



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

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

Please be seated.

Private members' business—

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MLA David Pankratz (Deputy Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the member for Seine River (MLA Cross), that Bill 210, the Indigenous—*[interjection]* Ah, yes. Very good.

I'd like to call for debate second reading of Bill 210, Indigenous Veterans Day Act.

The Speaker: Been announced that we will now go to second reading debate of Bill 210, The Indigenous Veterans Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended).

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

**Bill 210—The Indigenous Veterans Day Act
(Commemoration of Days, Weeks
and Months Act Amended)**

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Today, we get to take another—*[interjection]* Now I do this, okay, yes. We're going to get there.

So I move, seconded by the member for Seine River, that Bill 210, The Indigenous Veterans Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended); Loi sur la Journée des anciens combattants autochtones (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

MLA Pankratz: So today, again, we get to take an important step forward in formalizing Indigenous veterans day, which is an act of recognition, respect and reconciliation. It's a moment to honour the extraordinary contributions of Indigenous veterans who stood for Canada even when Canada didn't always stand for them.

And earlier this year, I had the profound privilege of representing our Province in Normandy, along with our Premier, at the 80th commemoration of D-Day. And you know, walking through those cemeteries, attending the ceremonies, I was struck, you know, not just by the rows of gravestones that you walked by, but by that shared story that each of them told. And, you know, each name on those stones represented someone who came from a different place, a different life, yet stood together for the same goal.

And one moment in particular has stayed with me. You know, our delegation met with a group of Indigenous students from Manitoba who had travelled to France, and it was completely unexpected to find gravestones of their ancestors. And watching them kneel at those graves, and I saw some of them almost tracing their fingers over the names of their ancestors, it was impossible not to feel the weight of the grief in that moment, but their pride and their deep connection to the history.

You know, Premier Kinew, who was there with me as I said—or, the member for—

The Speaker: Order, please. Order please.

We're not allowed to use members' names. You can use his title or his constituency, but not the name.

MLA Pankratz: Thank you, Honourable Speaker, for the guidance.

So First Minister, Premier (Mr. Kinew), was there, spoke to these students and it was completely impromptu, unexpected. They weren't expecting to have this moment with him that day. And it was incredibly powerful, you know. He said—and I'm paraphrasing, obviously, here—but he basically said, you know, your ancestors paid the price of admission for the freedoms that we have here today. Never forget that you belong here, that their sacrifices ensured you have a rightful place in this country.

And it was such a powerful moment for everybody involved—for the students, for the people who were standing there with him that day. And that idea, paying the price of admission, it really stayed with me. And it captures not just the bravery of those who served, but the unity of purpose that transcended nations, communities. And these were men and women who believed in something that was bigger than themselves. In freedom, in dignity and in the future that included everyone.

But their story didn't end on the battlefield. When Indigenous veterans returned home, many faced systemic barriers that their comrades did not, and they had fought for a country that in many ways refused to fight for them. This history is why today's formal recognition is so important, building on the resolution that was brought forward in the '90s. It's about ensuring their sacrifices are not just remembered but understood, honoured and used to build a better, more inclusive future.

Now, reconciliation demands action, not just words. It requires us to stand with communities, especially in moments of pain and uncertainty. And yesterday, we entered stage 4 of the search at the Prairie Green landfill, a search that represents not just an effort to recover remains, but a commitment to justice for Indigenous women and girls.

Now, the members opposite campaigned on a platform to stand firm against searching the landfill, a position which they justified through claims about budgets and safety, claims we have systematically disproven.

And these excuses were an attempt to manipulate Manitobans, exploiting serious issues for political gain. And now, unfortunately, they remain silent, refusing to clarify that stance, even as families and communities seek answers and closure.

And—

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

I'd ask the member to remain relevant to the bill before him. I understand that the issue he's talking to is very important issue, but it's not part of the bill.

MLA Pankratz: Yes, thanks for your guidance again. And the point that I'm making is coming here.

So this is not the first time the opposition has chosen posturing over principle. This past session when we brought forward this important bill to formalize Indigenous veterans day, they called for recorded votes, again delaying its passage, stalling it, to be used as a political bargaining chip, instead of standing up to make it unanimous, which would have allowed us to pass it immediately that week and move the bill through committee.

* (10:10)

Yet, days later, they appeared at events honouring Indigenous veterans, posing for photos, posting on social media to claim credit for that progress that they sought to obstruct just that—earlier that week.

And, you know what, ultimately, it's not leadership that was shown, it's opportunism. Reconciliation cannot, it should not, be reduced to a photo-op or an empty platitude. It requires standing firm on the side of justice, unity and truth.

Honourable Speaker, the passage of this bill will create opportunities for education, ensuring that future generations learn about people like Tommy Prince, who overcame immense adversity to become one of Canada's most decorated soldiers. Or, more recently, someone like Wanbdi Wakita who spent a lifetime bridging worlds through his service and teachings; or Randi Gage, who's joined us here today, who's advocated for this day for decades.

It will ensure that young people like those students in Normandy know that their ancestors' sacrifices were not in vain and that they have every reason to feel pride in their heritage and their place in Canada and here in Manitoba.

Indigenous veterans embody the highest ideals of unity. Their service teaches us that the freedoms we cherish were not given freely but earned through profound sacrifice. It's a debt that we can never fully repay but must always honour.

And today, as we formalize—unanimously, I would hope—Indigenous veterans day, I would encourage us to reflect on the unity that brought us here. These veterans came from all walks of likes—life and from across our country, yet they fought side by side for the same goal. Their sacrifices remind us of what can be

achieved when we come together and their legacy challenges us to do better by all who have served and continue to serve.

So let's honour their courage, their resilience, their commitment to a future where everyone has the freedom to belong, contribute and thrive. That is the Canada and Manitoba they fought for and the Manitoba that we must continue to build.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Before moving on to questions, there's some guests in the gallery I'd like to introduce. We have seated in the public gallery, from J.H. Bruns Collegiate, 50 grade 9 students, and they are guests of the honourable member for Southdale (MLA Cable).

We all welcome you here today.

Questions

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

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Thank you to the member opposite for bringing this important bill forward.

What type of observances would happen on November 8 for working Manitobans? Would that be an observed day off to honour the Indigenous veterans?

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Thanks for the question to the member for Selkirk.

No, this would not become a statutory holiday, just so that everybody is clear. This is formalizing the resolution that was brought forward to put this into the Manitoba statutes so it would become a law here in Manitoba.

And, ultimately, what it does is it just stabilizes and formalizes this day in Manitoba and it gives more opportunity for folks to attend events. And I would also encourage people to reach out to the many organizations who have already done a lot the hard work to set up some of these events to pay tribute to our Indigenous veterans.

Hon. Renée Cable (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): Manitoba was one of the first provinces in Canada to celebrate Indigenous Veterans Day. I, myself, went and celebrated with a number of folks down on Higgins. It was tremendous.

And I'm just wondering how the member celebrated Indigenous Veterans Day this year?

MLA Pankratz: Thanks so much for that great question from the member for Southdale, my colleague.

I was absolutely thrilled to be able to commemorate that day with my friend Randi Gage in Riverton. I travelled out there to take part in their ceremony. It was a wonderful, wonderful ceremony put together with a ton of heart from people who are directly connected to the work that's been done to make sure that we acknowledge and understand the sacrifices that Indigenous veterans have made over many years.

