are the only opportunity for children and

their families to participate in recreational activities or to come together as a community.

Because of this government's never-ending belt-tightening, the City of Winnipeg is now being forced to look at further cuts to public services during their current four-year budget process. This includes St. Boniface fire hall, six indoor pools, three libraries—including the Fort Garry library—and many other cuts.

In the past three years, the demand for library services has increased exponentially. Today, there's 80,000 more people in Winnipeg who own library cards than in 2016.

Libraries and other public facilities are at the heart of our communities. Reckless cuts from this government have made uncertainty an everyday reality for public services in this province. I urge the government to seriously reflect on how its choices are affecting Manitoba families.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli):** Madam Speaker, my apologies, I forgot to ask for leave to enter the names and numbers and positions of the roster and coaches from the 1965 Grey Cup to be entered into Hansard behind my statement.

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

### **First Nations and Red Cross Fall Storm Response**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas-Kameesak):** Today is the 45th day since First Nations leadership declared states of emergency following October's storm. I would like to reiterate the gratitude that four esteemed members of this House have set on record for the generosity and commitment of countless people, and it's still impacting peoples' lives, still today.

I am honoured that leadership of the Interlake Reserves Tribal Council and the Red Cross join us today: organizations that embody dedication, knowledge tempered by experience, humility and respect.

Each emergency reminds us that we have an imperative to take action before, during and after. Representing Dauphin River, Jackhead, Lake St. Martin, Little Saskatchewan, Peguis and Pinaymootang, the IRTC created the space necessary for all levels of government and every organization to come together in October.

Over 10,000 individuals from 13 First Nations registered as evacuees. They were kept safe, warm

and fed by this round-the-clock collaboration. A significant number of evacuees were displaced for 19 days.

IRTC staff and 600 Red Cross volunteers welcomed help from Bear Clan, MKO's crisis response team and many others. Families encountered hotel room shortages, medical emergencies, racialized violence and denials of service.

The need is great, not just because Hydro infrastructure was severely damaged, but because First Nations face inequity every day. To acknowledge the expertise in the gallery, I propose they be invited to the table and given more than an advisory role with the EMO—an action in line with our praise, particularly as we know the flood risk continues to rise.

Ekosi.

#### **Dauphin Fire Chief Cam Abrey**

**Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, I acknowledge and congratulate Dauphin's fire chief, Cam Abrey, for being named 2019 Canadian Career Fire Chief of the Year. This national award recognizes men and women who not only promote fire services in Canada, but who also go above and beyond the expected job description of a fire chief. Chief Abrey is Dauphin's first full-time career fire chief and was nominated for his dedication to his duties, his fire department, the safety of residents and for his involvement in the community.

Chief Abrey recently completed a two-year term as president of the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs and has represented the association on the Province of Manitoba Building Standards Board. Cam also represented the Manitoba fire service on the national advisory council, and in 2012 he was presented with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, which honours significant contributions and achievements by Canadians.

Chief Abrey and all the members of the fire department perform many volunteer duties, speak at schools and are active in promoting fire and life safety.

Chief Abrey was born and raised in the Parkland and joined the Dauphin Fire Department in December 1999 as a paid-call firefighter. Cam worked towards being the first full-time employee and became Dauphin's first full-time fire chief in January 2011.

Cam holds many provincial and national accreditations and uses his knowledge and experience

to provide training courses throughout the region and the province. Cam also serves as a Mountain View School Division trustee for 10 years.

Madam Speaker, Chief Abrey is here today with his wife Darla and their sons Tyler and Kaden. Please join me in welcoming and congratulating Chief Cam Abrey for his outstanding national recognition and for his dedication to public safety and service in Manitoba and the Dauphin region.

#### **No Frills Opening in Kildonan-River East**

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** Madam Speaker, I am exceptionally thrilled to rise in the House today to welcome Stephen and his brand-new No Frills to our North Kildonan community.

For over a year, families living in northeast Winnipeg experienced near drought-like shopping conditions when their beloved Marketplace was shuttered by Federated Co-op in 2018.

But just like our Winnipeg Blue Bombers, Madam Speaker, that drought has now ended, thanks to the establishment of Stephen's No Frills. Seniors, families and shoppers of all ages are elated to have once again an anchor grocery store located right in their River East—or Kildonan-River East community.

Madam Speaker, I first met Stephen during the recent provincial election when he stopped by to say hello and introduce himself, and what became immediately obvious was Stephen's genuine interest in our community and his desire to ensure that our senior population would be well served by his new grocery store.

Stephen didn't compromise on construction. His store is state-of-the-art, with wide, accessible aisles, bright lighting and a modern checkout. And speaking on behalf of our entire community, I can confidently say it is a very welcome addition to our neighbourhood.

On Friday, October 11th, Madam Speaker, I was proud to join Stephen and hundreds of anxious shoppers at the grand opening of his new No Frills. We enjoyed cake, free handouts, and Stephen even kicked it up a notch by presenting generous cheques to Siloam Mission and a very important seniors agency.

Now, like many of us in the Chamber here, we love a good party, but when the lights went out, we were left a little perplexed, only to learn the ice storm knocked off the breakers and the power supply to the

mall and the surrounding area. The power returned later that day, and I'm sure, like most of us, the ice storm is a day Stephen would prefer to forget.

Madam Speaker, I'm told that this is not the first time that Mother Nature threw a wrench into Stephen's entrepreneurial plans. Following the opening of his No Frills in High River, Alberta, high waters from the—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

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

**Mrs. Cox:** Following the opening of his No Frills store in High River, Alberta, high waters from the 2013 flood infiltrated his store and also caused its closure.

Stephen used this as an opportunity to again give back to his community by donating thousands of non-perishable food items to military families, homeless shelters and other needy charitable organizations.

Madam Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Stephen and his family for making the move to Manitoba and calling our neighbourhood his home.

Stephen, we welcome you and your new No Frills to our Kildonan-River East neighbourhood.

Thank you.

\* (14:10)

### Introduction of Guests

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

We have seated in the public gallery from River East Collegiate 30 grade 9 students under the direction of Irina Graeber, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield).

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Addiction and Mental Health Portable Housing Benefit

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Madam Speaker, I want to draw your

attention to a program called the Portable Housing Benefit.

Now, this is a relatively modest form of assistance. This supplement provides \$200 for individuals living with mental health issues in the community and it supports some 600 people in Manitoba, many of whom are at risk of homelessness, and this benefit helps to stabilize their housing situation.

Indeed, this would seem to be one of the investments in root causes that we were able to persuade the Pallister government to begin to consider in this very Chamber just last week. That's why it's so surprising to learn—this week—that this government has cut this program.

Why would the Pallister government cut the Portable Housing Benefit?

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

We as a government are committed to making life more affordable for all Manitobans. We're taking a common sense approach when it comes to the Portable Housing Benefit.

The NDP had designed, Madam Speaker, a system where some individuals were receiving more than the total cost of their rent with the Portable Housing Benefit and Rent Assist combined.

So this is a shelter benefit and we want to make sure that the benefit goes towards paying for shelter for those who need it. That's why we are ensuring that we make this a more equitable approach to providing more housing benefits to more Manitobans.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Madam Speaker, I would thank the minister for confirming that the government has indeed cut the Portable Housing Benefit program, but any sort of good vibes from this side would stop right there because we simply dispute the cut and the need for this government to do so.

Again, in the midst of an addictions and mental health crisis that ministers from this government rose earlier today to call attention to, this government is cutting a program that helps people who are housing-insecure to be able to continue living in the community as they seek assistance for their mental health needs.

Now, we've all heard from the experts who say that we need a Housing First approach which gives people the stability of having a place to stay so that they can then access mental health supports and addictions resources in the community.

So, again, the question for the minister is: Why in the midst of our current situation has this government cut the Portable Housing Benefit?

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, the Leader of the Opposition is just simply wrong in his preamble to his question.

What I did say is that we're providing more benefits to more Manitobans when it comes to affordability of housing. We are offering Rent Assist to more than 3,000 more Manitobans than did—under the previous NDP government.

But we do say that last week we also launched consultations for a new support program for Manitobans with disabilities, Madam Speaker, which will help us create a made-in-Manitoba program that can improve the quality of life for people with severe and prolonged disabilities.

So we're providing more benefits for more individuals in a more equitable way, Madam Speaker.

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

**Mr. Kinew:** Except, of course, Madam Speaker, when they're not.

There are 600 people who benefitted from this program, people in some cases with some very complex and high-stakes mental health issues, people who live in constituencies right across the province.

But, again, this is not a hugely expensive program in the grand scheme of things. We're talking about \$200 a month which could mean the difference between somebody having a housing situation or somebody not—and, again, these are folks who need stability as they seek a way to address their mental health issues.

This is a situation where this government is cutting supports for some of the most vulnerable in our communities, and, again, there's nothing more than talking points to explain the reason why.

Will the minister commit today to reversing the cut to the Portable Housing Benefit?

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Committed to today, Madam Speaker, is providing more benefits to more Manitobans who need those shelter benefits. This is a

shelter benefit and we want to make sure that the benefit goes towards paying for shelter for those who need it. This change will make Portable Housing Benefit more equitable and effective for Manitobans who need it.

Again, we are offering more—we're increasing non-EI Rent Assist by more than 150 per cent and providing it to more than 3,000 more Manitobans than the NDP ever did.

We're listening to Manitobans with disabilities through consultations through our province and we want to make sure that Manitobans with disabilities get the support that they need in a dignified manner. We make—we are making the changes to ensure that that happens.

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

### **Crime Increase in Manitoba Short- and Long-Term Solutions**

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Madam Speaker, there was another senseless act of violence in our province over the weekend. This one took place in a parking lot.

Now, certainly, our thoughts are with the victim—and, again, even bystanders I heard from over the weekend were traumatized, essentially, by having witnessed this event, and it certainly does follow on weeks of similar such acts of senseless violence in our city.

Now, we have said that this government ought to be able to do two things at once: again, first, be able to provide security in the immediate vicinity of such an incident; but (2), be able to invest in the root causes so that we address the long-term situation that creates these sorts of incidents.

What can the government tell us that they are doing new this week to respond to the situation to provide reassurance to Manitobans on both of those counts?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I certainly appreciate the question on public safety.

We as a government take public safety very seriously here in Manitoba. That is why we introduced a Policing and Public Safety Strategy a number of months ago. Everything we do around—is around that particular strategy. There's specific outcomes there—eight pillars we're looking at—and every program and

policy that we design and bring forward is designed to adhere to that particular strategy and, Madam Speaker, we are making improvements there.

And I will refer to our Safer Streets, Safer Lives Action Plan. Hopefully the member will take time to read that; and it talks about education, it talks about treatment and it also talks about enforcement.

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

### Call for Public Safety Summit

**Mr. Kinew:** Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, what we haven't heard as much about from this government is including the community in the design and delivery of these programs.

Again, we do need to have a secure situation to prevent something like this from happening, but we also need to address the societal conditions in the community so that we can prevent the next generation of young people from falling down this negative path.

Now, we've heard from many organizations—such as Ma Mawi, such as Bear Clan—who are already doing this important work in the community, both inside the city of Winnipeg and right across the province of Manitoba. But we're still waiting confirmation from this government that they'd be willing to entertain supporting these organizations and helping them expand the scope of their operations so that they could help young people so much more.

To that end, will this minister commit today to convening a summit that would bring together business, community organizations, labour, law enforcement and the Province to begin to address this issue?

**Mr. Cullen:** Well, Madam Speaker, I'm not sure where the member opposite was over the last couple of weeks because we've already said we will work closely with our police services, our municipal stakeholders, the retail markets and labour. We will bring those people together.

He talks about a one-day summit. Madam Speaker, a one-day summit will not address the complex issues that Manitobans are facing when it comes to public safety. That's why we're engaging with these individuals. We're engaging with these companies as well, and we will continue to dialogue with those particular individuals and corporations, and including labour.

Madam Speaker, one of the key organizations in the communities are community mobilization hubs. We as a government take these community organizations as a high priority and we are continuing to fund those on a local level so that at-risk people can be dealt with.

\* (14:20)

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

### Funding to Municipalities

**Mr. Kinew:** Well, Madam Speaker, in order for a government to be able to respond both immediately with security and in the longer term by addressing root causes, there needs to be adequate support for our municipalities to be able to deliver services at the local level. However, under this government we have seen freezes and cuts to funding for municipalities.

Now put at risk, as elucidated earlier, are not just community libraries and community centres, which would help keep young people on a positive path as they grow up here in the city, but, again, we are now seeing the City of Winnipeg and others contemplate cuts to policing—again, as a result of this government's cuts and freezes to municipal funding.

With this situation in mind and with the greater societal conditions at stake, will this government simply commit to ending the freezes and stopping the cuts when it comes to municipalities in Manitoba?

**Mr. Cullen:** Well, Madam Speaker, the member opposite is just wrong.

We are working with community organizations including municipalities. I referenced the community mobilization hubs—very important in assessing at-risk people. We're obviously involved at the local level in terms of community reintegration programs and restorative justice.

Certainly, through Victim Services alone—this is only one department of government through Justice. I know there's many other departments working at—with municipalities to fund various agencies. Justice alone, we're funding Aurora family treatment. We're funding the Brandon Police Service. We're funding Candace House. We're funding Age and Opportunity throughout Winnipeg. We're funding the North End Women's Centre. We're also funding other organizations all across our province.

So the funding is flowing to these very worthwhile agencies.

### **Highway Snow Clearing Request Not to Privatize**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Now, last year we raised our concern that the Pallister government was considering privatizing snow-clearing operations and other core government functions for highways and water management in the province.

Well, they've gone so far now as to hire an external consultant as part of those plans, and it's very clear that the government is moving full speed ahead to privatize and outsource these important government functions, including snow removal across the province at a time when winter storms are an issue.

Will the minister withdraw his plans to privatize highway snow-clearing operations in Manitoba?

**Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure):** One of the things that the people of Manitoba did twice—two largest back-to-back majorities—is they elected a government that knows how to do smart shopping and, Madam Speaker, that's what we're going to do and that's what we're going to deliver on.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, Madam Speaker, we know that when storms hit, Manitobans deserve their roads to be cleared in a timely fashion and they deserve a high standard of service. But we know that in other jurisdictions all too often corners get cut. The results are poor service and less safety for Manitobans, and we know that this is the wrong approach.

Why is the minister pursuing a course of action when it has been a disaster in other jurisdictions that have gone down that path?

**Mr. Schuler:** Well, Madam Speaker, if there's one thing that Manitoba Infrastructure does well, it delivers on snow removal. In fact, on the Thanksgiving weekend the snow plows were out. They were out working whenever it was safe to do so.

As stated earlier, we'd also like to thank all of our partners who participated in that whole storm, in particular the RCMP, who were very, very good at helping Manitoba Infrastructure with the snow-clearing process, and we're very proud of the work being done.

We're also going to be smart shoppers.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** On one hand, Madam Speaker, the minister praises the public service, while at the other side he privatizes more and more services. Over half a dozen requests for proposals have now been added to the MERX system in just the last few days.