Randi and her crew have put together this event for a number of years, and it, again, was a beautiful homage to the many sacrifices made by Indigenous veterans.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Thank you to the member from Waverley for bringing this important recognition of this day ahead.

I had the opportunity to spend time on November 8 at the Royal Canadian Legion in Portage to recognize this day. And I wondered if there was any thought given to a memorial being put up in recognition of the Indigenous veterans day.

Thank you.

MLA Pankratz: Thanks so much for bringing up that important question to the member from Portage la Prairie.

Actually, Randi—again, I'm going to be dropping her name here quite a bit because of the amount of advocacy that she's done—has actually done that work. And there is a memorial in Riverton which I got to visit with the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) and the member for Lagimodière (Mr. Blashko) who also joined me at the ceremony that day.

It's at a beautiful location, right by the river. And I think that it's—it allows for people a moment to sit and reflect and think about what the day means to them and what those sacrifices mean to them. And also how, moving forward, we can make sure that some of the mistakes that were made by the Canadian government in Canada as a whole, when—in how we

treated Indigenous veterans could be changed, moving forward.

Thank you.

MLA Cable: As we move through reconciliation in our province, we know that a big part of ensuring that the truth comes to pass and that folks are well aware of our shared history—can you tell me what the plans are to open this up to educators to ensure that young people learn about this?

MLA Pankratz: Thank you for that question. Yes, this is obviously a multi-faceted answer. I'm thrilled because I can say that on our side here, we have so many educators that have contributed to the conversations around this work, specifically.

So I do very much look forward, along with the member for Seine River (MLA Cross) who has offered up her guidance in this way, consultation meetings with the different school divisions to make sure there's an understanding.

But I would also say that there's been a great deal of work that's already been done in this regard. And so I would actually say in this moment, I'd like to uplift all the educators and the school division leaders who have done this work in the past and will continue to do so. And I look forward to learning more from them and contributing as much as I can in my role as a leader here, in Manitoba.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Thank you to the member from Waverley in bringing this important bill forward here, today, in the House. And I want to thank those veterans, the Indigenous veterans, for their service to our country.

I know the member opposite touched a little bit about what some of the obstacles have been for Indigenous veterans across our country, and I'm just wondering can the members opposite share a little bit with the House. What are some specific resources that might be available for Indigenous veterans?

MLA Pankratz: Thank you for the question. I appreciate that.

So when it comes to specific resources for veterans, all of that is done through the federal government, as you know. So the purview of the federal government is the military. We, as a provincial government, are always open to having conversations with citizens, generally, so Indigenous veterans are able to come forward. And actually, in my role as special envoy for military affairs, what I try to do is connect people with resources.

So I act as a conduit between the military community and our government. So I'm always encouraging. And I know Justin Woodcock is here today who is the military liaison with Southern Chiefs' Organization. We've had some great conversations about how we can find resources within our provincial government—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): Il est évident que plusieurs vétérans ont fait face à des injustices après leur temps passé dans les militaires.

Ma question pour le député de Waverley (MAL Pankratz) est : comment est-ce que cette journée aidera à reconnaître les injustices qui ont été faites envers les vétérans autochtones?

Translation:

It is clear that many veterans have faced injustice following their time in the military.

My question for the member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz) is: how will this day help to recognize the injustices that have been inflicted on indigenous veterans?

* (10:20)

MLA Pankratz: I will answer in English. I appreciate the question in French, and basically asking how we can talk about reconciliation and some of the errors that were made in the past.

So as we move forward, education is such a big piece of this. You know, Murray Sinclair famously said, you know, education got us into this mess, it's going to get us out of it, right?

So going forward, we need to make sure, as I've said, that we're continuing to consult with educators to folks in leadership positions to make sure that when they do have those conversations with the next generation, young folks, that they fully understand all of the mistakes that have been made in terms of how we treated those veterans. Because the important piece—and I hope this is the takeaway from—

The Speaker: Time has expired.

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): I'm just going to follow up on the question from my colleague from Portage la Prairie, because I don't think we got a direct answer from the MLA for Waverley.

So through you, honourable Chair, I know there is, as the member says, a monument in Riverton, where he was. But is the member for Waverley's government in discussions about building or creating,

commissioning, a monument specifically to recognize Indigenous veterans day somewhere here on the Legislative grounds or in Memorial Park, an area where the government controls?

MLA Pankratz: Thank you for bringing that question up again.

You know, it's important first of all—I mean, private members' bills don't have a monetary value attached to them, so that wouldn't be a part of the bill itself.

I am always happy to speak with advocates within the community, so I think that it would be incredibly important for these conversations to be had with the folks who have actually been involved on the ground, rather than a top-down approach, where government would be sort of suggesting to people what we should or shouldn't be doing to honour folks. So that's also why it's been so important for me to make sure that I'm consulting with a wide range of folks on this specific issue.

So it is important to bring that up. I will continue to consult and make sure that we're speaking with community.

The Speaker: Time has expired.

MLA Loiselle: Réconciliation et consultation vont souvent main dans la main, alors j'aimerais savoir si le député de Waverley (MAL Pankratz) pourrait nous éclaircir avec qui il a consulté envers cette loi.

Translation:

Reconciliation and consultation often go hand in hand. Could the member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz) enlighten us as to who he consulted with regarding this legislation.

MLA Pankratz: Thank you for that question. Again, I appreciate that.

Yes, it was an extensive consultation process, and I really appreciated the conversations that I had.

I just want to quickly go through some names. So Wanbdi Wakita, who is the grandfather in residence at U of M. He's also an Indigenous veteran. Randi Gage, Elder Barb Nepinak, Lieutenant-Colonel Jon Baker, CWOO Joel Pederson, Justin Woodcock from SCO, Colonel David Cronk, SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, former Grand Chief Cathy Merrick were all consulted in this process. And I sincerely appreciate their inputs into the conversation around this bill.

The Speaker: The time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is now open for debate.

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): As I stood up this House not that long ago, recognizing the importance of this bill and the fact that we owe it to our Indigenous—to the Indigenous community, especially in Manitoba and in the Armed Forces to shed light on the sacrifices that they have brought forward.

Currently, there is nearly 3,000 First Nation, Inuit and Métis Canadians serving in the Canadian Forces at home, as well as overseas.

And as I had mentioned before, it takes something deep within yourself to stand up for your country, to stand up for the people around you, and say that you are willing to enter into the military to protect Canada, to protect your family, to protect the citizens around you, to protect the citizens in your community and protect your country. And you literally know that day when you sign up that you may be called to put your life on the line. And it's every veteran takes that act of bravery very seriously.

But what happens after? We know that, coming home, there's a lot of racism that happened in the past and we need to learn from that. We need to learn to make sure that the Indigenous veterans that serve Canada proudly are welcomed and respected and appreciated for all their service, and this bill will do that.

This bill recognizes the Indigenous veterans that proudly serve Canada. To say their sacrifice is spectacular, their service to Canada is something that is very proud and every one of them should be treated as the heroes that they are: to leave your family and go off to basic training and then go after your field of expertise, whether it be in a combat arms division or naval or air force, the opportunities are there in our military and our Canadian Forces to do almost anything you want to do, but you have to be able to put your life on the line. And the veterans of Canada do that on a daily basis, and we have to recognize that we're all the same when we serve and, coming home, we need to be treated the same.