They contract out road-clearing services in northern Manitoba and in the Interlake, Madam Speaker. We know that in other provinces these exact kind of arrangements have been absolutely disastrous. Cleanups after storms have taken much longer and the roads were less safe. That's what the Auditor General in Ontario found in reviewing similar arrangements in Ontario. We know this is coming to Manitoba.

Why won't the minister stop this cut to such an important service in Manitoba?

**Mr. Schuler:** Well, Madam Speaker, there you see the difference on display. Our government is not a government that is bound by ideology—which you've seen the member for Concordia, he only has one ideology; he won't look at anything different.

Yes, Madam Speaker, we are continuously going out to see if we are getting the best value for Manitobans, and above all safety comes first. We're going to continue to be smart shoppers, something that lacked under the last 17 NDP years.

Where they went sometimes to the highest dollar, Madam Speaker, we're always going to look for the best value for Manitobans.

### **Dynacare Labs Winnipeg Closures**

**MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station):** Madam Speaker, the Pallister government contracted laboratory services to Dynacare. They're now closing half of the labs in the city. The result will be less convenient access, especially for those with mobility challenges. That's what those with disabilities are saying. That's what primary-care physicians are saying. They say these changes will present a large obstacle to many Manitobans.

Will the minister reconsider the closure of half of Winnipeg's labs?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, some members of the House have not been here as long, so this will offer an opportunity for me to provide a very short history lesson.

The consolidation of laboratory services in Manitoba has been going on for years and began under the NDP. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member for Union Station, on a supplementary question.

**MLA Asagwara:** Madam Speaker, cutting half the labs in the city means real challenges to many Manitobans.

Magnus Kincaid has impaired hearing and sight. He has to change—he has to plan his transit days well in advance and work out support staff to accompany him. To him, these lab closures will require a full day of planning and relying on others. He questions these closures as only about saving money.

Will the minister reconsider plans to close labs across the city?

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, to be clear, the NDP didn't think twice about closing lab services in Manitoba—they presided over the effort.

But let us be clear about what this really is. Dynacare has been acquiring labs across Manitoba, and what the member is not mentioning is that Dynacare is in the process of opening four supersite labs with extended hours, increased actual accessibility for all people as well as enhanced services. These are good investments that are getting better opportunity and better access to lab services for so many Manitobans.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Union Station, on a final supplementary.

**MLA Asagwara:** Madam Speaker, the root of the issue is one of mobility. These changes place a real burden on many Manitobans.

Family physician Dr. Michael Hochman explains that this change creates unnecessary obstacles to elderly patients and patients with disabilities. He worries that some patients simply won't get tests done—the tests done that they need to if they must travel further distances and make further travel arrangements in order to access them. It means a sicker population that is not getting the care that they need.

Four supersite labs doesn't change the fact—it actually creates the fact that people will have to travel further distances. It creates increased barriers for folks accessing what they need.

Will the minister reconsider his plans for Dynacare?

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, lets put this issue into context. Calgary is twice the size of Winnipeg and has 18 laboratory and collection sites; Saskatoon has five; Regina has five; Edmonton has 24; and after the consolidation that will take place plus the supersite labs with more accessibility and better services Winnipeg will have 32 labs. This is ideological.

We're about results; they're about ideology. *[interjection]*

\* (14:30)

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

### **Environmental Organizations Provincial Funding Concerns**

**Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, we are facing a climate emergency and now is not the time to make cuts to the very organizations that help Manitobans do our part to fight climate change.

Fifty per cent of the annual funding for the Manitoba Green Action Centre has been cut, and they were notified seven months into the fiscal year. Now they are forced to reduce their programming, lay off staff. And these programs are there to help educate Manitobans on sustainable, safe and active transportation, which has a long-term impact on the health of Manitobans and on our environment.

Why is the minister cutting funding to environmental organizations?

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Acting Minister of Conservation and Climate):** Certainly, I'm pleased to get up and answer a question on the environment, considering what the NDP lacked to do in their 17 years, Madam Speaker, in government.

Essentially, we, of course, as government, are working with all our stakeholders, Madam Speaker, and Manitoba is committed to taking—obviously, we are committed to action on our climate concerns. We'll get it right.

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

**Ms. Naylor:** The Green Action Centre isn't the only ones who have fallen victim to the minister's cuts. The Manitoba Eco-Network has lost their annual funding that they have received for 20 years.

Manitoba has seen the devastating effects of climate change this year, from droughts to flooding.

The Manitoba Eco-Network has been a leader on research and disseminating accurate scientific information on environmental issues.

Manitoba cannot afford a government that neglects to take the climate crisis seriously.

Will the minister reverse the cuts and adequately fund environmental organizations today?

**Mr. Wharton:** The department will launch and has—will be launching a centralized grant portal with Municipal Relations, Madam Speaker, and Sport, Culture and Heritage, for all organizations to apply—one portal.

Madam Speaker, we know that as we transition the new grant portal for—some NGOs, actually, will see an increase in funding.

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

**Ms. Naylor:** Madam Speaker, we have seen time and time again that the Pallister government uses program changes to mask its cuts. These funding cuts are another example of the government's lack of action on tackling greenhouse gas emissions or following the science on climate change.

Manitoba environmental NGOs cannot do their part and achieve output-based results if they do not have the funding they need.

Will the minister reverse these cuts to important environmental organizations? Will she do so today?

**Mr. Wharton:** Under the NDP—the NDP never met one climate change, not one, Madam Speaker—17 years. Matter of fact, on the back of a napkin was their climate plan.

We know the challenges that we have with our lakes and Lake Winnipeg and our streams.

Where their—the NDP essentially didn't have any—any—response to climate at the time, and now, now they're talking climate. The NDP never had a climate plan. The NDP government is just for the spending—of sake of spending—real, meaningful, measurable contributions by NGOs on climate plan.

Madam Speaker, where they got it wrong, we'll get it right.

#### **Foster-Care Homes and Maintenance Rates Auditor General's Recommendations**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas-Kameesak):** The Auditor General's report into foster care raises real

concerns about the care of our province's most vulnerable. Homes are being licensed despite noncompliance. Home compliance visits are rare and unannounced visits are not required. Dozens of people are living in foster-care homes but don't have the necessary background checks, including criminal record checks.

Why has the Pallister government not addressed these serious issues?

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Families):** The member opposite will remember that immediately upon hearing of what had happened in—under B & L, we did an overall review to ensure that—the safety and well-being of those children, and so that was phase 1 of that review. The second phase was also to ensure any systemic problems.

So many of the systemic problems that we released in our review on Friday, along with the OAG, the office of the Auditor General, releasing their review on B & L, many of those there were some commonalities in some of the systemic problems. We've already taken various measures to ensure that we've addressed those issues. We'll work closely with those people in the communities as well as we'll look at the—at further of what the Auditor General brought forward in the review and we'll make those changes.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for The Pas-Kameesak, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Lathlin:** In the audit, the department, CFS authorities and agency officials all expressed concerns that the current basic foster care maintenance rates do not adequately compensate foster parents for the costs of caring for our children. This issue was raised as a key risk to the system.

Unfortunately, the way the Pallister government has structured block funding means agencies face impossible choices without the funds to adequately fund foster care.

Will the minister address this issue as recommended by the auditor?

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, the auditor—the audit from the Auditor General reflects a snapshot in time, and we know that we have a changing landscape before us with changes to the federal government legislation and C-92, Madam Speaker. And so we understand the federal government is looking to proclaim that legislation on January 1st of next year with very—with absolutely no consultation or discussions with the provinces, as well.



We know that, certainly, child welfare is under the purview of the provinces and so we are looking to the federal government to see what it will look like moving forward with respect to funding, and I'll wait to provide more information after the next question.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for The Pas-Kameesak, on a final supplementary.

**Ms. Lathlin:** On Friday the Auditor General explained that these matters have been under consideration for several years and that government had opportunity to address them. Unfortunately, this hasn't happened.

The breakdown of care at B & L is just one example of a system facing serious problems. Placements at B & L continued earlier this year, but the minister has provided no evidence that the agency is complying with the new requirements.

With their review released, what is the plan to implement the recommendations?

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, the member opposite should know that back in 2017 we initiated a pilot project on single-envelope funding, and we received some very positive results as a result of that single-envelope funding resulting in an 18 per cent reduction in the number of kids in care and those participating agencies.

We have also been quite successful at reducing the number of kids in care. Last year, for the first time in 15 years we saw a reduction in the number of kids in care, and I'm pleased to report that once again this year we found a reduction as well for a 4.3 per cent reduction overall to the number of kids in care in our province.

We are about getting real results for Manitoba children and families. We will take no lessons from members opposite, who left us with an extreme mess when it comes to the child-welfare system in our province.

### **Heavy Metal Recycling Municipal Zoning Concerns**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface):** I've been approached by many St. Boniface residents about the Province's decision to approve a licence for a scrap metal dealer which in the past has been ordered to cease activities because municipal zoning didn't allow their activities next to a residential area. I table documents showing residents' concerns of Rakowski Recycling operations in their neighbourhood for various reasons.

Among the activities that are prohibited by zoning at this site is the storage and disposal of lead batteries, but the provincial licence explicitly grants permission to handle lead batteries. The former minister promised this licence would not be granted so long as zoning didn't change. The zoning hasn't changed.

Why is this government granting permits for heavy industrial activity right next to residential areas?

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Acting Minister of Conservation and Climate):** I thank the member opposite for the question.

Appeals of Environmental Act licensing may be made within 30 days, Madam Speaker, of the licensing decisions. All grounds for appeals will be carefully considered in accordance to the appeal provisions of The Environmental Act.

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

### **Air Quality Testing St. Boniface Area**

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface):** There have been repeated tests that show elevated levels of lead and other metals in the soil in St. Boniface neighbourhoods, as well as across Winnipeg in Point Douglas and Notre Dame. Successive governments knew about the problem and did nothing.

\* (14:40)

The department also promised air testing in St. Boniface. That's because residents say they have been able to smell and even taste metal in the air. That air monitor has now disappeared from the government's website. This-do-was-had been promised for months.

Is the minister going to step up and provide proper air testing in St. Boniface where their predecessor failed?

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Acting Minister of Conservation and Climate):** And I understand the staff from the department visited the site on the day of—the licence was issued, Madam Speaker, and—to go over some of the conditions set within the licence and ensure compliance. It sounds like we're not ignoring anything.

### Weston School Area Report Regarding Lead Levels

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** The Minister of Health shared with us in Estimates that there was cover-up when it came to the public release of lead levels in soil in the Weston School area.

I'm curious as to why the minister decided to share this information years after the alleged cover-up took place.

The Minister of Health also said in Estimates that there is no dangerous level in this area.

Is the minister going to continue the cover-up or will this government take action and call for an investigation into what happened so that, in the future, governments can be better held to account?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, to be clear, there was a cover-up when it came to the lead levels in soil: by the NDP government. There was a website devised to give people information that was never allowed to go live. There were discussions at Cabinet. Members of that side were complicit in these things and our government took action.

**An Honourable Member:** Name them.

**Mr. Friesen:** We'd be happy to name those members.

Our government took action; our government went back to ask for more testing. It declared to individuals what was going on. We take the safety of Manitobans very—as a primary point of care, but that NDP party tried to cover up the facts.

### Mental Health and Addiction Supportive Recovery Housing

**Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere):** Our government understands the importance of investing in mental health and addictions services, services that give Manitobans the support they need to overcome their health challenges so they can successfully transition back into the community.

Supportive recovery housing, for example, has been shown to reduce relapse rates by providing safe, stable housing for those who have completed treatment.

This morning the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living made an important announcement regarding supportive recovery housing in Manitoba.

Could the minister please share the details of this announcement with the House?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Rossmere for the question.

Earlier today it was my honour to declare this week of November 25th to 29th Substance Use and Addictions Awareness Week.

Madam Speaker, we're keeping our promises when it comes to improving mental health and addictions services in Manitoba and this morning we made plans and announced those plans to add 100 supportive recovery housing beds to our health-care system.

These spaces create access for individuals who have completed treatment. It gives them a place to go, a place with rehabilitative supports, accountability, access to recreation, opportunities to work and to volunteer, to stabilize them and give them a pathway back to real and successful living. It is yet another example of how our government is getting better health care sooner for all Manitobans.

### Northern Manitoba Justice System Review

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Madam Speaker, last week I asked the minister what he was going to do about the collapse in the administration of justice in northern Manitoba. In one case, a single mom of four waited 51 days without a bail hearing.

The minister said that he's known about this issue for some time, but has only made vague commitments to improving the current situation.

I ask the minister today, in detail, what is his plan to address injustice and will he commit to a comprehensive review today?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I do appreciate the question in terms of public safety in northern Manitoba.

Clearly, I think Manitobans appreciate the mess that we inherited from the NDP government, and certainly this is a classic case of an NDP mess that we're trying to clean up, Madam Speaker—*[interjection]*—not that we—

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Cullen:** —the first step—Madam Speaker, we are working with the judiciary, we're working with Crown counsel, we're working with lawyers in northern Manitoba and we're working with sheriff and probation officers to find productive outcomes for

this, and we are starting to move the needle on the issues around bail in northern Manitoba.

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

**Ms. Fontaine:** Again, the minister said last week that he's known about this issue for years, particularly under his ministerial leadership, and yet according to his own annual reports there are actually less people now working in Manitoba court operations than there were three years ago, Madam Speaker, and there are less people working in prosecutions. This is an absolute contradiction. The minister has known about this problem and has done less than nothing.

Will he commit to a comprehensive review today, as recommended by Justice Martin?

**Mr. Cullen:** Well, Madam Speaker, the fact of the matter is the NDP knew there was an issue in northern Manitoba. When we realized the issue there, we have taken proactive steps to address it.

Madam Speaker, the NDP left the whole judiciary system in a mess. It is an antiquated paper-based system that we are moving to change. We are bringing forward an integrated case management system all across the judiciary for all of Manitoba that will move Manitoba Justice into the 21st century. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Cullen:** The NDP ignored it; we're going to get the job done.

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

**Ms. Fontaine:** I invite the minister to review his own annual report, and what he'll find is that every aspect of our courts have seen a decline in staff over the last three years, all under his ministerial leadership. That includes court operations, judicial services and sheriff services, and Manitoba prosecution service has also seen a decline in staff as well. The minister says he's known about the problem for years, but why is he doing less than nothing and why is he ensuring that there are less people to work on these issues?

Will he commit to a review immediately today to rectify the situation in northern Manitoba?

**Mr. Cullen:** Well, Madam Speaker, here's the fundamental difference. The NDP knew about the issue for years, chose to ignore it. We, on the other hand, are making investments in northern Manitoba to address the situation.

If the member would actually take the time to read the full annual report, she will know we're actually achieving outcomes for Manitobans in terms of fewer days before they get to, actually, into the court system. So better outcomes for Manitoba and in—and matter—Madam Speaker, in terms of Thompson itself, we have committed to an \$11-million investment in that facility alone; that is progress.

### **Door-to-Door Sales Scam Compensation for Victims**

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** My question is to the new minister of consumer affairs.

In April of 2018 the—Winnipeg residents signed a contract with a door-to-door direct seller called Utilebill promising to pay over \$37,000 for a furnace, a HEPA filter, water filter and electronic air cleaner, when all of these products should've cost less than \$10,000 including equipment and installation.

Now, after the CBC carried this story, the Pallister government promised—in last year's Throne Speech—to do something about direct sellers in Manitoba. They did nothing. A year later they made no mention of this issue in the recent Throne Speech. So promise made, promise not kept.

Will the new minister tell us when he will honour his government's promise to help the growing supply of victims of this scam?

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance):** Our deepest sympathy goes out to all Manitobans who've lost their hard 'erk'—or hard-earning money on unethical behaviours, so it's a part of it. Such actions include—we've taken real actions. In fact, we've taken real actions including things like appropriate administrative penalties to unlicensed sellers and taking preventative measures to educate the public on problematic practices through consumer alerts, news releases and public representations.

\* (14:50)

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

**Mr. Maloway:** The minister knows that all direct sellers in Manitoba are required to be bonded. I'd like to know whether any of these bonds have been called and any of these victims have received compensation for the losses.

Had he compensated anybody, he probably would have owned up to it and mentioned it in his answer, which he did not.

**Mr. Fielding:** As mentioned to you, our government takes consumer protection issues extremely important. We want to make sure that consumers are protected in some ways where there's not unethical practices that are in place.

Our government wants to make—people are educated as much as they can, in terms of—protect themselves as citizens of Manitoba, and that's our—something our government is very committed to doing.

**Madam Speaker:** The time for oral questions has expired.

### Speaker's Ruling

**Madam Speaker:** And I have a ruling for the House.

Following oral questions on October 10th, 2019, the last day of the First Session of the 42nd Legislature, the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) rose on a matter of privilege regarding the government's failure to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review revenue Estimates report. He expressed his opinion that this failure to provide an account of the Estimates of revenue by the government impeded his ability as an MLA to understand a critical component of the financial affairs of Manitoba. The member concluded his remarks by moving that, and I quote, that this matter be referred to a Legislative committee. End quote.

The honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Goertzen) also spoke to the matter of privilege before I took it under advisement, and I thank both members for their advice to the Chair on this matter.

For the information of all members, in order for the matter raised to be ruled in order as a prima facie case of privilege, members must demonstrate both that the issue has been raised at the earliest opportunity and also provide sufficient evidence that the privileges of the House have been breached.

Regarding timeliness, the honourable member for River Heights said that, and I quote, I do need to raise this now because it relates to a matter that we found out only earlier this afternoon. End quote. Accordingly, I would rule that he did meet the condition of timeliness in this case.

Regarding the second condition of whether a prima facie case has been demonstrated, the member argued that the, and I quote, privileges of a member are violated by any action which might impede him or her in the fulfillment of his or her duties and functions.

End quote. He further stated that the—and quote, failure to provide the Estimates of revenue by the government impedes our ability as MLAs to know a critical component of the financial affairs of Manitoba. End quote.

As stated on page 220 in the second edition of Maingot's Parliamentary Privilege in Canada, questions of privilege are frequently raised, but few are found to be prima facie cases. Members have a tendency to use the rubric of privilege to raise what is really a matter of order or, in the words of the Speaker of the House of Commons, a grievance against the government.

For the information of all members, parliamentary privilege is a constitutional right passed on to the Parliament of Canada and to the provincial legislatures from the United Kingdom's 1689 Bill of Rights and was incorporated into the Canadian experience to provide protection for members to exercise their parliamentary duties free from interference.

I would remind the House that the individual protections for members under parliamentary privilege include: the freedom of speech; the freedom from arrest and civil actions; exemptions from jury duty; freedom from obstruction, interference, intimidation and molestation; and the exemption from attendance as a witness. In order for a prima facie breach of privilege to be found, one or more of these individual protections would need to be demonstrated to have been violated.

Based on his comments in the House on October 10th, 2019, the honourable member for River Heights appears to have a grievance against the government regarding the tabling of the revenue Estimates, but his argument did not meet the thresholds I have just described regarding his privileges as a member of this House.

Several previous Manitoba Speakers have made the point that while members may have a case for a grievance or complaint against the government, such cases do not amount to a prima facie case of a breach of privilege. Speaker Rocan made this point on June 19th, 1991, and March 13th, 1995, as did Speaker Hickes on June 5th, 2000, and April 25th, 2002, as well as Speaker Reid on August 27th, 2013.

Accordingly, I am ruling that this matter does not constitute a prima facie case of privilege.

## PETITIONS

### Personal-Care Homes

**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:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The provincial government has allowed personal-care homes to serve food that is warmed from frozen instead of being freshly cooked, depriving seniors the taste of good food, which is one of the few real

pleasures that would be—they would be able to enjoy at this time of life.

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Signed by Lucienne Germaniuk, Marie Bourrier, Rene Bourrier and many others.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Acting Government House Leader):** Would you call for the resumption of debate on the Throne Speech?

\* (15:00)

## THRONE SPEECH (Fourth Day of Debate)

**Madam Speaker:** Resuming debate on the motion of the honourable member for Southdale (Ms. Gordon) and the amendment and subamendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage, who has 16 minutes remaining.

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** Again, I do invite all members in the Chamber here to participate in the wonderful activities that we're going to have in support of Manitoba 150. It really is going to be the most memorable anniversary in Manitoba history.

I am proud of our government's commitment to culture, heritage and sport, and I'm very excited to be

able to continue in this role. But now I would like to turn to the other part of my portfolio. Our government has taken many actions to improve the lives of women and girls in Manitoba, and I'd like to share some of them with you now.

Our government has made the largest capital investment in health in provincial history, and its investment in women's health and the new Women's Hospital at HSC will be a welcome addition for all women right across the province of Manitoba.

This \$267-million investment will provide women, their families, the newborns, a warm and inviting environment to give birth and to address all of the issues that involve women and women's health here in the province of Manitoba.

And I'm proud to say, Madam Speaker, that it is our government that backed—that got it back on track after many, many years of NDP mismanagement and delay.

And in November 2018, our government established the gender-based violence committee of Cabinet, Madam Speaker. And this is the very first committee of Cabinet of its type that was established to focus on the issue of gender-based violence. Our government recognizes the need to take a whole-of-government approach to tackle the issue of gender-based violence.

And recently we invested \$3.34 million into women's health initiatives, including expanded treatment for eating disorders. And just this October we announced that we were providing \$2.4 million to Klinik and Laurel Centre to provide walk-in counselling services to women and trauma counselling services as well as seven-day-a-week trauma intake centre, the first of its kind here, Madam Speaker.

The executive director of Klinik, who was just with us here today in the Chamber, hailed this, and I quote, the largest single investment in our counselling services in decades, and is projected to cut wait times, Madam Speaker, for women seeking counselling at the Laurel Centre significantly.

And recently we also announced \$3 million worth of new shelter beds at Siloam Mission, and many of these beds will be designated specifically for women, Madam Speaker, so they can feel safe in a separate unit.

We recently announced a heaven—\$176,000 in new funding for woman's resource centres in

Winnipeg and Brandon. And we ensured annual funding of \$118,000 for the West End women's resource centre for the very first time ever, Madam Speaker, and I'm proud to say that she was—that executive director was also with us here today, supporting us in the new bill that we just introduced today, Bill 7. The NDP said no for 17 years, but our government recognized the important work that the West Central Women's Resource Centre does.

And we passed Bill 2, The Municipal Amendment Act, which implemented and strengthened codes of conduct for municipal council members. And I know that's going to be just discussed today at the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

We also announced \$58,000 in new funding for the Women's Resource Centre in Brandon, Madam Speaker, including expanding programming in Spanish, and more crisis intervention and counselling.

We also updated and implemented a new respectful workplace policy after the NDP let sexual harassment go unchecked at the highest levels of their government.

Our government established third-party reporting protocols for sexual and domestic violence with Klinik, Heart Medicine Lodge, Sage House and Pluri-Elles.

We passed Bill 15, Madam Speaker, The Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention Act, which requires sexual violence policies at private vocational institutes, in addition to existing requirements of public universities and colleges.

And I want to talk about what's next for women and girls in Manitoba, Madam Speaker. As mentioned in the Throne Speech, we will introduce Clare's Law, which will allow people to be informed if their intimate partner has a history of violent convictions. Alberta and Saskatchewan have already passed this law, and we need to join our western neighbours in this important initiative.

Our government recognizes that we must do more to improve the lives of women and girls here in Manitoba. This is another important step to ensure that women and girls can make the right choices in their lives.

We'll expand job-protected leave to survivors of interpersonal violence regardless of the perpetrator. We will also expand this leave to people taking care of dependent children and adults who have experienced or witnessed interpersonal violence. Six other

provinces have expanded this legislation and we will join them in survive—in supporting our survivors.

We are not content on this side of the House, Madam Speaker, to sit on our hands and claim that we are helping foster—and claim that we are helping women. We are actually taking action, and from all the information that I just provided to you, you can see that we are taking action to address domestic violence here in the province of Manitoba.

I am proud to be a member of this government who recognizes the importance of women and girls here in the province of Manitoba and recognizes the importance of working side by side with the community to address these very, very important issues here in Manitoba.

So I would like to say thank you to our government for taking that important action and recognizing the importance of women here in Manitoba; and I would like to say thank you, as well, to our Premier (Mr. Pallister) for all of the work that he has done in bringing our province forward and really moving Manitoba forward to make it the most improved province in all of Canada.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry):** I wanted to thank the people of Fort Garry who have placed their trust in me to represent them. I want to thank all those who helped send me here, including my many volunteers, campaign team, friends and family, without whom I would certainly not be here today.

And I want to acknowledge the previous MLA for Fort Garry, Jamie Allum. He's had a lasting impact on the riding, one that was on full display as I knocked on doors. They spoke warmly and fondly about his passion for the community. I also share his passion for social justice and his belief that we can, in fact, build a fairer, more prosperous, more equal Manitoba. He's been a mentor and a friend, and I appreciate all he's done for me personally and for the province.

The constituency of Fort Garry is incredibly diverse with over 25 per cent of the population being newcomers. It's younger and better educated than the Manitoba average, with almost half the population are renters.

It's also a riding with challenges—some of the poorest neighbourhoods not only in the city, but in the province. It's the original car suburb of Winnipeg with historic neighbourhoods like Wildwood Park and the former Metis Rooster Town settlement. It has a

vibrant arts—or activist and arts community in Earl Grey and Rockwood, and a hard-working West and East Fort Garry—and with rapid transit and international immigration this one-time suburb is quickly transforming itself into a growing and increasingly dense urban neighbourhood.

As I speak, a number of hi-rise apartment towers are under construction, making this one of the fastest growing parts of our province. It is a welcome challenge to be a small part of guiding this community's transformation.

For many, Fort Garry is the first community in which they will settle in Manitoba. I suspect their experience in making Manitoba their home will be very similar in many ways to my own family's story.

My mother was born in the Ukraine and her and my grandparents were taken by the Nazis and placed into a forced labour camp. My grandfather's forced labour job was to go into now empty homes of Jewish residents and spray chemicals throughout the apartment. The Nazis were literally fumigating the homes of Jewish residents who were sent off to concentration camps.

My grandfather was taken from us way too soon. He died of Parkinson's quite young, and I suspect it was the chemicals he handled in those days that amounted to his early exit. The Nazis obviously didn't care about the Ukrainian slave labourers they had under their control; they weren't given any safety equipment and they weren't worried about the toxicity of the chemicals they were forced to administer.

As horrible as that story is, as horrible as I imagine it would have been for my grandfather to do the forced work of that kind, as an adult I've certainly recently learned that I actually have Eastern European Jewish background in my heritage, and it illustrates to me how anyone of us could be the person whose apartment is being fumigated, and I think it's a valuable lesson for all of us, for those with power on the government benches and those of us who aspire to it on the opposition side.

We are a small and privileged group of legislators who have the honour of serving Manitobans, and when we do our job well, we are the voice for all Manitoba. When we fall short, we only become the voice for the small and chosen few.

\* (15:10)

Politics is about power—who has it and what we do with it, and too often our laws reflect what is

important to those who have power in our society. The strong get to decide the rules upon which the weak and the vulnerable must live.

We must all keep in mind that today we may be in a position of power. We may be healthy, financially secure and have a voice that people listen to. In short, we are strong. But tomorrow and at some point in all of our lives, that power will be taken away from us. We will be in poor health, we will fall on hard financial times and we may be isolated, alone or ignored.

It is my absolute belief that as legislators, we have taken a sacred oath to represent all Manitobans, both weak and strong. We as a Legislature must govern as if we are the ones without power, as though we are the ones who are vulnerable and as though we are the ones who are in need.

My family was liberated by the Allies and placed into a displaced persons camp. We now call them refugees and they came to Canada and they settled in the Brooklands neighbourhood in a small cottage without running water and an outhouse in back. And so began their journey as newcomers. The racial slur of the day and how they were greeted to Canada was with the moniker of being a DP or a displaced person.

My grandfather understood that the key to a better life in Manitoba was education. He was an intelligent, very well-read man, but didn't have much formal education. Those opportunities were not open to him. But he was going to make sure that they were open to his family. One wonders what he would have been able to accomplish if he'd been given the opportunity of higher education.

But, without complaint, he made do with what he had. He became a licensed barber, opened up a barber shop on Selkirk Avenue and catered to Eastern European immigrants. And, like all newcomers, they worked hard, lived modestly and saved. They dealt with language and cultural barriers, racism and intolerance, and they did so with grace and understanding that the next generation would have it better than the last.

He encouraged my parents not to settle, to strive for a better life, not to be cowed into the racism of low expectations, not to accept other people's dismissive narrative of two working-class kids from the North End. He encouraged both of them to get education and take the opportunities that were denied to him.

As a result, both of my parents became public school teachers. My father went on to start the first

bilingual Ukrainian program in Transcona-Springfield School Division and my mother touched the lives of students for over 30 years, teaching grade 3 in Garden City and Maples. I have, to this day, middle-age adults stopping me and telling me how much their—my mother believed in them and changed their course of their lives forever.

Now, through their hard work and sacrifice, I was able to attend law school, and for the past 20 years I've had the great honour and privilege working in the criminal justice system in Manitoba. I witnessed first-hand how poverty, mental health and systemic racism works against many Manitobans. I've seen a system that in many ways is broken. In our justice system, it matters who you are and how much money your family has and it often determines what we consider a crime in this province and what we consider a just punishment. We are not equal in our justice system.

Many of my former clients would come to court having grown up in abject poverty, neglected, abused, abandoned, living desperate lives of survival. Often the stresses of their lives would lead to serious mental health issues or substance abuse and addiction. A criminal record or even a jail sentence in that world is hardly a deterrent.

I have seen chronically homeless offenders commit petty crimes and intentionally get arrested, knowing they were going to jail. They would time their crimes, their arrests and their detention just when the weather turned cold. A winter in a warm jail sleeping on a hard bed with three meals a day was a better life than trying to brave Winnipeg streets in -30° weather.

I have seen in one week a client be the victim of a horrendous crime and days later turn into an aggressor and victimize another. This cycle is repeated daily in our community. Those that commit the crimes are often those most likely to be the victims of it.