And that hasn't always been the case. There are some definite wrongs of the past that we have to acknowledge and make sure that they never happen again. In true reconciliation, we need to make sure that the Indigenous veterans who have served Canada have the same rights as every other person who has

served. And this bill goes one step closer to making that reality possible. It is the ability for Canada as a nation to stand up—and especially in Manitoba where this bill will be proclaimed—to stand up and say, the Indigenous veterans of our province matter and they always have mattered, and we want to recognize that moving forward.

And if you look back in history, in the First World War, there was approximately 4,000 Indigenous veterans from that era. And in Second World War, there was approximately 3,000 First Nations, and the Métis and the Inuit members at the time were not recorded under the First Nations or Indigenous, so we would probably estimate that—probably about 6,000 members during that war.

My grandfather served in the Second World War, as well as my wife's grandfather served in the Second World War. And we have lost—both of those members have since passed, but they will tell you there was zero regrets to putting their name forward to representing and fighting for the freedoms of Canada. Like every veteran who has come before, the sacrifices they make in the name of freedom is beyond respect. It is absolutely incredible.

You talk about—the member from Waverley had the opportunity to go over to France and see the rows upon rows upon rows of fallen soldiers on the graves that are there, and I also had that opportunity. And there's something that stirs in your soul when you see that, when you see the capability and the ugliness that humans can do to each other. And then you see the headstones of so many fallen soldiers who stood for the freedoms of the world to make sure that we are in a free society and that everything that we take for granted today is because these members have stood forward.

* (10:30)

There was a few questions going about is there any monuments or anything to do? I think that we do need to educate the people, and the member from Waverley certainly said that education is a very important proponent of this.

The Indigenous day celebrations that were happening in our province throughout on November 8 were a joyous celebration. They were a solemn reflection on what's happened in the past and the sacrifices made by the Indigenous veterans, but it was a very joyous occasion on the fact that we were recognizing the Indigenous veterans who have come before. And I personally would like to see more of that

happening; more education on the role the Indigenous veterans have had.

We hear from the member from Waverley how they attended the monument out in Riverton. I've been there. My wife's family is not far from the area. And we need more of that. We need more monuments to represent the heroes that have come before. I like the—you know, one of my colleagues suggested that we do something here in Memorial Park; I would love to see something move forward.

I think that when you look at Manitoba and the role of us legislators, education is a huge part of that. We need to recognize the wrongs of the past, but we need to educate about those. Some people don't know about them. We need to educate people—in our schools, people who are fairly new to our province—of some of the wrongs that happened so we don't repeat history; that we can step forward and bring a new light into what the expectation is of Manitoba citizens. And that unity for all and acceptance for all needs to be a part of that.

We need to make sure that the Indigenous veterans know that they're respected, they are loved and they are appreciated for the sacrifices they make and they continue to make in our armed forces, in our military here in Canada and around the world; how proud we are of all the members of our military and armed forces who stand up for freedom, stand up for democracy, stand up for humanity on a daily basis around the world to help Canada and the military become, again, a respected force in the world military; to make sure that when there is trouble around the world, that we're there as peacekeepers, and we bring the logical sense that we have as Canadians across to make sure that no travesties happen in other countries, nor genocides, and that we respect the rights of all people to live freely and independently.

And I really want to thank the member from Waverley for bringing this bill forward. And this is something I can wrap my head around and I can really support, so thank you very much.

The Speaker: No further—

An Honourable Member: Question.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Portage la Prairie.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): I appreciate the opportunity to put some words on the record here today.

I want to also recognize those that have come to join us here today, as well, too. I don't want to turn my back to you, but I want to make a speech, but again, my apologies for turning my back.

Indigenous Veterans Day Act is important, and I think it's important to all of Manitobans. And I think it's important to—and I'll admit, I heard something from the other side about we have a lot of work to do yet in order to move forward, but I think this is another way and another opportunity for us to move forward. And us, meaning all of us in this Chamber, to be leaders, to speak of this and move forward with this.

My father was a World War II veteran. I can't imagine what they went through. And that's everyone that went through this. When we talk about Indigenous veterans for Manitoba, like their counterparts across Canada—I am going to face this way—Canada—

The Speaker: Order, please.

The member please direct his comments through the Chair.

MLA Bereza: Indigenous veterans for Manitoba, like their counterparts across Canada, face significant challenges upon returning home from military service in World Wars I, II, as well as the Korean Wars. Despite their valour and dedication on the front lines, they encountered systemic discrimination and inequities that hindered their reintegration into civilian life.

Denial of veterans' benefits. Many Indigenous veterans were denied the same benefit and support programs that were available to non-Indigenous veterans. This included limited access to financial assistance, land grants and educational opportunities which were crucial for successful reintegration. The lack of equitable support was—and the difficult—they—difficulties they faced in transitioning back to civilian life.

Again, my father, as a World War II veteran, was offered a home. They referred to them as wartime houses. I lived in a wartime house, I didn't know what it was, but my father and my family were offered that. Not everyone was offered that, and it's wrong.

The only way we can move forward is to recognize what we have done in the—

The Speaker: Order, please.

If the member would kindly direct his comments through the Chair and quit turning his back on the Chair, that would be greatly appreciated.

MLA Bereza: My apologies. Social and economic challenges also. The discrimination Indigenous veterans faced made their transition to life back home even harder. They offered an—they often encountered barriers in accessing employment, housing and health care, which impeded their ability to rebuild their lives after service.

Community recognition. Despite these systemic challenges, Indigenous veterans were cherished and honoured. Within their communities, they were regarded as role models and elders with their service and sacrifices recognized and respected by their fellow community members, but not all community members.

I want to make sure that I recognize from Portage the—from the area of Portage la Prairie, because I represent a number of Indigenous people in that area from Long Plain, Dakota Tipi and Dakota Plains and I would like to read their names out today.

Michael Pashe, born in Old Sioux Village, was in the Canadian army from 1944 to 1946. Before his army service in—he attended a residential school. For his service, he received the France and Germany Star medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and the Clasp for his services. He later went on to be chief of Dakota Tipi First Nation in 1970. Michael Pashe has been—was seen as a powerful voice and a role model for the Dakota nations in Manitoba.

Thank you, Chief Pashe.

Rufus Prince. Mr. Rufus Prince from Long Plain First Nation was a Second World War veteran, serving in Italy. Before his service, he attended a residential school and continued on from army as the chief of Long Plain. Prince accomplishments continues as he helped found the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council and the first Indigenous law enforcement agency in Canada, which was the Dakota Ojibway police force in 1977.

Thank you, Rufus Prince.

* (10:40)

Herbert Daniels. Mr. Herbert Daniels from Long Plain First Nation served in the 2nd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. He was also stationed in Korea. He was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for the Battle of Kapyong and received a Purple Heart.

Thank you, Herbert Daniels.

Lionel—sorry. Private Arthur Meeches was from Long Plain First Nation. He went to the Brandon Indian Residential School in his youth, then continued on into Red River College where he graduated, serving a year in Korea with the 1st Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, airborne unit.

Thank you, Private Arthur Meeches.