I recall an incident as a young lawyer. I was in a meeting with an 18-year-old client at the Remand Centre and for those of you who've been there, there's a row of lawyer booths which are all glass and you can see down the row, one row after another. And I'm going through a very serious charge with this young man and I lose his attention. And he stands up suddenly and he starts banging on the glass. And I see he's trying to get the attention of the man next to him and he all of a sudden jumps up, and my client starts screaming, and he's screaming, he's—hey, dad. Hey, dad.



And I see their hands touch up against the glass in sort of a prison embrace and it was a sad, touching moment, but those men would only see each other from now on separated by glass.

And there were several lessons I learned that day that we, as a province, have yet to learn: When everyone you know goes to jail, there's no shame or stigma to it, and when we failed that young man's father, when we wrote him off, when the effects to his life didn't end there, the trauma, the hurt, the pain—it's passed down from generation to generation. It ends up costing us millions and it makes us less safe.

Had we dealt with the issues that brought the father to jail, that son may have never seen the inside of the Remand Centre.

We have a Province that has failed those people. They are the weak, the vulnerable and they suffer trauma from their lives. When someone commits a crime, they violate the public trust, but I can tell you after 20 years almost every one of those offenders that I've met has had their trust violated first. That's what it takes for someone to stop caring, to stop caring about how people will see you, to stop caring about the needs of others. Someone has to take away their trust so they can stop and take away yours, and any child who ends up in our child-welfare system or the criminal justice system, we have failed them and we have failed Manitoba.

The justice system was designed in the 1800s by rich, white men and it's accomplished what it set out to do: it has kept rich, white men out of jail for over 200 years.

What it hasn't done, and what it's not designed to do, is address the needs of poor, the racialized and the mentally ill, and imagine in Manitoba if we asked the people who actually use the justice system how they would design it, what type of system that they would come up with.

Now, as a young father of three wonderful children, I ran and won a by-election for the school division—the Winnipeg School Division. I went on to be re-elected two more terms. I was elected as the vice-chair and finally as the chair of the board, and despite an education system that is chronically underfunded, one that's funded by far below the national—and they always see the average—we are blessed in this province with outstanding teachers and our schools.

Now, not all students come to school equally placed to learn. Not a day goes by that tens of

thousands of Manitoba students don't come to school hungry. You can't learn when you're distracted by hunger.

Now, my partner Jackie, who has sacrificed and supported me in my political career and for whom I will be forever grateful, she's currently finishing her education degree and is a teacher candidate—otherwise student teaching in our schools, and I can't remember in the last two years' time when she's actually been able to eat her lunch. Not a day goes by where she gives up her lunch to some of her students who are clearly starving and can't concentrate in class that day. In a province and country as rich as ours, this is beyond shameful and, as a Legislature, we need to do better.

Now, you cannot learn if you suffer from depression or anxiety. You cannot learn if you're homeless or your family moves every three months. You may be war-affected and traumatized by the horrors you've seen. You may have been abused or deal with daily instability of neglect, alcohol or drug abuse in the home. Until we recognize as a province that many students have often multiple barriers to them succeeding in school and until we, as a Legislature, commit to providing resources to help those students overcome those barriers, we will continue to lose a generation of students, and as a Legislature we need to do better.

I've seen first-hand how the legacy of racism and the exclusion of indigenous Manitobans have affected our community. This has directly impacted my home. My partner Jackie is a '60s scoop survivor and a member of the Teetl'it Gwich'in First Nation. Events and tragedies that happened many decades ago and a thousand kilometres away still resonate and affect our lives.

*Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

For thousands of Manitoba these legacies have a lasting and enduring influence in how their lives unfold, and as a Legislature we have a solemn duty to repair the damage to our community and to reconcile all Manitobans. We will be stronger for it and this is who we are.

In Manitoba, we certainly believe in community and we understand it intrinsically, that we are stronger together than apart, and I think nothing highlights this more than how Manitobans act to one another in a snowstorm, and I think you're all familiar with this scenario. You're driving late at night on a dark, lonely road in blizzard-like

conditions. You come upon a fellow Manitoban who's off the road, stuck in a snowbank. And how do you know someone is a Manitoban? Because a Manitoban will stop; a Manitoban will leave the safety and warmth of their car and they will get out and they will push that vehicle out of the snowbank, and they do it without any need for thanks or favour; it's automatic. And they know that some day it's going to be them in that snowbank and they're going to be the ones that will get pulled out by a stranger.

That's what it means to be a Manitoban, and as a Legislature we need to embody that spirit. We need to build a province, one that includes all Manitobans, regardless of who they are and where they come from.

\* (15:20)

On any objective measure, this Throne Speech fails Manitobans. It does nothing to build our province. It ignores and marginalizes the voices of many Manitoba communities and it privileges the few at the expense of the many.

Middle class living standards depend heavily on public service. This government has engaged in reckless cuts to health care, education, infrastructure. They have been solely responsible for eliminating thousands of good middle class jobs: Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba Public Insurance and over 14 per cent reduction in the provincial civil service. They have made cuts to municipalities and school divisions, all of which compound these cuts they have already made and mean even more job losses. And with cuts to municipalities and school boards, it forces other levels of governments to raise taxes on Manitobans and cut teaching, nursing, child care and public service positions.

For every job that has been cut, economists estimate it results in a further three other job losses. So for—every thousand jobs that the Pallister government cuts ends up being about 4,000 jobs lost in the Manitoba economy. And those are jobs not just connected with teaching, medicine and public service, they now go into all professions.

We have gone from having the second lowest unemployment rate in Canada to now having one of the worst, including having the worst unemployment rate in a generation. Our economy is slowing down, and this government is putting Manitoba into a recession. This, after 15 years of having the second fastest growing economy in Canada.

We are starting to see the effects of this government's choices not only hurt Manitobans' economy,

but directly affect the overall well-being of Manitobans. In their 2019 annual report, the government reveals that the percentage of youth aged 15 to 24 who are not employed, educated in education or training, has seen a 12 per cent increase. College and tuition is getting less 'infordable'. You're going to have less students. There's been a drop in attendance of 18-to-34-year-olds at Manitoba post-secondary institutions. We're seeing a decrease in the percentage of people aged 15 or older who are employed—so not only is this government putting students out of school, it's putting students out of work.

We're seeing for the first time in a decade that Manitobans are now leaving the province en masse, that we have more people leaving than coming here. And people are literally voting with their feet. They have seen what the Pallister government's Manitoba looks like and they don't want any part of it.

We've seen 20 per cent increase in the number of children in care. We're seeing premature mortality rate increase in the past year. We're seeing an increase in deaths occurring for people under the age of 75. And we're seeing an increase in the prevalence of chronic disease by income—meaning the poorer you are in the—Manitoba, the higher rate of diabetes you're going to have, hypertension, respiratory illness and arthritis. It is not hyperbole to state that the government's policies are 'litelaly'—literally killing more Manitobans each year, and we are seeing an increase in Manitobans who enter poverty in the last year.

And this is the saddest part, but it makes sense: Manitobans' income inequality has grown for the first time in years, with the richest 10 per cent of Manitobans share of after-tax income growing against the poorest 40 per cent in our province. In other words, the Pallister government's Manitoba—poor people are getting poorer, rich are getting richer.

And remember the sort-of most improved province mantra from this government—we don't hear that too much anymore for obvious reasons, as it was a silly and hollow boast back then and now seems cruel and cynical.

Now, none of this is by accident. I wish I could blame this government's obvious fiscal incompetence and mismanagement, but sadly, I can't. This is the result of choices they have made and are continuing to make under this Throne Speech. The pain they are causing Manitobans is by design.

This government has outlined a shopping list of boutique tax cuts that Manitobans never asked for and

which have no valid public policy reason to enact. What unifies all of them is that each and every one of these tax cuts will disproportionately help those at the top and do little or nothing for everyday Manitobans. What they will do is continue this government's regressive approach to taxation by shifting the tax 'burthen' from wealthy Manitobans who are disproportionately benefitting from Manitoban's economy and have the greatest ability to pay to middle- and working-class Manitobans who are not benefitting from this economy and have the least ability to pay.

So rich Manitobans get their taxes cut; everybody else has to pay for them.

Now we have a tax breaks, we're told, for fancy haircuts. Well, most Manitobans don't spend more than \$50 on a haircut, and this is going to help very few Manitobans. And the ones that it will, they've never asked for it and they don't need it.

Now, if this is this government's idea of feminism, we're in a lot of trouble. If this government wants to be a feminist government, how about a law that ensures pay equity in Manitoba. I mean, the message that this government is sending is that, well, we don't care if women get paid equal wages for equal work, but we do think that your fancy haircut, you're paying way too much PST and we're going to cut a break on that. With the \$7 million that we lose from fancy haircuts, we could keep an ER open for a year, we could keep class sizes lower and we could create thousands of child-care spaces.

Now, we have tax breaks for accounting fees. Well, you need to have a lot of money and assets in order to use an accountant, and, of course, the larger and richer your business is, the more accounting fees you'll have. So this is disproportionately going to help those, again, that need it the least. Another \$11 million is going to be squandered on this, and that can certainly stop the cuts to police and save our local libraries.

This Throne Speech benefits those at the top while making life harder for the rest of us. It's making us poorer, less educated, more unhealthy. The policies contained in it will make Manitoba less fair and less equal. For the sake of this government, we need to do better. Thank you.

**Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain):** I am truly honoured to once again represent what I believe to be one of the most beautiful constituencies in Manitoba: Riding Mountain.

When the electoral boundaries commission released its final report nearly a year ago, the Riding Mountain boundaries changed, as did many in Manitoba. My constituency changed considerably as the northern portion of the former Arthur-Virden constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was rolled in, and areas to the west like Rosssburn, Russell and the Asessippi area moved into Swan River.

At the time, the change seemed a bit daunting, but as I got to know the new area, I realized the people who lived in the 5,000 new homes were just as appreciative of the work done by our Progressive Conservative government as those who lived on the west side that are now served by my friend and colleague, the honourable member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk).

I want to thank all the volunteers who assisted me during the campaign. I'm going to name them: Dallas Watt, Terry Johnson, Ray Orr, Jim Kennedy, Tarra Moulson, Celina Nernberg, Gary and Joanne Findlay, and my parents Joe and Shirley Nesbitt, who provided me with the odd meal.

I travelled over 8,000 kilometres, meeting as many people as possible in coffee shops and at fairs and parades across communities in my constituency. The new Riding Mountain constituency, which stretches from Highway 2 in the south to the north side of Riding Mountain National Park and from St-Lazare in the west to midway between Minnedosa and Neepawa, has an even more diverse economy, adding oil to the mix of agriculture and tourism.

Oil is extremely important to the economy of Virden and surrounding areas. As of December 2018, there were approximately 3,700 producing wells in Manitoba. Manitoba's oil is of good quality and the estimated value of the over 13 million barrels of oil sold in 2018 was \$943 million. Two hundred seventy-six new wells were drilled in Manitoba in 2018, including 263 horizontal wells. The current cost to drill and complete a well ranges from \$325,000 to \$1.8 million depending primarily on the depth. These numbers give you some idea of the employees and support services required in the oil field.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only did I inherit one of the—Manitoba's true resource assets, as you well know, the community of Virden also has a stoplight and a Boston Pizza, both of which'd I didn't have under the old boundaries. An interesting note is that Jim Treliving of Dragons' Den fame and the owner of Boston 'pista'—Pizza International was stationed in Virden as a member of the RCMP.

\* (15:30)

Our government's Throne Speech promised to deliver on the strong mandate from Manitobans in the recent provincial election to continue building a 'stronger,' more resilient Manitoba. Since being elected in 2016, we have kept our promises. That's important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as people remember what you promise and what you deliver.

Too often into the past, under the previous NDP government, promises were made but not kept. When electors cast their votes on September 10th, they were satisfied with what we had accomplished in less than four years but also extremely excited about our five-point guarantee that we announced during the campaign.

After completing our promise to reduce the provincial sales tax by 1 per cent in our first term on July 1st, 2019, we went one step further with our guarantee pledging that the average Manitoban will save \$2,020 in taxes and fees over the next four years. These savings will come from the 1 per cent PST reduction but also from removing PST on personal-care services, such as haircuts and nail treatments, on professional income tax preparation and the 'preparation' of wills.

We will not roll—we will roll back vehicle registration fees by 10 per cent and eliminate probate fees. We will also continue to index the basic personal exemption and personal income tax brackets. These savings for Manitoba residents, which will begin in 2020, add up, Madam—Mr. Deputy Speaker, and are in direct contrast to the NDP's election promises and alternative throne speech suggestions of spending more money but not providing any detail of where the money would come from. On this side of the House, we know where that money would come from: out of the pockets of hard-working Manitobans.

Our plan gives real, meaningful tax relief for Manitobans who, for 17 years, paid higher taxes under an NDP government. Manitobans told the NDP they were tired of their tax-and-spend mentality and reinforced that again this fall when they elected the largest back-to-back Progressive Conservative majority governments in the province history. They voted decisively for making their life more affordable by having more money on their kitchen tables so they can decide where to spend it.

For years, the Keystone Agricultural Producers and the Manitoba Teachers' Society have been on record supporting the elimination of the practice of

collecting education tax on property. As we promised in the election campaign and reinforced in the Throne Speech, our government will eliminate the education portion of property taxes and instead fund education entirely from provincial revenues. The phase-out will begin the first year after the budget is balanced and will be completed over a maximum of 10 years. Once fully implemented, the average homeowner will save more than \$2,000 annually.

Better health care sooner has been the focus of our government since being elected in 2016. After inheriting some of the longest wait times in Canada, our government decided to consolidate our emergency resources in Winnipeg, which will lead to consistently shorter wait times—wait times.

Our \$2-billion health-care guarantee will allow for investments to provide better patient guarantee—patient care, care that's closer to home based on the needs of where Manitobans live.

The provincial clinical and preventive services plan, which tapped over 3,000 health-care providers for their insights, will ensure that resources around the province are located in the right place to serve rural residents like those in the Riding Mountain constituency.

In my constituency, we're already seeing the results of our 'governingment', hiring more paramedics to provide 24-7 coverage. An additional 80 paramedics will be hired to achieve a standard of reaching 90 per cent of Manitobans in under 30 minutes, 90 per cent of the time. This is a service that has been the standard in cities, but in rural Manitoba, we relied on on-call EMS providers for many years. Time is so important in an emergency, and our government believes our investments in hiring highly trained paramedics will save lives.

An additional 1,500 child-care spaces will be added as part of our guarantee to build 20 new schools in the next 10 years. Currently, we have committed to building seven schools across the province, including the new Maryland Park School, in the constituency of my good friend from Brandon East, where I am proud to say my granddaughter will begin her education.

Child-care spaces are so important to rural communities, and adding them to any new schools being built is just common sense. In the spring, I was pleased to join the Minister of Families (Mrs. Stefanson) to open the first public daycare in the community of Rivers. This was not a new

build, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but a retrofit of surplus space in the Rivers Collegiate, to serve the residents of Rivers and area. Prior to this daycare opening, many families in Rivers had to drive their children to daycare in Brandon, some 20 minutes away.

I was delighted to hear in the Throne Speech that our government will expand private sector investment in an effort to increase the number of child-care spaces across the province.

Predictably, the Liberal Party's alternative Throne Speech, which may or may not have had some input from Ottawa, recommended our government drop our lawsuit against the federal government for refusing to accept our Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan.

Our plan, which Ottawa said was the best plan they had seen, would have maintained a flat carbon tax in the province, and would have given us credit for our green initiatives like clean hydroelectric power. However, as we all know, our plan was rejected by the Liberal federal government.

While Manitobans send carbon tax to the federal Liberals in Ottawa, our government will continue to face the challenge of climate change head-on, by protecting the environment and conserving our natural resources.

We will help homeowners and business 'retrofit' their homes and commercial buildings by establishing a \$25-million energy efficient program. This initiative is expected to 'redece' greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of taking 27,000 vehicles off the roads.

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

Speaking of vehicles, Madam Speaker, the ethanol requirement in gasoline will be increased to 10 per cent and to 5 per cent for biodiesel, and we will ask the Climate and Green Plan Expert Advisory Committee to provide recommendations on the electrification of Manitoba's 'transfertation' infrastructure.

The increased ethanol and 'biodiesenal' requirements will reduce emissions by the equivalency of planting 25 million trees, while at the same time supporting our agricultural industry by utilizing Manitoba-grown corn and canola.

Madam Speaker, there's so much more good news for rural Manitobans in the Throne Speech. Our government will eliminate regulatory barriers that restrict farmers from producing food for rural markets

and free consumers to connect with local producers who, in many cases, are their friends and neighbours.

Legislation to remove restrictions on Sunday and holiday shopping is being well-received by both businesses and consumers. Gone are the days when people worked regular hours. Consumers having the ability to shop whenever they want should be a basic right. Business owners who invest their capital and want to grow their businesses also deserve the right to retail their products when they want.

I mentioned earlier that tourism is an economic driver in my constituency. Besides Riding Mountain National Park, the constituency has many pristine lakes and some of the best waterfall and game hunting areas in Manitoba.

Thanks to our commitment to budget 4 per cent of yearly tourism revenue to Travel Manitoba over the past three years, area communities have been able to develop marketing plans and boost their tourism revenues through increased visits.

I'm pleased to say we will be increasing our commitment to Travel Manitoba to 5 per cent to allow them to continue to promote Manitoba tourism, along with developing a strategy to attract some major events to the province.

Our government will be adding \$50 million to our \$350-million budget for bridges and highways. We look forward to working with key partners to develop a plan that provides a more meaningful role for the private sector to help us build more kilometres of road for each dollar of taxpayer investment.

Over the past three years, many roads and bridges in the Riding Mountain constituency have been rebuilt and upgraded to today's standards after many years of neglect. A case and point: approximately 25 kilometres between my home community of Shoal Lake and Hamiota on Highway 21 was rebuilt for the first time since the early 1960s, something many area residents didn't think would see happen in their lifetime.

Our Progressive Conservative government cares about all areas of Manitoba, and knows that investing consistent dollars year after year to rebuild our transportation network is very important for both our citizens and contractors.

Our government has always supported our veterans. Our military envoy, the member for Waverley (Mr. Reyes), does a tremendous job of liaising with the members of the Canadian Armed

Forces, their families and legions and auxiliaries across Manitoba.

Our announcement that we would remove property tax from legions and other veterans' facilities, as well as increase their share of VLT revenue, will go a long way to making lives easier for the veterans and their families that operate these organizations across the province.

When I spoke at the Remembrance Day banquet at the Minnedosa Legion and told those in attendance of our government's initiatives, along with our Military Memorial Conservation Fund earmarked to restore cenotaphs and war memorials, I received a tremendous round of applause. It's the least we can do for the people who gave us the freedom we enjoy today.

\*(15:40)

Madam Speaker, I have been in business my entire life, and I can tell you I'm proud to be part of a government that gets value for money. Shopping smarter is the Manitoba way, and the members on this side of the House know that.

Providing the services Manitobans want and in the least expensive way allows us to pass the savings along to taxpayers and brings us closer and closer to fiscal balance in Manitoba.

This is completely opposite of the previous NDP government who consistently raised taxes. They had nearly a billion-dollar deficit when we took power in 2016, while getting poorer results each year in key departments such as Education and health care.

Our strategies and initiatives obviously resonate with Manitobans as the results of the recent election attest, but the job is not done, Madam Speaker. We have committed to balancing the budget in '22-23 and we'll do just that.

However, the previous government's laid a few land mines that we continue to find. The NDP were more than just poor bookkeepers, Madam Speaker, and we expect to have to recognize additional writedowns to remove assets that don't exist and set up allowances for uncollectible loans and advances.

Continuing to clean up the mess the NDP left us is not glamorous, Madam Speaker, but it is a work that is necessary to move Manitoba forward into a brighter and more prosperous future.

I want to thank our Premier (Mr. Pallister), the ministers and Treasury Board members who have done—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** —and continue to do this work to create a better Manitoba.

Thank you.

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park):** Madam Speaker, it's wonderful to have the opportunity to stand up and respond to this government's Throne Speech, and I'm going to get into many details about the Throne Speech, but I did just want to get on record myself saying go Bombers, go. It's the first time that they have won since I've been born and I'm very proud of that.

So, Madam Speaker, you know, one thing I want to talk about is how, as politicians, we have many, many jobs. Many of us, not me in particular, but many of us are parents; many of us are aunts. I am an auntie. Many of us are students. We have many roles in our own lives, and as a politician, two major roles that we have is constituency business, as well as legislative business. So I was hoping to discuss a little bit about both of them with respect to the Throne Speech.

I want to talk about my constituency role first. I am so proud of the constituency in which I represent and the constituency is Tyndall Park. It's actually where I grew up. It's where I went to school. It's where I'm most familiar, and so it's so nice to have the honour to represent these constituents here inside of the Manitoba Legislature.

We're such a diverse community, filled up with so many different groups of people and different religions and cultures and practices and, you know, it's been such an educational experience, even, just growing up in the community.

You know, I can talk about the schools. I've got six elementary schools now in my constituency, Madam Speaker, and Prairie Rose is the first one that comes to mind. It's actually where my nephews are currently attending school, and Prairie Rose, I remember having friends going to that school growing up, and we would play outside at the play structure, and now that my nephews go there I get to go pick them up sometimes when we're not in session, and it's always neat going back down those hallways.

And I can talk about Shaughnessy Park, and what makes Shaughnessy Park School so special for me is it was actually part of my former constituency of

Burrows and is now part of my new constituency in Tyndall Park, so I've been representing them for about three and a half years now and now I get to continue representing them moving forward. So I really like the relationship that I'm building with a lot of their teachers and their students and watching them through the years and celebrating farewell parties and I Love to Read Months, Madam Speaker.

And I can talk about Garden Grove and Stanley Knowles, and why I put these two schools together is I actually attended both the schools. I started off my education and, I guess, pre-school when I was four years old at Stanley Knowles school, and many of the teachers who were there when I was in school have now retired but still live in the community, so when I go door-knocking during the election, I actually run into some of the teachers and they tell me stories that I don't remember at all. I remember this past election one of the teachers telling me a story that, on the first day of school, I brought dandelions for everyone in my classroom, and I had no recollection of this, but I thought it was really cute and I appreciated that the teacher's sharing that with me.

I can talk about Garden Grove School, too. I was at this school, particularly for grade 2 and 3, and then I switched back to Stanley Knowles, and at Garden Grove School, I remember gym class a lot; I remember I lived on Egesz Street at the time, all within the constituency of Tyndall Park.

So, really, it's just—it's so nice to be able to identify with my constituency and really feel at home there.

I can also talk about NorWest. I've talked about this a lot. I've represented NorWest the last three and half years when I was the member of Legislature for the Burrows constituency, and, again, they've now come over into the Tyndall Park constituency, so I have the honour of continuing to work with them.

Whether it be the Youth Hub, which I'm thrilled to see has been invested in, Madam Speaker. They needed that investment, and it's going a long way. Whether it's the food centre, the ACCESS clinic, I'm very, very proud of our community and I'm looking forward to continuing working with them moving forward.

Now, during this past election, when door knocking, the two biggest issues that were coming up and were both addressed in the Throne Speech is health care and justice. So I want to start off by talking about those two.

When I talk about justice, just the other day, I think about the multi-person assault that took place at the liquor store at Tyndall Park market square and just how—like, I grew up—that strip mall where the liquor store is, it actually used to be a Blockbuster Video, and that was my second job. I worked at Blockbuster for three years. And at that point, I could walk home and walk to the Blockbuster Video, my workplace, and walk back home after—at midnight when the store closed, and I felt safe. But now adults going into the liquor store do not feel safe.

We need to be doing everything that we can at a provincial level ensuring the safety. That should be our No. 1 priority, Madam Speaker.

You know, I live very close right now to Tyndall Park school, and the other day when I was actually out with my nephew, we were finding needles on the ground. There were three needles. I'm lucky that they were all in the packages. But nonetheless, in—it's everywhere. It's throughout the entire city, Madam Speaker.

We know that there is a meth crisis happening, and it's unfortunate that this government is doing nothing on it. They've started to invest in the legalization of marijuana, which is great, because we all want to be on the same page with that, but the meth crisis is truly a crisis. It is affecting people every single day. It is ensuring—people are having to be hospitalized for it. People are being assaulted because of it. People are dying because of it. It should be addressed. We should be doing something at a provincial level to address the meth crisis, Madam Speaker.

I remember, too, during the election, talking with some of my constituents because they actually lock their fences, so you can't get into their yards now. And the reason they're locking their fences is because of the number of break-ins that are actually happening.

So, Madam Speaker, if there's something we could be doing—whether it's community groups—we have the wonderful groups like Bear Clan and Neighbourhood Watch, 204, but people are actually starting to create their own neighbourhood watch groups, which are great and we should be encouraging, but there needs to be something more.

And I can't stress this enough. I know it sounds repetitive, but the Province can be doing things. We should be doing things. And so it's really discouraging when we hear a Throne Speech but nothing about community safety. When we hear that the crime rates

are only worsening here in our province, it is discouraging.

And this is just in Tyndall Park alone, Madam Speaker. Like, if you want to talk about the entire province, we could spend the entire response to the Throne Speech doing so.

The second main issue that was coming up at the door a lot, and that was talked about a little bit but not with respect to details here in the Throne Speech was health care.

So I don't know where to start with this. We can talk about the Seven Oaks hospital, and the terrible, terrible changes that this government put on them. Madam Speaker, Seven Oaks hospital, when it was built, billions and billions of dollars were actually invested into the hospital. It has a helicopter pad on top of the hospital. It shows you the capacity that it has. There's so much potential for it. And with the North End population growing out in Amber Trails and Commonwealth Path, it doesn't make sense to be cutting the services at the hospital. If anything, we should be expanding the services.

And so it is discouraging. People are upset and we should be doing something to be investing in the Seven Oaks hospital, not taking away from the hospital and North End residents.

You know, I've also talked about a national pharmacare plan here in the Chamber. We talked about this prior to the last election, and I know, ultimately, it would be lovely. It would be great if the federal government took the lead on this, because then it would be nationwide, but at the very least the Province—they—we have our own two legs. We can stand up for national pharmacare.

You know, in my constituency—well, the North End in particular—one in 10 people are not taking their prescribed medications due to affordability. We should be—there should never, ever, ever be a reason someone is not taking their prescribed medication because they cannot afford to pay rent or afford to send their child to school with a lunch. This should not be a question.

We live in Canada. We pride ourselves on our health care. We should be changing this and ensuring that everyone who is being prescribed medication—because the doctors are prescribing this to them—they should be taking that medication, which would help with a lot of recidivism rates. It would help with hospitalization stays in the long run if people take their medications. There's going to be less falls at

home. There's going to be less having to go on different medications.

So let's invest in this. Let's make sure our Canadians, people here in Canada, here in Winnipeg, Manitoba, are taking their medications.

\* (15:50)

Now, we could talk about the waiting times, but we do that all the time in question period, Madam Speaker, and ambulance fees, how they still are significantly way too high for people. You know, I've used this example before but it's really a tragic example.

I remember—this was in the 2016 election—talking to someone at the door, and she was explaining how—it was in the winter—she had stepped out of her house and she had slipped and fallen. Her neighbour was actually the person to call the ambulance for her. When the ambulance came there, she kept saying, like, no, no, it's fine, but the ambulance encouraged her to go into the ambulance, and so she did.

And then she was later charged with a 500-and-some-dollar fee. And, Madam Speaker, this senior was on low income. She herself was not the one to call the ambulance. She felt pressured from the paramedics to bring her into the ambulance—which, in fairness, they probably should do because they want to do their diligence—but then she got—had this huge fee that she could not possibly pay.

I know ambulance fees are now, I'm being told, around \$300, \$350, and it's still way too much, Madam Speaker. It's part of health care. Whether you're a two-minute drive from the Health Sciences Centre, outside of the city of Winnipeg having to come into the city, it should be a flat rate if—no rate.

Now, to get back on topic here, we're halfway through my time. I actually want to start talking about our legislative roles as politicians. As legislators, it is our job to all work together collaboratively to see what we can do to make our province better.

We have provincial topics, whether that be how health-care dollars are spent or education or immigration, and if we actually all worked together and took away a lot of the partisanship, Madam Speaker, think how much work we could get done.

Now, I often like to talk about the amount of effort and time that is invested—and resources—into partisanship. If that was actually directed towards helping our province, think how much further along we would be, Madam Speaker.



Currently, we have highest numbers of people leaving our province, and you can't help but think about immigration with that respect and all the barriers that are put up, whether it's the \$500 head tax that is now being charged for the Provincial Nominee Program.

You know, when the Provincial Nominee Program first came to be here in Manitoba, there was no \$500 fee, and it actually ran more successfully back then than it currently is now. No one ever waited more than three months. People were being accepted or declined based off credible reasons.

But now, people are confused. They don't know if they're coming to Canada. I still have people coming to my office without status updates on their provincial nominee case file for over a year. No one should have to wait a year to find out if maybe or maybe not they're going to be able to immigrate to Manitoba.

Immigration, the Provincial Nominee Program, we could be improving it. I think that we need to get rid of the \$500 fee because it's taking advantage of new immigrants, frankly, and we need to be able to all work together. Once a Canadian is Canadian is Canadian. Same thing goes with Manitoban, Madam Speaker.

We know that jobs are being cut. We know that cost of living is going up. We should be creating opportunities here in Manitoba, whether that's job opportunities, whether that's affordable education.

We know students are actually leaving our province, not only because tuition is going up—but that is a massive factor, Madam Speaker—but also because the tuition rebate was cut a couple of years ago, and people were basing their careers, their living situations—that tuition rebate was supposed to be the down payment on many people's houses.

If we want students here in Manitoba, if we want our province to flourish and be innovative and creative, we need solid programs, and we need students to be able to go into these programs and pursue them into careers, Madam Speaker.

You know, Manitoba has so much potential: tourism, for example, Madam Speaker. If the government would address the safety needs of our province and invest in things like The Forks Market downtown, we could be prospering in so many ways.