Chief George Myran was from Long Plain First Nation. He served in the Second World War in the Canadian military. After his brave service to his country, he was a band councillor, then became chief of Long Plain. He stood as a representative for his fellow Long Plain veterans and commemorated First Nations veterans in France.

Thank you, Chief George Myran.

I want to talk about another person that come into my constituency office, and it was before I was able to attend the Remembrance Day ceremony on November 8 at the Royal Canadian Legion in Portage. And I want to say his name today.

Thank you, Joe McNabb.

Joe McNabb also is a proud veteran, a proud Métis veteran. Joe McNabb told me a story—and again, we learn from our families, as well, too. My dad ran a car dealership, and Joe McNabb was a mechanic that worked underneath him. And Joe told me stories that I'd never heard, of him being—of Joe being discriminated because of his heritage, because of what he believed in. And I'm so proud to say that he told me that my dad stood up for him every time. And I will stand up.

Thank you so much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the time today to talk about this very important bill, Bill 210, The Indigenous Veterans Day Act.

Thank you so much for the opportunity today. Thank you.

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Thank you to the member from Waverley for bringing forward this important bill. And to begin, I also want to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to the Indigenous veterans who are present with us here in the gallery today.

We owe an immense amount of gratitude to each and every one of you for your service and your sacrifice to all of us here in our province where we can enjoy the freedoms that we hold dear in Manitoba and across our magnificent country of Canada.

I'm pleased to stand here today in this Chamber and put a few words on the record in relation to Bill 210, the Indigenous veterans act. This bill seeks to formally recognize November 8 as Indigenous veterans day in our great province of Manitoba and is a wonderful tribute to the bravery and sacrifices made by Indigenous veterans who have served in the defence of Canada and commitment that stretches to the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759.

It's estimated that approximately 12,000 individuals from First Nation communities, Métis and Inuit communities served in the wars of the 20th century, with at least 500 of these courageous souls making the ultimate sacrifice for our country. The inaugural Indigenous Veterans Day was observed on November 8, 1993, with Manitoba becoming the first province to recognize Aboriginal Veterans Day the following year. This moment marked a monumental milestone in acknowledging the contributions of Indigenous peoples to our military efforts and our freedoms.

Indigenous veterans have served with honour, integrity and distinction across all branches of the Armed Forces, contributing not only during times of war and international conflict, but also during peacetime. Despite encountering many cultural differences and language barriers, these courageous individuals brought a wealth of invaluable skills from their traditions, excelling in their respective roles as sailors, pilots and soldiers.

It is also crucial to highlight the indispensable contributions of the Indigenous women who played vital roles as nurses in overseas operations and supported war efforts on the home front through fundraising initiatives and the production of essential military supplies.

Today, nearly 3,000 First Nations, Inuit and Métis Canadians continue to serve our country with honour in the Canadian Forces, both at home and, of course, abroad. Their ongoing service stands as a powerful reminder of the deep bonds that unite us as Manitobans and reflects our shared commitment to reconciliation and moving forward during times of conflict and war.

As we reflect on Bill 210, it's important that we take a moment to express our pride for the Indigenous veterans of our province. The legacy of military service among First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples is long-standing and proud. Think about the courage and dedication of those who fought valiantly for the

ideals we cherish here in Canada, namely peace, freedom and our justice.

One of the most remarkable figures in this history is Tommy Prince, a member of the Peguis First Nation. Prince was one of Canada's most decorated Indigenous soldiers, serving with distinction in both World War II and the Korean War. He exemplified the bravery and skill of Indigenous veterans, earning numerous honours, including the Military Medal for his courageous actions during the Second World War. His contributions went beyond the battlefield. He worked tirelessly to advocate for the rights and recognition of Indigenous veterans, shining a light on the sacrifices made by those who serve.

Tommy Prince's legacy serves as a powerful reminder of the incredible impact Indigenous individuals have had on our military history and the ongoing fight for recognition and respect.

I know there are many, many, many more names of men and women that demonstrated remarkable courage during their times in combat and war, and I would also like to take a moment and say thank you to those that are here today who have consulted with the member from Waverley and have had significant contribution and input on this bill.

November 8 would be a day to observe a moment of silence to honour the commitment and sacrifices made by our Indigenous veterans. We owe it to those men and women who laid down their lives so that we may live in the peace and freedom that we have here today in our country. It is our responsibility to ensure that their legacy is recognized, celebrated and passed down through generations to come.

The recognition of Indigenous Veterans Day on November 8 is not merely a formal acknowledgement, is—it is a significant step toward reconciliation and honouring the profound contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people to the Canadian military. These individuals have a rich and storied history of military service in Canada that dates back to the colonial era, characterized by a steadfast sense of duty to safeguard our communities and our nation.

* (10:50)

Honourable Speaker, during the First World War, around 4,000 Indigenous individuals answered the call of duty, utilizing unique skills such as patience, stealth, marksmanship, all of which provided invaluable—to the roles like snipers and scouts.

The Second World War saw an even greater involvement with over 3,000 Indigenous individuals serving in various capacities, including those of code talkers, using their languages to protect sensitive communications. And on the home front, Indigenous communities made substantial contributions by donating resources and land for military purposes.

Furthermore, the contributions of Indigenous peoples extended far beyond combat roles. Indigenous women played vital roles as nurses during the wars, providing compassionate care to those wounded soldiers. Those at home organized fundraising efforts and, like I mentioned, manufactured essential supplies, all of which demonstrated their unwavering commitment and—to the war effort.

Despite facing numerous challenges such as cultural differences and language barriers, Indigenous veterans persevered, showcasing remarkable resilience and adaptability. I cannot imagine the challenges that many faced when they came back after serving and integrating back into their home communities. Their military service has become a source of immense pride and a testament to their capabilities and character.

Today, nearly 3,000 First Nation, Inuit and Métis individuals continue to serve in the Canadian Armed Forces, reflecting their unwavering commitment to their communities and our country. The legacy of Indigenous veterans resonates deeply within our communities and inspires younger generations while—all while raising awareness of their sacrifices and contributions.

Indigenous veterans day is a powerful reminder of the bonds that unite all Manitobans and Canadians, fostering a collective sense of pride in the diverse contributions that shape our national identity and an opportunity for Canadians to reflect on the sacrifices made by Indigenous veterans and recognize their contributions.

Indigenous veterans day, we not only pay tribute to the past, but also reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that the contributions of Indigenous peoples are celebrated and appreciated. In closing, let us honour the legacy of Tommy Prince and all Indigenous veterans who have served our country with courage and distinction. Many stories deserve to be told and sacrifices remembered and contributions celebrated.

And, once again, I'd like to say thank you to the Indigenous veterans who are here today, and also to

those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. May we all share in gratitude and deep appreciation for the diverse narratives that shape our country, Canada.

MLA Billie Cross (Seine River): It is my great honour to stand up and put a few words on the record, as a proud Red River Métis citizen and as the niece of a person who served most of his life in the military with great honour—and, in fact, even after retirement, was called upon to come out of retirement and help provide training to soldiers who were being deployed to Afghanistan.

I admire my uncle Bill Miller who put country before family, who put country before—not before but even in despite of the way he was treated by Canadian government systems and policies. I want everyone to remember in this House the greatest way that we can honour Indigenous veterans is by acknowledging the truth, and in this Chamber this morning, it's by allowing this vote to go through.