I don't know if members of this House has taken a walk through The Forks Market lately, but there are so many closed stores. And this is supposed to be—

Winnipeg is in the centre of Canada. We have so much potential for tourism, Madam Speaker. We talked about—we built an international airport that is not being utilized whatsoever.

If we wanted, we could really, really be capitalizing downtown Winnipeg. We could be cleaning up the streets in the Exchange centre. And these are all initiatives that the Province could spearhead, but they're choosing not to, Madam Speaker.

Another example of things that we should be talking about that we're not in the Throne Speech are seniors. Whether it's housing facilities, quality home care, pensions, taxes, transportation, all of these things need to be discussed.

And, ultimately, what I believe we need here in this House and I've been advocating for for the past few years is a seniors advocate, Madam Speaker. We have a seniors advocate in BC and we should have one here: a non-partisan person, just like the children's advocate, a non-partisan person where people can go to discuss their needs and their concerns, because right now, seniors are afraid. They don't know where to go. A lot of them don't have the support system.

We need a place for them to go, a place of safety. We know that oftentimes seniors are being misplaced in homes. A lot of the times seniors are in a supportive housing home when they should be in a personal-care home. They're in a personal-care home when they could be just receiving some home care.

There needs to be a better system set up, enabling—all these seniors have contributed so much to our economy over the years, we should be doing something to take care of them. It's the very least we could be doing, Madam Speaker.

So this past weekend my colleague from River Heights and myself, we actually co-hosted a forum of sorts on senior care, and I'd say about maybe 50 people came out, and it was a nice discussion. We had some panelists and it was just so obvious that senior care is a real concern here in the province.

And so if we just take the time to listen to Manitobans, if this government were to actually take the time to listen to Manitobans, they would hear that seniors are concerned. They want a seniors advocate, Madam Speaker. They want to be placed in the correct home. They want quality home care. And as I said, with everything they have contributed to our economy over the years, that is the very, very least we could be doing, trying to provide those things.

You know, I also want to talk about mental health a little bit. This government needs to start treating mental health the way that they treat physical health, or that physical health is treated here in the province.

You know, I often use the example that if a person has a broken arm, they go into the hospital, a cast is put on it and they walk out of the hospital. They don't have to open up their wallets, they don't have to hide their face.

But when it comes to mental health, we have no resources that are available and accessible and affordable. We need people to feel that there is no stigma on mental health. If you are struggling with depression, with anxiety, if you need someone just to talk to, check in with, there should be people you can do that with.

We have places like the crisis hotline, for example, though Klinik, Madam Speaker, but there should be therapists, there should be a familiarity and it should be regular visits. People should not feel ashamed and it should be completely accessible if you need to talk to someone about mental health.

And I hope that that's something that this government—because it needs to happen soon, it can't wait for another four years—this government needs to take that initiative. Maybe it's talking about coverage for therapists, maybe it's talking about coverage for psychologists, but something needs to happen.

We know that organizations like the John Howard Society and Elizabeth Fry association, they've actually been cut in funding, and we should be doing the complete opposite. We should be investing in funding in those places, opening up more transitional places for when people are let out of prison, for example.

Oftentimes, when people are let out of prison, and this leads to recidivism rates, they fall back into old patterns, back with their old crowds. But if they had places to go, healthy food to eat, places like the Elizabeth Fry association and John Howard association, I believe that there would be a lot higher of a success rate for justice and crime here in our province. I think we would be doing better.

Anyways, Madam Speaker, I'm going to wrap up here. I'm looking forward to hearing other people's responses to the Throne Speech. Thank you for this opportunity.

**Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere):** I'm glad to hear that the—[interjection]—I'm glad to hear the

raucous applause which so frequently precedes my speeches in this House. I'm also glad to hear that members who have just spoken are, and I quote: looking forward to hearing other speeches. I certainly hope this one will not disappoint.

\* (16:00)

It's a privilege to stand here, Madam Speaker, elected for a second time and for a second term. It's not something I take lightly. It's not something I take for granted. It's actually a very humbling thing when you go through that process and on election night you find out that you've won. That's not something I think any of us should take for granted. Some areas are easier than others, and I'm grateful to be back here.

I want to thank my family. My wife, Ruth, worked tirelessly during the writ period. She—well, she did just about everything and I want to acknowledge that and put that on the record. My kids, also, just were absolute champions during the whole election process—Simeon and Chloe and Ezra, they all rolled up their sleeves and got involved. Our kids actually took turns making suppers for our family. And Ezra, who is 11 years old, made Kraft Dinner a few times just so that we could all have something to eat and so that we could keep things moving during those very, very busy days.

I was so grateful that they also joined me at the door. And some of our kids brought their friends. In fact, quite a few of their friends came and joined me at the doors of Rossmere. And it was a lot of fun to hang out not only with my own kids canvassing and campaigning, but as they brought their friends, their friends as well listened and watched and observed and accompanied. And it was a great experience for them and it was a great experience for me, as well.

So young people are a wonderful asset, and it's such a sad thing when they're ignored or pushed aside or brushed past. They were truly a great asset to my campaign, and I just want to thank all of the young people. Literally, there are too many to mention, but there—who came and helped. We had a lot of fun. And I sincerely hope that one day those young people will consider putting their name forward for public service. And I hope those seeds were planted this summer in Rossmere on the campaign trail.

I want to acknowledge a number of other people, as well. One family in particular: the Fast family. Their kids are all very musical, and we toured seniors homes together, we toured apartment blocks together. They would sing and I would speak. And I think that

people enjoyed their singing more than my speaking, but they certainly listened to what I had to say and I was very grateful to have won in those places that we visited with the Fastos. They are a terrific family, they're good friends, they have talented kids and it was fun to make it fun and mix it up a little bit in how we campaigned.

I'm very grateful, as well, for some newcomers to Canada who came and helped me. They couldn't vote; they can't participate yet in democracy because they're not yet citizens. They are on that path. But they wanted to come and help me, and they did. They really came and worked very hard. And I want to acknowledge them and thank them for their support as well.

I want to thank the people who put signs in the ground. I think particularly of my friend Larry [*phonetic*], I think particularly of my friend Russ. Those—I don't know how many hundred signs they put into lawns, but they worked very, very, very hard and I want to acknowledge them on the record.

I want to acknowledge Barrie and Marvelle are well into their 80s, and they came and helped. They answered phones, they made phone calls, they organized things, and it was just tremendous to have people, like I say, well into their 80s working beside my 11-year-old son. It was quite a place and we had a lot of fun.

My dear friend Helen, also well into her 80s, came and helped as well. She did whatever she could. And, Madam Speaker, I just want to acknowledge her contribution, which was so kind and generous. And we'd pick her up and give her rides and then she'd come and make a few phone calls or, you know, prepare some literature—whatever it was. It's an honour, and it's very humbling to have people come around.

I was grateful, as well, for the assistance of teachers. I was grateful for the assistance of nurses. I was grateful for the assistance of doctors and these medical professionals who said, we understand that the system needs to be addressed and we will come and support you, Andrew; we're going to come and stand with you; we're going to come and stand beside you.

Madam Speaker, as is the case for many of us in this House, my boundaries were changed, and so I inherited some new areas and lost some familiar areas. I was so grateful to be warmly received in those new

areas, and I look forward to serving those people more in the future.

Madam Speaker, I'm struck in a fresh way at the fragility of life because over the summer I lost a number of friends. I lost three friends personally and then was informed of a fourth who just passed last week, and these are sobering things. I don't know—I don't recall a summer that has been marked by that number of funerals, but I do want to acknowledge my friend Gary, my friend Eileen, my friend Didier and my friend Gerard, who, sadly, are not with us anymore, but all of them expressed a great encouragement to me when they were here.

Madam Speaker, I met a former NDP Cabinet minister when I was canvassing, and I was surprised to see this individual, and they were surprised, I think, to see me, and indicated to me in no uncertain terms that they would not be voting for their former party. That is the amount of confidence that this individual had in his former party.

And so I put that on the record because I think it is very telling. I think it is a moment that I will never forget, hearing somebody who held a prominent position in this place say, not anymore; I can't support that party.

Madam Speaker, the Concordia emergency room, it's no secret that that was quite a controversy in our area, and—but as time grew on, I was curious to see how this would play out, and I was always grateful for people who would take the time to call and say, I had a wonderful experience at Concordia Hospital, and I just want to call and tell you about that.

Madam Speaker, I had one lady call me, and this is a quote from her phone call: I was treated like royalty, is what she said. So I had someone else meet with me, and they said they were very unhappy with the changes at Concordia. I listened. I tried to explain. Well, a couple of weeks later, they called me back. They said, I just had to use the Concordia ER. I totally—or the Concordia urgent care. I totally get what is going on. I just had the best experience that I have had in a hospital—in that hospital, ever. This is an individual who's been in the medical system for, you know, more than a few times, due to their age.

So, Madam Speaker, what that tells me is that changes that this government has boldly made are making a positive difference in the system, because people with no vested interest, people with no particular partisan attachment are calling and saying, I get it; this makes sense; this is working.

Madam Speaker, I do want to honour the time restraints. There are many of us who'd like to speak. And I just want to draw attention to one or two things, if I may, in the Throne Speech. The first is a commitment to amend the limitation of actions legislation, and that legislation doesn't mean much to people who are not in that world, but to those professionals who are currently liable for their work for longer than anywhere else in Canada, those amendments will mean a great deal. I think, for example, of architects, who are currently liable for 30 years. They are required to take out insurance for three decades, and the estate of that professional can be liable as well.

What this means, Madam Speaker, although most of the time it is digitally stored now, is that people sometimes had filing cabinets in their attics or basements of all of Grandpa's work because Grandpa—although Grandpa is no longer with us, the estate could potentially be liable under the old legislation. It's good news that finally that's going to get looked at, and we're going to see some real changes.

\* (16:10)

I close on something that actually was the opening of the Throne Speech, and—close to the opening. And those were the comments about religious freedom. Now, I listened with some interest at a colleague across the aisle who referenced the horrendous things that happened to the Jewish people in World War II. I don't take—I don't think any of us in this House, no matter of political stripe, take those things lightly.

But, Madam Speaker, we can't just wait for things to reach that boiling point. We do need to speak up whenever religious freedoms are trampled on or are compromised. And it is with sincere concern that our government is—has expressed no small caution about the religious freedom issues going on in Quebec, the curtailing of freedoms. And I must say that, if I understand the Quebec legislation properly, there is an exemption that public servants cannot wear or express religious freedom with—by wearing symbols except—if I understand it correctly—they can wear crosses.

Madam Speaker, I find that doubly offensive because that is the elevating of one faith—albeit my own—over another. That is not democracy and that is not equality. We do need to have equality. We do need to have an even playing field. And we will always stand for those freedoms in this province. And I look forward to discussing that at more length via a resolution referenced in the Throne Speech.

I do want to respect the time restraints which have been placed on me. I've already stretched what I said I would do. I know that members would probably love to hear more, more, more, but I shall have to keep it there for now.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook):** Madam Speaker, let me be the first to say it's great to have you back in the Chamber after your absence for the last few days.

For myself, if I had to have a theme to what I'm about to say, I would say that it's now become the norm and not the exception. And a secondary theme would be: What does it matter to me? And that's the message that I get from my constituents in my communities.

For myself, my background—I live on a First Nation here in Manitoba. I grew up there. I was educated on-reserve, I was educated off-reserve. I woke up there this morning and I'm going to go to sleep there tonight. And for me, I take pride in the fact that I can be able to do that on a daily basis.

Born and raised in my community, I've also experienced a lot of hardships and a lot of undue what does this mean to me, what does it matter to me, how does this affect me—those kinds of things are very common in our communities, including my campaign and the things that I've gone through in a campaign. And that was a big question that I had: Why does this matter to us?

My constituency of Keewatinook is 95 per cent—probably closer to 100 per cent—First Nation and indigenous communities. So we've always been bounced back and forth between provincial, federal governments. What does this mean? At the end of the day, we fall between the cracks in a lot of different situations—health care, education, justice, social injustice, social welfare, all those kinds of things.

For myself, like I said, born and raised in my own community. My father's a commercial fisherman. I invited him here for my member's statement the other day. He'll be 81 years old in December. He's been a commercial fisherman for almost 60 years. And even to that day, he's always fully supported things that I've done.

I stand here today 47 years old. My first dabble into politics, I ran for chief in my home community of Hollow Water. I was 19 years old. So the very first time I could vote was actually the very first time I ran.

Twenty-two votes—that's what I lost by in that election.

So, to me, that showed exactly where we are moving. We are moving towards the youth. The youth are the future. And, like I mentioned earlier in my other speech, the youth are not only the future, they're the now.

So, when you talk about and go into schools and talk to the youth, don't talk down to them, talk to them as your equal because, at some point in time, they are going to go be the future. They are our future leaders. They are our elders in training. For me, one of the things I've always been very confident in saying—and I say this to my children all the time, and I'm sure every person and every parent in this room here and across the province and across this country will have the same feeling. I want my children to be smarter than me, and that's going to be a message that I've always maintained and I always go.

For me, I'm a father of six children. I was a foster parent, an adoptive father, biological children, and I've—so I've kind of gone through the whole gamut of exactly what a blended family would be like, and it's something that I take pride in and I—when I go out in my community and support my communities and support not only my community but my surrounding communities all across Manitoba and even my extended families here in Winnipeg and across the country and across North America, for that matter, I would maintain that same kind of method of thinking.

I'm a coach; I'm a hockey coach that can't skate. I'm going to sit here and admit I'm a Canadian that can't even skate, but I coached hockey and I ran as fast as I could, so I coached up to pee-wees, and then they couldn't—they could skate faster than me, so I stopped doing it.

But I'm also a baseball coach. So in my baseball life, in my base—also an active baseball player, my baseball life I've coached my daughters, and my daughters' baseball teams not only here in Manitoba but across the country.

So, in our surrounding communities of Hollow Water, Sagkeeng, Black River, that what made up our team, and we represented Team Manitoba for the North American Indigenous Games a couple years ago in Hamilton. And they were very—and when I mention their names of our teams there because we had a club team that played and—what is—my number is—seven of our members made Team Manitoba: Emily Bushie, Allyson Bushie, Keyairah Hardisty,

Trista Boulette, Recheal Courchene, Alura Courchene and Amber Curé. They went out and they were ambassadors of not only young women, not only young indigenous women, but also of young indigenous Manitoba women. So they went out there and now they're 17 to 19 years old and now they're doing that in other levels. Now they're exactly—they're the role models now that are going on to the future.

My daughter, who's 19 now, is going on to be an ECE. When she graduated high school, she went back into our school, worked with our JP program—our Jordan's Principle program and worked with a young man—a young boy named Blaise [*phonetic*], who had all kinds of challenges growing up, and he was a prime example of a youth that would fall between the cracks and fall in the system, which is something that Jordan's Principle is encompassed to eliminate.

So that gave her that drive to now go back into school. I'm going to go back and make that difference. So, to me, that's something that's well worth that effort; that's—things was always done.