As a Chamber, last month, we voted unanimously to support this bill. It is my sincere, sincere hope that we are not playing political games this morning, using this bill as a tool for leverage, but that we are respecting the veterans and that we are going to vote this morning in favour of this bill and not speak it out. We have members of the military here in attendance, we have advocates who have fought tirelessly for this type of recognition, and they deserve to hear us all say yes this morning, that we agree that this is an important piece of legislation that will demonstrate how actionable we are in terms of reconciliation.

I want everyone to remember that Indigenous veterans are so much more than just people willing to make sacrifices for their country. These are people that were wards of the federal government because of Indian Act policies. These were people that spent time in residential schools, whose own children or relatives were sitting in residential schools while they were fighting across the ocean for a country that did not respect them the same way they respected this place. And I know that for those veterans who went to fight, they weren't fighting for Canada as a government; they were fighting for this land. They were fighting for the people.

It's also important to remember that, when we talk about military service personnel, there's a myth that soldiers are these folks that go out and they just—they want to fight and they want to do these things, but in fact what they are, they're the people in our society with the greatest hearts. They have the biggest hearts because they're willing to sacrifice everything: their

lives, their families, their well-being, their mental health, so that we can have democracy, so that we can have the rights and privileges that we have in a country like Canada. And so we should be extremely grateful and thankful for those sacrifices.

I'm not planning to stand for very much longer. I just wanted to say thank you so much to my colleague for bringing this forward and for doing the work, putting in the time. and I sincerely hope that members on this side of the Chamber, please vote yes. Don't speak this out this morning. Let's do the right thing. Let's put the partisan politics aside and do what's right for the people who made these sacrifices.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): You know, I would like to echo the comments of the member for Seine River (MLA Cross), actually, in thanking the member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz) for bringing this bill forward once again now that we're in a new session of this Legislative Assembly.

It is an important bill, there is no doubt about that, and the member for Waverley is doing an excellent job, I would say, as a fair compliment across the way, in his role as military envoy. I represent alongside my colleague for Agassiz the only army base in this province, and I know that the folks there feel very well in touch with him and very well supported by his work so far as the military envoy on behalf of this government.

A couple of comments, I think, that are important, and I share the awkwardness of my colleague for Portage la Prairie in having my back turned to the individuals, but I'm cognizant of your rulings, Honourable Speaker, so I'm going to keep addressing my comments through the Chair, but I would like to thank them for their advocacy on behalf of Indigenous veterans in this province as well as in—on behalf of this bill in particular.

And I would just say, on the record today, that I am quite sure that if the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) and this government choose to prioritize this bill, that it will be in effect for the next Indigenous Veterans Day—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Jackson: Honourable Speaker, are you going to call the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) to order, because I can't hardly hear myself, not to mention what I'm trying to put on the record on behalf of all Manitobans. So—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

The honourable member for Spruce Woods has the floor.

Mr. Jackson: As I was saying, I appreciate all the work that is being done to make this—to bring this bill to fruition here in the House. I think you've heard from the comments that our colleagues have made here today that they are, in fact, supportive of this bill. It—I—as I said, I have no doubt, no doubt, that if the Government House Leader (MLA Fontaine) chooses—

An Honourable Member: You're turning your back to Métis veterans.

Mr. Jackson: Well, the member for St. Boniface (MLA Loiselle) just criticized me for turning my back to the veterans, but you yourself—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please.

The member for St. Boniface will come to order, please.

Mr. Jackson: Believe me, if you had not upheld the rules of this Chamber that it has to come through you, I would very much rather be looking at the Indigenous veterans. And so, anyway—

The Speaker: Order, please.

* (11:00)

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have seven minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 2—Supporting the Provincial Government on 800 New Hip and Knee Surgeries

The Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m. and the time for private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is the resolution brought forward by the honourable member for Tuxedo. *[interjection]*

Order, please.

The title of the resolution is resolution No. 2, Supporting the Provincial Government on 800 New Hip and Knee Surgeries.

MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo): I move, seconded by the member from Radisson,

WHEREAS the previous, failed PC Provincial Government cut health services and closed ERs; and

WHEREAS the previous, failed PC Provincial Government closed beds and fired health care workers; and

WHEREAS the previous, failed PC Provincial Government allowed wait times to rise under its watch; and

WHEREAS the previous, failed PC Provincial Government sent Manitobans out of province for surgeries they deserved to have closer to home; and

WHEREAS the previous, failed PC Provincial Government disrespected health-care workers causing them to leave public health care; and

WHEREAS the previous, failed PC Provincial Government cut hours for rural ERs and closed rural EMS stations; and

WHEREAS Manitobans voted for the New Democratic Party to rebuild health care in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the current Provincial Government has opened 197 beds to help reduce wait-times; and

WHEREAS the current Provincial Government has hired 873 net new health-care workers to staff integral health services; and

WHEREAS the current Provincial Government is hiring two new surgeons and one anesthesiologist to expand capacity at the Selkirk Regional Health Centre and ease the surgical backlog; and

WHEREAS the current Provincial Government has introduced seven-day-a-week discharge in hospitals so more Manitobans can get the care they need; and

WHEREAS the current Provincial Government is improving access to health services by opening new extended hour clinics during evenings and weekends; and

WHEREAS the current Provincial Government is reopening emergency rooms across the province, including the Carberry ER, the Victoria Hospital ER, and Eriksdale ER.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to support the provincial government in efforts to bring in 800 new hip and knee surgeries to Selkirk Regional Health Centre.

Motion presented.

MLA Compton: Manitobans deserve access to timely and quality health-care services, and for seven and a half years, people and their families experienced the cuts and mismanagement to health care from the failed PC government. And our government is bringing health-care services closer to home with 800 new hip and knee surgeries to Selkirk.

So Manitobans should not have to wait in pain to get the surgeries that they need. The failed PC government left Manitobans waiting in pain for years due to their cuts, and our government is working to rebuild health care and bringing down wait times so Manitobans can get the care that they need sooner. And that's why we're adding more surgeries to the Interlake to reduce wait times by hiring more surgeons and nurses in the health-care system.

By adding 800 new hip and knee surgeries at the Selkirk Regional Health Centre, we're giving back to Manitobans the freedom to enjoy their lives to the fullest. Our NDP government is also increasing access to health care in Interlake-Eastern region by adding more staff beds to our public health care, like 15 beds to the transitional-care unit, 30 fully staffed medicine beds and funding a seven-day-a-week discharge from the Selkirk regional health-care centre.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Our government made a commitment to rebuild health care in Manitoba and we're doing that by reducing wait times. We're building the capacity for joint surgeries, and so it's going to increase to 7,800 joints per year now, and that's with the addition of the 800 knee and hip surgeries to Selkirk.

In this year's Throne Speech, we dedicated an extra \$4 million to getting Manitobans access to additional surgeries, and this funding will help with recruiting additional surgeons and an 'anesnetologist.' We're helping more Manitobans get access to hip and knee surgeries.

And this year, more hip and knee surgeries were performed in Manitoba than ever before. And this is part of our plan to introduce more and reduce wait times. We're going to be creating a new surgical wait-list database to prioritize Manitobans who've been waiting the longest. And our government is making sure that Manitobans can get the care they need.

In just one year alone, we've proven what smart, targeted investments can do in health care, like adding 800 more hip and knee surgeries to Selkirk. We also do this with the understanding that public health care

is a fundamental Canadian value and the foundation for building a good life. It's the freedom from uncertainty that, no matter what happens, Manitobans their family can get the care they need and not go into debt. In Manitoba, we will always protect public health care and work to make it better for everyone.

So, as we're strategically building capacity in rural Manitoba, one of those progress points is this addition of 800 new hip and knee surgeries to the Selkirk regional facility. Public health care is a fundamental freedom in our country and how so many Manitobans have built a good life in our province, and our government believes that Manitobans deserve care close to home when they need it.

For years, under the previous PC government, rural Manitobans were faced—were forced, pardon me, to travel many hours south for health services that could be done in their communities. Where the PCs cut, we're going to rebuild. We've reopened the Carberry ER and are building the Eriksdale ER so that Manitobans can access emergency services closer to home. We're adding more paramedics, ambulances and emergency patient transport in rural Manitoba, and we're doing our part to reduce those wait times for rural Manitobans so that they can spend more time at home and less time at the hospital or health centre.

So again, that is why we are adding 800 new hip and knee surgeries to Selkirk, as well as we've opened a new minor illness and injury clinic on Sixth Street in Brandon. Instead of closing ERs, we're opening them, and instead of cutting services that Manitobans rely on, we're supporting them. And as we continue to rebuild capacity within Manitoba and within our health-care system, Selkirk will be able to provide 800 more new hip and knee surgeries.

One of the things that our government has also done is embarked on the health-care listening tour to hear directly from the health-care workers about their concerns and ideas. And so we've been to the Grace Hospital, we've been to St. Boniface Hospital, Victoria Hospital, Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg and Brandon Regional Health Centre, as well as Thompson General Hospital and also the Selkirk Mental Health Centre. And we're also—from consultations and working on what our government is hearing from front-line health-care workers, we are doing our best to strategically reinvest in our capacity and one of those points, one of those things we're doing, is adding 800 more hip and knee surgeries to Selkirk.

With the launch of My Health Team, based in The Pas, some more Manitobans have access to a nurse and a social worker specializing in mental health. We are investing in new staffed hospital beds with smart, targeted investments: nine new beds in Dauphin Regional Health Centre and renovations for an expanded CancerCare Manitoba space. We are making it easier for nurses to return to Manitoba's health-care system by collaboratively updating the nursing college's regulations, keeping new doctors working in Manitoba with the new-to-practice program, pairing new doctors with mentors and support networks.

And, after years of closures and cuts under the previous PC government, we are bringing health-care workers and health-care resources back to the North. We're adding more paramedics, ambulances and emergency transport in rural and northern Manitoba, along with the 800 additional hip and knee surgeries at the Selkirk facility.

When we're funding a new independent seniors advocate that will help support Manitoba seniors navigate the services and care available to them and improve their quality of life, the PC government created a health-care staffing shortage after years of cuts, and patient care suffered as a result, like the increase in surgical wait times. And our government is reinvesting back in Manitoba public health—in Manitoba's public health care, and we have proven with smart, targeted investments that it can be done.

In our first year alone, we have made significant process in-progress in hiring 1,000 net new health-care workers, and we're 87 per cent of the way there. And our team knows that we need to treat health-care workers across the province with respect, and that we need to properly pay them for their services.

We also know that nurses in the North and in rural communities deserve more support from the public health-care system, and that's why our government is expanding the provincial nursing float pool to northern Manitoba so that patients across the North and in rural Manitoba can get the support that they need when they need it. And we're establishing a new health-care retention and recruitment office to help nurses train and find good jobs in Manitoba.

* (11:10)

Manitobans in the North and in rural Manitoba don't just need more health-care workers, but they also need more access to diagnostic testing. And we've made a lot of progress with rebuilding health care,

bringing it back to the North and into rural Manitoba. And again, one of those progress points is the 800 new hip and knee surgeries at the Selkirk facility.

But it's also hard to gauge our progress when—without some form of reflection. And Manitobans remember the record of the cuts by the PCs, leaving them with less care close to home, like closing ERs in communities like Pine Falls and Melita and Treherne; cutting services in Altona, Roblin, Eriksdale, Granville, Gillam and Swan Lake; and reduced capacity in Brandon lab. And they cut the mobile breast cancer screening, cancelling over 5,000 appointments. They cut an essential program that recruited doctors to rural communities such as the Interlake, Prairie Mountain and southern Manitoba. And they had 87 fewer rural paramedics in 2023.

So this left Manitobans living in rural areas with less access to health care, and that's not right. And so that's why our government has added an additional 800 hip and knee surgeries to the Selkirk facility. And, in general, our government is working hard to improve the capacity of health care within Manitoba for all Manitobans.

Thank you.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held, and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party; any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): Wait times at the Grace Hospital emergency room have now shot up to a median of almost six hours, as of October 2024, under this NDP government. That's following decisions by the NDP to not follow through on promises to add beds and to open a minor injury and illness clinic at the Grace.

So does the member for Tuxedo agree with their government's approach to making promises, failing to follow through on them and then the resulting increase in ER wait times at the Grace Hospital?

MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo): I thank the member across the way for the question.

Our government believes in consulting with front-line staff and working on strategic capacity building and rebuilding the relationships that have

been harmed from the previous government. And we know that it's going to take a while to rebuild our health-care system in capacity after the cuts that were previously experienced from the PC government.

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): I would like to thank my colleague for Tuxedo after bringing forward this resolution. Her experience on the front lines is truly an invaluable asset to this team, as demonstrated today.

We know that having access to health care in rural parts of our province is vital. It ensures that rural Manitobans can get quality care close to home, something that the failed PC government took away.

My question for my colleague is, why does she see it as essential for health services to be available in people's communities?

MLA Compton: I thank my colleague for that question, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Our government believes firmly that Manitobans, no matter where they live, deserve access to health care close to home. Every second counts in an emergency and which is why we're reopening emergency rooms, like the one in Carberry, and bettering emergency transportation services.

Where services were cut, our team is going to rebuild.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): I'd like to ask a question for the House, here.

Brandon emergency room, the physicians, 12 of them, sent a letter, and the letter was sent to myself, the Minister for Health, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and the MLA for Brandon East. I was the only one to reach out to them.

My question is, why did it take a media issue to bring this forward and have the government reach out to them?

MLA Compton: I thank the member across the way for this question.

Our government is a listening government. We're a 'collabertating'—a collaborating government and we welcome members from physicians, nurses, diagnostic, lab folk to connect with us and consult with us on what their needs are so that we can all strategically work together to invest and rebuild capacity where it's most needed, and keep building from there, so all Manitobans can have accessible health care where they are.

MLA Dela Cruz: With 800 new hip and knee surgeries in Selkirk, folks can now be free to pursue a better life, a life where they can keep up with their family and friends without pain. But just as importantly, they can get the care that they need close to home.

My question for my colleague is, how will 800 new hip and knee surgeries help Manitobans in rural communities?

MLA Compton: I thank my colleague for that question.