And when I said one of the greatest fears as a parent is to outlive your children. We've had, in my personal life, my own niece, my brother's daughter died from complications of the flu when she was five years old. We buried her on her sixth birthday. And that just doesn't happen. Trying to understand in our communities how does that happen, how do you die from something as simple as the flu, and trying to engage that and trying to understand that is something that I will never get to understand.

Another youth that we—that passed away—I won't say passed away—he was murdered. Hunter Haze Smith-Straight, another member of my community, and one of the cautions that I've always spoken about, especially when we have youth in our community and issues in our community, is don't let them be the cause of the day. That young boy never got to experience his life because his life was taken from him. He wasn't sick; it wasn't an accident; he was murdered.

But, again, we have to caution that that's not going to become the cause of the day and something that we rally behind. Let's put an inquest; let's put an inquiry, and then once that—all that hoopla is gone and we're talking about that a month now, it's something that just, again, going back to my theme, it's now going to become the norm instead of the exception.

One of my reasons for running for politics here in our communities is to be able to make that difference,

be able to go out there and actually say I'm going to walk the walk, talk the talk, all those kind of things.

In our communities and in most people, for indigenous communities it's one thing. Even rural communities you become a jack-of-all-trades and you become the go-to person to do all kinds of different things. In a First Nation community that's even more so tenfold.

I'm a licensed first responder in my community. My very first call in my community was to a murder-suicide and, again, that became the cause of the day, and to me that started to become the norm. If we had things like that happen to us today, we would never accept it, we'd never put up with it. But, again, it's just something that's becoming the norm.

\* (16:20)

But, when you get into your communities, and even into political life, it gets to be a thankless job. You'll—for every 999 things you do correctly, the one thing that you do what somebody disagrees with, that's the one thing you'll feel. That's the one thing you'll hear about. That's the one thing you'll hear on a regular basis.

So, when I first became a candidate, I wanted to make that difference and make those ninety-nine–999 things matter. I didn't have a goal of becoming a paper candidate. I didn't come here to go through the motions. But as I sit here, while we are different political parties and have different views and positions on certain issues, I like to think we all have a lot of common ground and interests for all of Manitobans.

I come here with a need to raise awareness. While we are not—while we will not agree on all issues, my intention is not to bash government, but rather to share ideas, compromise and come up with concrete solutions for all Manitobans.

But in my short time here, I found some protocols to be very old and ineffective. My goal is to remain with a positive attitude and make that difference, that every person comes to this Assembly with and hopes to accomplish for their constituents.

I come to this arena of public service to make a positive difference, but it seems things are the same all across political arenas, local, community, municipal governments, provincial government, federal governments, that when you—comes to time to actually get things done, it gets very discouraging, as we'd much rather argue and look out for certain

interests rather than the greater good, which is very unfortunate.

Even as I stand here speaking, it has a sense of going through the motions, following some old, out-of-date protocol just to say we did what was required: I put in my 20 minutes, or for lack of a better term, we put in our required time.

As each member takes their turn to speak to this issue of the Throne Speech, it's very clear that this is the fact, the case there's very few members listening or even paying attention, for that matter, and will perhaps just say I'm going to read this later in Hansard. However, if I raise my voice, slam my hand on the table, I'll have the full attention of the Assembly.

But it shouldn't come to something as dramatic as that to get—to garner attention to issues of the day, issues that Manitobans are dealing with on a daily basis should be more paid—should be more than enough to garner everyone's full attention.

Our province, our citizens, Manitobans are in crisis. Health care, education, climate change, public safety, jobs, housing, social issues, they're all in crisis. We're just so accustomed to it being the norm that we don't have our eyes wide open to realize it.

It makes me think of an analogy I heard right from when I was a child about a frog, something as simple as a frog, that if you had a pot of boiling water, and you put that frog in there, he's going to jump out because he knows he's boiling.

But if you put him in a pot of cold water and slowly heat it up, he'll sit there and boil to death because he just don't know that he's in crisis. And we are that. We're sitting and we're boiling to death, and we don't even realize it.

My constituents are boiling; we're in crisis. The difference is we know it. We realize it; we are seeking help. We're seeking assistance. We are tired of the paternalistic approach where someone else tells us what's best for us. We have the professionals in our communities. We have the experts. We have the front-line people with their boots on the ground. What we don't—want is the commitment from government to provide the vital assistance and resources needed to assist, not come and do the work for us, but to assist, to work together and to work collaboratively.

You've heard the saying, walk a mile in my shoes. For us, I say, live a month in my community, not walk a mile in my shoes. That would give you a true sense of what our lives are like. It's not a snapshot of a

moment in time, but rather it would give you a true understanding of what we endure, not only year in and year out, but month to month, day to day and in some cases, hour to hour.

During my campaign, I was fortunate enough to visit the Island Lake communities: four communities, population over 13,000 people, isolated, cut off from the outside world, so to speak.

My first initial visit, my first day, my first five hours of my day, involved a plane ride, a 20-minute walk, a 10-minute boat ride, a four-minute truck ride, another five-minute walk, and I finally got to my very first destination to see my very first constituent in I-Lake area.

And that's—for them, it's just normal. That boat ride that I took, the first leg of that boat ride, I sat at the end of a dock, a dilapidated dock that was falling apart, waiting for the boat to come. When the boat finally came, I couldn't get on the boat right away because we needed to assist a dialysis patient who was in a wheelchair, just him and the captain of the boat, to get off, roll him down that dilapidated dock because he had to go from St. Theresa Point to Garden Hill for dialysis, and that was his norm.

If we sat there today and this happened in downtown Winnipeg, that would be absolutely unacceptable—absolutely unacceptable. And it's, again, for them, it was just the norm.

We take for granted in the south here what people need to do every day. We take those things for granted: power; fresh, affordable food; clean water. Think about that 'exsorm'—the storm we just experienced and how it required a state of emergency. Do you know that some—and by some, I mean close to all—of the northern communities have at been—have at times been without 'pawter'—have been without power, without water for extended periods of time? No, most likely you haven't, because it has become our norm. It has become the way of life and we just have to accept the way that life is.

There is no commitment to the North. We have become afterthoughts, a demographic that the government feels that we have to talk to rather than want to talk to. There are no Conservative members in the North, and for that, the people in the North will be made to suffer, suffer because they expressed their democratic right to have a fair voice, a fair representative, a fair spokesperson, a representative that truly spoke up for and listened to their interests and

didn't just posture support while looking out for the privileged few.

I have always believed that government's goal, and, more specifically, an individual politician, should be to get elected by acclamation, meaning that there would be no challenger because that person was doing right by all, not just right by the people that they feel supported them. Most, if not all, of my communities have Third World conditions within our respective communities.

And here we sit in 2019 and have our citizens living in those conditions of poor housing, poor education, poor health, and those conditions exist as I speak. They not only exist as I speak, but they exist only 200 kilometres from where I am speaking here right now.

And for that, this government should be ashamed—ashamed there is no comprehensive commitment to work together, ashamed that Manitobans have to live in these conditions and circumstances.

My constituency is well over 90 per cent indigenous communities and people—we see no real commitment from this government, but rather, we are accommodated out of convenience rather than respect. We are told that we are a federal responsibility and our issues are bounced back and forth in the hopes that we will give up.

Climate change is a real issue that affects us today. And as I mentioned, I have a number of isolated communities in the North, particularly in my riding. Climate change is effective today. Winter road seasons, which rely—which our communities rely on for vital support for our housing supplies, food, quality of life, that window is getting shorter and shorter and shorter.

I was fortunate enough in my time representing chief in my community to sit on a board that compromised a makeup of the First Nations that built the winter road system, in conjunction with the federal—with the provincial government, but now that window is getting shorter and shorter and shorter.

When I was a child, my father—to this day, not only is he a commercial fisherman, he's our winter road supervisor for our southern area which goes all the way up to the Island Lake network. When I was a kid, we used to be able to go out on a winter road system already by this day. We're sitting here in the second, third week of November, we'd already be out

there. Now they're lucky if they can get transportation before Christmas.

And again, that window at the end is also getting shorter. So what it comes down to, it's sometimes there's maybe 10 days to two weeks to get basically a year's worth of supplies to your community. And that's something that's a real factor today.

Two of our communities in my region, Bloodvein, Berens River, have all-weather road access. And for that, they are fortunate enough to be able to do that. And now they can have some semblance of a little bit of a better quality of life. But that's just the start. There's still other communities that are literally a stone's throw away. But because of a lack of commitment from funding, a lack of infrastructure to be able to build them an all-weather road access, they don't have that.

The other day, I asked about winter road access. And the answer was referenced to Shoal Lake 40. That's also a community that was in need of a road, and that's road that—and they're grateful for the fact they have that road. But again, that road is down here in the south. We need a comprehensive plan for people in the North.

Instead, people in the North and, in particular, indigenous communities are told that we are a burden on the taxpayer. That's something I have heard time and time again in my campaigning, time and time again, just on everyday life. We're not a burden on the taxpayer. We're taxpayers every single day. The biggest—the best argument that I heard, and I've heard this for many, many years, and now I've heard it from a grade 7 student in my class—in my home community school just two weeks ago: Doesn't our money come from the royalties of the land? I'm pretty sure my grandpa, my grandma, all my ancestors, never gave up anything. So why are we the ones being told that we're the burdens?

\* (16:30)

Indigenous peoples have long been ignored, and this Throne Speech continues on that path of ignorance by not reflecting our community's needs. When I've gotten up here to speak, I've read the Throne Speech. I didn't cite specific things in this Throne Speech, but there are things in there that are—relate specifically to us. Even just the public sector construction projects, winter road access. Will we have DNCs, directly negotiated contracts? Will we have CBAs, community benefits agreements that, again, will encompass our people to be able to learn a

trade, continue on and be able to bring that thing forward, including with Manitoba Hydro?

Again, we want skills transfer. We don't want someone to come in there with a paternalistic approach and do it for us. We want to be able to learn those skills, so we can pass that on.

Another reference in the Throne Speech is to the outlet channel. But the reference in the Throne Speech is about calling on the federal government to expedite things. So why are we, again, calling on the federal government but at the same time criticizing that government for not helping?

One of the other things I see in there too is the resource development when it 'tomes' time to shared management. What exactly does that mean? What do you mean by shared management, and how is that going to affect us? How is that going to help us? And, more importantly, how are we going to be engaged to develop those agreements rather than just say here's the agreement, live by it, like it or not? So we have to be able to be accommodated in that way, instead of coming across like a militant state.

More things I see in there too, is about night hunting, about indigenous hunters and how eight more COs are going to be put in there, to again, just enforce—enforce—enforce, rather than work collaboratively. And that's something that needs to change.

One member in my community sitting there went hunting with his children. Again, sustenance. But what happened to him? Face down on the ground while his kids are watching there. Face down, COs, guns drawn. Again, a militant state.

So, in closing, I'd like to once again thank my community and my constituents for giving me this honour to represent them here in this Assembly. And I honestly hope I did not offend anybody. I've always been one to speak my mind and again, that's why I was elected.

Miigwech, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

Earlier today the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson) requested that the names of the teams from the 1965 Grey Cup be included in Hansard. To ensure that the information is included precisely as requested, I'm going to put this to the House again.

Is there leave of the House to include the names, numbers, positions of the roster and coaches from the 1965 Grey Cup, meaning both teams, in Hansard



immediately following the member's statement made by the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson). Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Jon Reyes (Waverley):** Today, as diehard football fans would know, today is victory Monday. Not only did our Winnipeg Blue Bombers win the Grey Cup but also my Pittsburgh Steelers, that's the team of the former member for Minto, and know we share a passion for our teams.

But, seriously, thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing me to—the opportunity to speak on the Throne Speech from last week which explains our new, continued course of action to continue to keep Manitoba moving forward, a mandate that is just as an ambitious plan, one that will focus on long-term, sustainable measures that will continue to fix our finances, improve the services and rebuild the economy.

But, before I go on, Madam Speaker, I want to thank the many people along the way that have helped me get re-elected as an MLA in the new constituency of Waverley. I want to thank my campaign team including Fred Westfall, Jeff Denessa *[phonetic]*, and Todd Labelle. I also want to thank the many, many volunteers who came to help me get re-elected in Waverley. There are so many names to mention, but I'm so thankful for the great team we had.

Speaking of teams, that is why our PC team was re-elected for another term, to keep Manitoba moving forward. I am very proud to serve alongside our Premier (Mr. Pallister) and our caucus, as I know I'm surrounded by people who are driven, passionate, working hard to get positive results to those we serve.

I knew that my former constituency of St. Norbert would be affected when the boundary changes were going to be announced. As a result, the new constituency of Waverley was formed. I'm looking forward to the challenge of doing my best and continuing to be the hands-on MLA that I was in St. Norbert. We accomplished many things—many great things in St. Norbert.

I was proud that our PC government was able to invest just under \$20 million locally, including the \$16-million expansion at École Noël-Ritchot, \$75,000 towards the outdoor canopy at the world-famous St. Norbert Farmers' Market and \$50,000 towards a South Pointe playground, to name some of the local investments when I served as an MLA.

I'll continue to advocate to do what's best for my constituents in Waverley and for our province to make

the best decisions for your betterment. Part of our campaign moving-Manitoba-forward guarantee is to build 13 more new schools on top of seven that are in the plans to be constructed. That is why I'm very happy to say that our PC government recognizes the need to build 20 new schools in the next 10 years across all the corners of Manitoba, from Winnipeg to Winkler and East St. Paul to Brandon. This commitment, Madam Speaker, represents a record-setting pace of investment in new school construction that will give more students the opportunity to learn in the very best classroom spaces.

I'm also very happy our PC government recognizes that the southwest part of Winnipeg, my 'constitusewey' of Waverley, is indeed the fastest growing quadrant of the city, where two new schools are under way in the Waverley West and two more future schools will be constructed in the future.

It was also great to see last week the progress that I saw first-hand of the just-over-\$2-million investment of the elevator project at Arthur A. Leach school that will improve accessibility for all students and staff at the school located in Waverley Heights.

Investing in schools and future ones is key to all stakeholders involved with education, and especially the students. That is why our government is also undertaking a mandate review to prepare to implement reforms that will achieve better outcomes for our students with a kindergarten-grade 12 review.

As a city boy, I remember back in the days of elementary school we would do these field trips to the farms. It was always enjoyable to see the animals, like you're going to a petting zoo. These were probably some of the field trips I will always—I was always looking forward to, when we would be visiting farms. Well, speaking of farms, I have more of a deeper appreciation of farms and the agriculture industry, having visited some parts of rural Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, during those years, I was fortunate to travel to some parts of rural Manitoba with my kids, to visit my colleagues and to see their way of life in their communities. As I mentioned before, I went to Shoal Lake, Manitoba, with my kids, where my good friend and colleague, the MLA from Riding Mountain, resides.

While in the beautiful constituency of Riding Mountain, through the connections of the local MLA, my kids and I were able to visit some farms, talk with farmers and to see what they do. It was a great experience for me, coming from the capital,

Winnipeg, learning the terms of some types of equipment like swather and a sprayer and it was great to see my son having the opportunity to ride with one of the local farmers in a swather. Of course, we saw farm animals, which my kids enjoyed meeting, with more farmers, and we even got to see Manitoba bison from a distance again thanks to my friend, the MLA from Riding Mountain.