Honourable Speaker, 800 new hip and knee surgeries is just one of the ways that we're going to reduce wait times across Manitoba. We're going to help those who are left waiting too long for the care they needed as a result of seven and a half years of PC cuts. But this is also a matter of principles. Accessing publicly funded health care is a fundamental freedom in Canada and a building block to a good life in Manitoba, and this is something that our government is proud to support.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Honourable Speaker, my question is, and again, regarding MRI services, despite the community of Portage la Prairie raising over \$5 million to expand local diagnostic capacity, the NDP continues to deny this much-needed MRI expansion in Manitoba.

Does the member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton) support her government's refusal to invest in expanded diagnostic services, especially when we look at the weather that is out there today, and people are having to drive miles and miles in order to get diagnostic services for hip and knee surgery?

Thank you.

MLA Compton: I thank the member for the question.

And our government is committed to consulting and working with experts in the fields, and again, strategically reinvesting and rebuilding our health-care system, and we are bringing MRI back to the North with our mobile MRI to be up and running and we are continuing to consult on where's the best places and ways to reinvest and rebuild our health-care system so Manitobans can access health care quicker and closer to home.

Thank you.

MLA Dela Cruz: I once again thank my colleague for the value that she assigns to listening to the front lines.

We have made significant progress because of this approach, rebuilding health care and bringing health-care resources back to all Manitobans, but after seven and a half years of cuts and mismanagement, we know that there is a lot more work still to be done.

My question for my colleague is, how will our government continue to improve health care in rural Manitoba?

MLA Compton: I thank my colleague for this question.

One of the significant ways that we're improving health care for all Manitobans, including those living in Selkirk, Brandon, Dauphin, Swan River and so many more places, is the recruitment of 870 net new health-care workers, and we're on track to 1,000. We're also bettering services by investing in staffed ambulances and expanding patient discharge from five to seven days every week.

Thank you.

* (11:20)

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): As the MLA for Morden-Winkler, I receive many calls and emails from deeply concerned family members on behalf of their loved ones that are experiencing deep health-care—in a—that are in health-care crisis. They need testing, but can't get it because of the wait times for the MRI at Boundary Trails are too long. Doctors are not even prescribing the testing needed.

How is the government going to help this mother living in pain at home trying to take care of her children, that can't even get the testing, never mind the surgery that she needs in rural Manitoba?

MLA Compton: I thank the member across the way for this question.

Our government is committed to working with front-line staff and increasing capacity for more accessible care closer to home. We know we're planning to be bringing back the mobile MRI and increasing diagnostic services along the way. We are working with experts in the field, we are working with training programs, we are rebuilding capacity.

The reality is there's a lot of work to do after the seven and a half years of the previous PC government, and we can't fix overnight what a mess that we inherited.

So thank you.

MLA Dela Cruz: A year ago, Manitobans voted for a new vision of how health care should be provided.

The failed PC government made cut after cut to Manitoba public health care, negatively impacting their own rural constituents.

So my question for my colleague is, how did the PC government fail their constituents when it came to health-care access and how are we doing justice by them today?

MLA Compton: I thank my colleague for that question.

Every Manitoban knows that the PCs have no leg to stand on when it comes to how health care should be managed. They closed ERs in Pine Falls, Melita and Treherne, along with service disruptions in Altona, Roblin, Eriksdale and many more. The list goes on.

But the good news is that Manitobans now have a government that's going to better serve in their communities and not take them away.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: And with that, the time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: The floor is open for debate.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): This resolution is full of false information and useless political rhetoric and deflection, and it's the second time in just over a month that the member opposite has the audacity to put forward a resolution patting this government on the back at a time when Manitobans are waiting in pain for surgeries, waiting anxiously for diagnostic tests, for appointments with specialists; when staff at health-care facilities are reporting safety concerns, workload issues and burnout; and when Manitoba is falling behind other jurisdictions in terms of the standard of care that is offered to Manitoba patients. The list goes on and on.

There is one thing missing from this resolution, and the member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton) mentioned it in her opening remarks, but I found it a noticeable absence, I guess, from this resolution, is any mention of the listening tour.

The listening tour was the foundation of the NDP government's health-care policy. It's their signature health-care policy. It's the first thing they committed to do, is a year-long, province-wide tour

touted as the solution to every problem facing the health-care system, and in fact the very foundation for the future of health care in Manitoba.

And what did the great, grand listening tour result in? Five bullets—five bullets—on a backgrounder to a news release released at 3:30 p.m. on a Friday, honourable Deputy Speaker. Five bullet points is what they heard in a year, and then followed by 14 bullet points talking about themselves and making re-announcements.

I've actually FIPPA'd for a what-we-heard report that came out of the listening tour, and I haven't received a response yet, but I'm quite sure that the answer is going to be, the record does not exist. Because the listening tour was for show, honourable Deputy Speaker. It resulted in nothing.

So now they've wasted the first year of their mandate allegedly listening, and what we've seen is in fact an attempt not to listen, but to silence front-line health-care workers. We've seen this over and over again. *[interjection]*

And the Minister of Families (MLA Fontaine) loves to sit in her spot and heckle me as loudly as possible, although all members on this side of the House quietly listened to the member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton), respectfully listened to her without heckling. I see the member for St. Johns (MLA Fontaine) can't have the same respect for anybody else in this House. That's fine.

I'd like to talk about front line health-care workers and how they're being silenced by this NDP government. Time and time again I hear from front-line health-care workers who want Manitobans to know what's going on, on the front lines in health care and the challenges that they're dealing with. But they have been told by regional health authorities not to talk. They've been told to stay silent. They've been told that if they speak out there will be professional repercussions. This culture of fear and secrecy imposed by the NDP has gotten so bad that the MNU had to go out last week and remind its members that it's still safe to go to the union; that they can go to the union anonymously.

In response to concerns brought forward by front line nurses at Swan Valley Health Centre, the government put out a memo that I'll table for the House, stating that the Manitoba Nurses Union post unfortunately contained several inaccurate statements, in attempting to discredit the nurses who brought forward these concerns. But the memo actually

confirms everything the nurses said about the lack of safety and security at the facility, in fact stating violence in the ER is escalating.

So my question for this government is, who do they believe? The management at Prairie Mountain Health, or the front-line nurses who are raising these concerns and who are scared to come in to work everyday? Who do they believe?

I also want to talk about some of the broken promises this NDP government has made that were missing from the resolution. I'm going to start with the minor injury clinics. Now, these were touted as the solution to rising ER wait times across the province. They promised one in Brandon, which did open, and in the Premier's (Mr. Kinew) own words, the Brandon minor injury clinic was supposed to be operating at the level of an urgent care centre. It would get you in and out in 20 minutes.

After visiting with front line health-care workers in Brandon just a couple of weeks ago, I can confirm for the House that that Brandon minor injury clinic is not operating anywhere near the level of an urgent care centre, and for a variety of reasons: (1) it's not taking walk-in appointments. You have to make an appointment. Secondly, it lacks the diagnostic tools to effectively function as an urgent care centre. And third, it's not fully staffed. So another empty promise from the NDP that is not effectively reducing pressure on that ER.

And that's not all. The NDP also offered minor injury clinics at Misericordia and Grace Hospital, clinics that were supposed to be open this fall. But an eagle-eyed reporter noticed that, oh, those clinics aren't actually open, and went to the NDP to ask, hey, what about those clinics you promised?