I also learned the best farming equipment is either manufactured by John Deere or New Holland. I had a great time in Shoal Lake, and so did my kids.

I also went to Dauphin, Manitoba. I appreciated more about farming and the 'agriculture' on the farm of the member from Dauphin and that time of year, it was actually harvest season. He showed me the different types of crops that were invested at the time. It was soybeans and canola. He showed me all of the land that had to be harvested, and I was even able to ride on a combine with my good friend, the member from Dauphin. And he—showing me some of the operations involved with harvesting.

Madam Speaker, going out to the farms and visiting rural Manitoba was a great experience, and I have a great appreciation and even more of a great deal of respect for farmers. And that is why I'm proud to be part of a PC government which will eliminate provincial regulatory barriers that 'respic' the ability of farmers to produce food for local markets and free consumers to connect directly with local producers. Thank you to all the Manitoban farmers for all you do for our province.

As special envoy for military affairs, it was great to be part of an event at the Henderson Legion with colleagues to hear the revenue-sharing agreements with veterans organizations will increase to 30-70 from 25-75 on an interim basis, as set forth in the Province's 100-day plan.

\* (16:40)

Veterans, both past and present, served, fought and continue to shape our country. Their willingness to give everything they had has afforded us a safety and security we enjoy today, something we must recognize and never take for granted.

I want to thank the Premier (Mr. Pallister) for allowing me to continue to serve as the military envoy for the Province and knowing that our government will introduce legislation to exempt all veterans' organizations from municipal property taxes throughout the province. This'll be great news to many Legions and ANAVETS organizations.

Just recently, I visited Arborg Legion on Aboriginal Veterans Day in Riverton, and paid a visit to Arborg with our outstanding and fine member from Interlake-Gimli, and all of the above news I just mentioned was welcomed wholeheartedly by members of the Arborg Legion.

I'm looking forward to visiting the Legion in Swan River in the near future, and more throughout our province. To all veterans, from your fellow veteran, thank you for your service.

Madam Speaker, back in 1990, I took the oath to serve Queen and country in the Armed Forces. I had a great experience serving overseas in Germany, and I left Manitoba in 1993 to serve full-time in the Canadian Armed Forces with the Royal Canadian Navy.

From my experience working overseas with teams allowed me to prepare for the future that I had no intentions of going into: politics. And after 10 years, I was able to get a post-secondary education at Royal Roads University with a business degree in entrepreneurial management in 2001.

My wife, Cynthia, had moved out with me to Victoria and there we had our daughter Reyna. We wanted to come back to Manitoba to be with our immediate family, as we knew the cost of living was more affordable in our home province versus British Columbia.

When we moved back, and after realizing my wife and I wanted to do something that many young families don't do so often, was to open our own business. We lived in the basement of my in-laws. We still decided to go into business for ourselves.

Through the hard work, the family support we had, we did well, servicing our customers and creating jobs. We bought a brand-new home in 2003, but over the years, I realized that we were not getting ahead due to the overtaxation of the previous NDP government, so I paid more attention to the news.

I'd been involved in non-profit organizations like the kidney foundation, creating the Manitoba Filipino Business Council, and helping those wanting to get involved. I was addicted to achieving positive results, and many who knew me—I go—'moony' who knew me recommended that I go into politics.

So here I am, Madam Speaker. The party that created the Provincial Nominee Program: the Progressive Conservative Party, I decided to run for. A party that helped immigrants call Manitoba their

home, that many other provinces have emulated this program.

We inherited such a mess from the previous NDP government, but we are cleaning that mess. During the first term, I've learned a lot. I look forward to moving Manitoba forward to continue to fix our finances, to improve the services and rebuild the economy.

A safer Manitoba, a more prosperous Manitoba, so we can leave our province in good hands for future generations to come.

Before I conclude, I want to thank my family for their support. My wife, Cynthia; my children, Reina and Miguel; and I cannot forget about my dog, Seger; my parents and my in-laws, as well.

C'est tellement un plaisir et un honneur d'être le député de Waverley.

### **Translation**

*It is a such a pleasure and an honour to be the member for Waverley.*

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** What an honour and a pleasure it is to once again rise here in this Chamber and to address my colleagues, especially on such an exciting day. Of course, it is the day after the long-suffering fans of Winnipeg have been rewarded for their loyalty and their patience and, of course, we are Grey Cup champions here in Winnipeg once again.

I say once again because, of course, Winnipeg has a winning history and it's not something that even people of my generation would understand. It goes back a little bit further. But in my particular case, I did come of age at a time when the Bombers were a strong CFL team and they were a winning team. And I remember that game in 1990. I do remember the last time the Bombers won.

I was 11 years old. I was just starting my own football career and—my amateur football career, just for the record—but it was that team that I looked to and those heroes on the field, including—and I wear the jersey very proudly today, of Chris Walby, because he was a hero of mine in that game and in the CFL.

He's not just an example of an amazing football player but we all know, of course, that he was an amazing Manitoban and remains so today, a committed Manitoban, somebody who I also had the pleasure to have him teach me in his post-CFL career. He was a teacher and taught at River East Collegiate.

And so not only did I have my idol to look for—look to on the field but also in the classroom. He is an example of a Winnipegger who, you know, is an example to all people and as a young person, he was my hero.

Now I think to my son and my daughter who are just getting more and more interested in football every year. They haven't taken the step over to start playing the game, but for them to look to heroes like Andrew Harris and to Nic Demski, who show us what it is to be a Manitoban and can be the heroes of the next generation. So I take a few minutes just to acknowledge the historic day we are here today.

I also wanted to take just a moment or two to congratulate my colleagues on this side of the House, new members of the Chamber. I've been listening intently to their speeches. I think I've heard every single speech, if not in person here in the Chamber, certainly in my office where I listen in.

And what an amazing group of people that we have elected as New Democrats here in the House now, Madam Speaker. You know, it's incredible to hear their personal stories, but, most importantly, it's incredible to hear their passion and their drive to be here on a personal level and for their communities.

You know, it really speaks to, I think, the energy, and you can feel that in the speeches, the energy on this side of the House, you know, in contrast, maybe, Madam Speaker, to some of the speeches on the other side.

I'll leave it at that because we—I am trying to be somewhat magnanimous here in my words, but I will say that I can certainly feel the energy and, you know, it was quite telling that our seat count went up dramatically while the government's went down.

And I think it speaks to what Manitobans are looking for and that's representation for Manitobans who can bring their voices here to this Legislature and talk about the issues that they care about: health care, education, about housing, about poverty and about things that matter to Manitobans.

So I welcome them here and thank them for their work so far. It's also—you know, maybe you could say I—there's an ulterior motive to me mentioning and praising my colleagues.

I now serve as the whip for our caucus. So, as everybody who has served in that position or knows of that position, understands there's always a push and a pull with members. And so I don't mind offering the

praise to make sure that they understand how much I appreciate them, and when they come and they show up and they bring that enthusiasm that helps all of us in—on the team.

You know, I also wanted to acknowledge, Madam Speaker—and I appreciate the fact that I'm going after—I'm speaking after the member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield) because he and his remarks this afternoon spoke a little bit about the Concordia Hospital emergency room.

Now, members here in this House will know we, of course, differ very, very much on the Concordia Hospital emergency room and Concordia Hospital in general. We differ in our positions and we differ in how we presented that to voters last time.

What I will say, Madam Speaker—and I think this goes beyond politics—is that, you know, as a member of this Legislature there's certainly political victories. And I, you know, I'm proud to be—to have increased our margin of victory in Concordia significantly—I think tenfold—but the reality is my biggest victory, or the biggest victory for our community, I should say, was saving some service at that hospital.

And, you know, it's something that, you know, I fought very hard for, I was very passionate about. And again, I did that as the member for Concordia and I think because I think that it's the wrong move. It's the wrong move to cut emergency rooms in our city and to cut health care in our city and soon to be in the rest of the province. I think that's the wrong move and I think that that's just a misguided step.

\* (16:50)

However, I also am a resident and I am a person who has young kids, that lives in that neighbourhood, that uses that hospital. Members here know that my family, you know, multiple family members, have had their lives saved in that emergency room. Members know that I've had my life saved in that emergency room.

Members here know that it's the Mennonite community that brought that facility to our community and left it as a legacy for all Manitobans, for all time, that that facility and that service would be there.

And so, on a personal level and just in a purely, you know, for my own family and for my own neighbours, knowing that we have somewhere to go in the middle of the night that's close to home, that is a victory. And so electoral politics aside, you know,

and the member for Rossmere now says, well, you know, people on the doorstep said urgent care was a good thing. Well, that's—we said that over and over again, and the member said, no, no, no, no, no, we have to close it down completely; we cannot have the 24-hour service there. And we fought, and we fought, and we fought until that was the decision that, finally, we forced the government to—into when they saw their political fortunes, their cold calculation on their political futures, so clearly ahead of them.

So, again, I mean, you know, we can play politics and we can talk the politics behind the scenes. What I can say is that as a member for Concordia, I'm very proud that we were able to save that facility. And time will tell.

You know, time will tell now if the service gets better. We know so far it has not. We've seen every single month since the changes were made that the wait times have gotten worse. You know, in the last election, the members opposite went around saying, you know, trust us, don't worry, we're not going to cut front-line services. Don't believe what the opposition is—or what the government at that time was saying; we're the good guys; we're not going to cut front-line services.

Well, of course, we know they did. So now they're going into an election and folks know that the cuts have happened and they've seen how wait times have gotten worse. They've seen how service is getting worse in this province.

So they had to adjust their strategy a little bit. And this is where it got really Machiavellian, because what they did is they kind of went full Trump this time, and they said, don't trust your eyes and your ears. Don't believe what they're saying about the wait times. Don't believe our own WRHA numbers. Don't believe CIHI. Don't believe anyone that's telling you that nurses in this province are getting fired, that wait times are getting worse, that every single day the health system in our province is under attack; don't believe them. Don't believe the nurse in your family. Don't believe the service that you got at the hospital the last time that you were there. Don't believe the app that says there's an eight-hour wait time or a 10-hour wait time or even, Madam Speaker, when we saw one time a 12-hour wait time at Concordia Hospital. Don't believe that, they said, things are actually getting better.

Well, we know, Madam Speaker, that's not true. And, again, you know, the people of Manitoba, maybe they hadn't experienced it personally. Maybe they

believed the government, and they thought, well, maybe it could get better. Well, time will tell, and here we are at the beginning of a new session, and I know our very capable member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara) who's joined us here and is now the Health critic for our party, will certainly bring that to attention every opportunity to say things aren't getting better and that we need to protect health care and we need to invest in it.

We know that that—those cuts are now moving into the rural parts of Manitoba; that's phase 3, phase 2—I always get these mixed up—2; this is phase 2. We've already suffered through phase 1; now it's into phase 2, and we're just going to see more and more cuts.

So, you know, I think Manitobans, they see through this, and they're certainly going to see more of it. I also think that Manitobans understand that this is just the tip of the iceberg, that the cuts that are coming into education are certainly of concern. I spent a lot of time as the education critic, travelling the province, either with the official commission that was struck, to listen to what they were hearing so that I could say, well, in fact, you know, this is what you heard very clearly and, hopefully, you'll respect that. I've talked to some commissioners individually, off the record, who have said that that was their intention and, hopefully, they'll stick to that word.

But over and over again, this government heard that, you know, the classroom is more complex than ever, that there's more and more mental health issues, that poverty is a major factor in the ways that we can address or can enhance education in this province. And they heard that teachers want to teach. Teachers are doing more and more in the classroom all the time that is outside of teaching. They are there to support students, but when they become more like social workers and trying to support, in so many ways, that is where, I think, we need to refocus and we need to give them the supports that they need in the classroom.

So I hope that this government has heard that message and now, when presented with the opportunity—and it is an opportunity—to take that information and actually act on it and invest in this province in our education system, that they take it.

However, we've seen that over the last three years, in fact, it's just been cuts. It's been freezes. It's been an absolute assault on education. And then the members stand up and say, well, we're building schools. Well, of course you're building schools. You

were supposed to be building schools for three years. You did nothing, and now we wonder why they trumpet that, as if it's such an important thing.

After our government—after our opposition, I should say, forced the government to say, yes, we'll public—we should build it with public funds, well, of course, that's an obvious thing that members opposite should understand, but it took a little bit of pushing. And again, we will do that, and I know our critic for Education will continue to do that as well.

I see my time is getting short, Madam Speaker, so much more to say. What I will just end on is a sincere thank you to the voters of Concordia and all the amazing volunteers that came out and helped in our campaign.

You know, this was—of all the campaigns that I've worked in, this was the first campaign where we—or the campaign that had the most new people coming in off the street—you know, what we would call off the street—you know, coming into the campaign office and just saying, I'm concerned about health care, I want to help out. I'm a teacher and I'm worried about what's next. I want to help out.

And that's so appreciated and just encouraging because—and I said it earlier when we had one of our young volunteers, actually, Courtney Tosh, who, again, many people know. She's been active, in terms of—well, a lot of—a range of issues, but in particular, on environmental issues and with the students who are leading the climate strikes. She is somebody—an example of somebody who is not checking out of politics and, in fact, is deciding that she wants to learn more. She wants to become more involved and—so she can make a difference.

And I just—I found that so encouraging because, you know, we had the rallies, we had the petitions. We had, you know, so much action around health care in my community, and it was powerful, and I think it made a big difference, but I do believe that it was the political power that then harnessed that energy and pushed the government that made the difference.

And so I say this because, especially amongst young people in our world today, it's so easy for them to check out and to say, you know, politics is ruined, that those people who are saying that they're representing me don't actually represent me. And we see this especially south of the border, but I do say that it's coming here in some small measure. And that is so concerning to me, because as soon as our young people especially, but in general, people check out of

politics and check out of our democracy, we are in big, big trouble. And that's when people like Donald Trump and others who are populist, who are demagogues, can seize power and can skew things. So I'm glad that there are still people that believe in our democracy and our political system.

Finally, I want to thank my family, my wife, who's so, so supportive of me, and especially this summer. I remember a member from Fort Whyte—Fort Whyte?—in the past who said, a by-election in the summer? I can't believe it. August is family month. How could you possibly call an election in August?

Well, Madam Speaker, I missed out on my eight-year-old and my seven-year-old's summer because the Premier (Mr. Pallister)—so maybe it was family month. We went out. We talked to voters. I appreciate my wife for still giving my kids a great summer and trying to make sure that they knew that they were supported.

To my in-laws, who also stepped up, and my parents, who have been unbelievable. They worked in

my last campaign because it was a campaign we all needed to pull together. They came back. They worked even harder this campaign: unbelievable. I thank them.

I'm only in politics because of my mother and her, you know, consistent concern for political life. I've learned everything from her, so for her to now step up and actually help on the day-to-day of the campaign was such a joy. It was a great campaign and I thank the voters of Concordia.

And apparently I have one minute left. Okay, well, you know what, I'll just add a little bit more to that, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker—

**Madam Speaker:** When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have four minutes remaining.

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

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, November 25, 2019

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