And they said, well, Misericordia's actually not going to open until next year. But Grace Hospital, where wait times have now climbed to almost six hours at the median—which is higher than this time last year, by the way—there's no timeline on that at all. And what are they citing? Staffing issues.

So I think it's important that we talk about staffing a little bit here. The much-touted 873 health-care workers are nowhere to be seen, honourable Deputy Speaker. We don't know if they're full-time positions or part-time positions.

And you don't have to take my word for it. Nurses on the front lines are questioning the government's claims. Honourable Deputy Speaker, from the Winnipeg Sun, quote: Whether that's net new or just

new hires, I don't know, Darlene Jackson, president of the Manitoba Nurses Union, told the Winnipeg Sun. Quote: In order to be very accurate, we need to know how many nurses have retired, how many have left the system, their profession, the province or gone to a private agency, to know whether that's new. What we monitor is vacancy rates, agency nurse use and the amount of overtime both mandated and voluntary worked. Until we see some definitive change in those numbers, it's very difficult to say with accuracy whether that measure has been a benefit.

That's not me, that's the president of the Manitoba Nurses Union.

And that's not all, honourable Deputy Speaker. The Manitoba Nurses Union also told the Winnipeg Sun: Despite the new hires, its members have yet to report any noticeable relief. The union said it would like to see improvements in the working conditions for nurses, including a reduction in mandatory overtime.

Interesting, because the now-Minister of Health multiple times introduced legislation to ban the use of mandatory overtime, promised to ban the use of mandatory overtime, and yet, over a year into their mandate, mandatory overtime persists.

According to Darlene Jackson, without addressing the working conditions, no matter how many nurses they hire, we will continue to struggle with retention.

And nurses aren't the only ones calling into question the NDP's claims with respect to staffing, honourable Deputy Speaker. Jason Linklater of the Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals told the Winnipeg Free Press, and this is a quote from the Free Press: While the Province touts hiring 873 net new health-care workers, vacancies and staffing issues that plague diagnostic imaging haven't improved, said the head of MAHCP.

* (11:30)

Quote: They don't have enough technologists to perform the tests. All of the problems that existed before continue to exist today. They don't have enough people to do the work. What you also see is people working longer hours, being required to stay, a level of intensity and patient acuity that isn't sustainable, and we're seeing that burnout already.

Again, those aren't my words, honourable Deputy Speaker; those are the words of Jason Linklater, head of MAHCP. And perhaps what he's talking about is reflected in what we're seeing in diagnostic and

surgical wait times in this province. Wait times for an MRI at HSC are up to 56 weeks as of August 2024. That's a 55 per cent increase from August of last year. I wish I had more updated statistics to give the House, but it's December and August is the most recent that's available.

Continually, members of the media or us on this side of the House have to prod the government into making publicly available information actually publicly available because they have an allergy to being transparent and accountable with Manitobans.

Diagnostic wait times are not the only problem we're having in this province. Surgical wait times are up. Waits for a knee replacement in August are at a median of 36 weeks; that's the highest it's been in five years, honourable Deputy Speaker. The wait time for a hip replacement at the median is 28 weeks; again, up from the historical median for each of the last five years. And these are just median wait times, meaning that half of patients are actually waiting even longer. Cataract wait times are up to 12 weeks at Misericordia, and these wait times don't even take into account the length of time patients wait to see a specialist. That's the first part of the wait that isn't even publicly reported.

So none of this squares with what the NDP are attempting to put on the record with this resolution. They talked a lot about rural health care during the question period in their comment so I just—I need to put on the record that the NDP's record on rural emergency rooms is abysmal, and I'm sure that some of my colleagues from rural areas will be happy to put on the record the names of every single rural health-care facility that the last NDP government permanently closed. It's also important to note, I think, and I've talked about this during question period, that over the summer, hospitals in Prairie Mountain Health region were closed for over 391 days total, and that includes the Carberry ER which was actually closed more often than it was open.

I can see I'm running very short of time, honourable Deputy Speaker. I had so many notes; I'm so disappointed I won't be able to get all of this on the record. Things are moving in the wrong direction. The NDP is all show and no substance. They love making flashy news announcements and then not following through—very disappointing record from the NDP so far.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Lots to say on this topic for sure, and I know my colleague from Roblin ran out of time because, you know, there's just so much to say, but I'll add a few words here for the next nine minutes and 43 seconds, honourable Deputy Speaker.

So I find it hypocritical that the NDP government talks about health care with the negative impacts that their policies have had on all of Manitoba. So I'm looking at the fact that the NDP, their whole campaign was based on one thing and that was health care. Health care was the only issue that they brought forward that had any substance within Manitoba, and for them to tout this as a victory is somewhat hypocritical.

When we look at the fact that the wait times alone have skyrocketed over the past year after the closure of the Diagnostic and Surgical Recovery Task Force—one, that I might add, cleared up all of the backlog from the pandemic and was actually making a large dent in the number of people that were waiting for services across Manitoba. What did the NDP do, honourable Deputy Speaker? They fired these top doctors, these top surgeons, the people that came to this task force and brought these recommendations forward. The very own people that they are supposed to support, that they pledge on their listening tour that they would listen to and support, their first act was to fire each and every one of these individuals that were helping Manitobans.

Let's look at the wait times over the past year. Under this NDP's watch, surgical and diagnostic wait times have skyrocketed in Manitoba. The increasing wait times include CT scans, which are the highest that they have been outside of a pandemic, and wait times, as of August 2024—and again, we can't get the updated stats because they're not put on there by this NDP government; August is the most recent we can have. At Health Sciences Centre, over 32 weeks for a T-C—a CT scan. At Concordia, over 25 weeks. At Seven Oaks, over 25 weeks.

These are people that are waiting in pain and suffering not only physically, but mentally as they try and wait and find out what is affecting their body, what is affecting their health and how they can get the help that they need. Instead, they're put on hold for half a year or a year, waiting to even hear what's happening with them before they can get to a surgeon or a specialist or an appointment that has been arranged.

Wait times in Manitoba have climbed with the MRI. So at the Health Sciences Centre, over 56 weeks—so over a year to wait for an MRI. At St. Boniface, over 31 weeks for an MRI, honourable Deputy Speaker. And when we look at this, it's horrific. People are waiting over a year just to have these diagnostic services, and that is a direct result of this NDP government and their failed health-care policies.

When we look at this, not only did we talk about it in this House, but we brought forward a solution. The member for Portage la Prairie (MLA Bereza) brought forward petitions, as well as—

An Honourable Member: Five million.

Mr. Balcaen: Yes, \$5 million that has been raised by the community through the health-care foundation, or the health foundation, to bring an MRI to Portage la Prairie.

I think we've heard a number—it changes because we don't have updated statistics, but it's between 21,000 and 24,000 MRIs that are needed across this province. What does the NDP do? They turn down \$5-million gift and say, no thank you, not worth it to us. But to Manitobans, it's worth it to them. They are the ones that are wanting to have their health care taken care of. This would significantly cut down the number of days, months and years that people would have to wait, but instead, they're happy with the status quo.

On this side of the House, we are not happy with the status quo and we bring solutions forward so that those services could have been provided, and I'm extremely proud of the member from Portage la Prairie, as well as the member from Roblin, for their continued advocacy in this House and in their constituencies and all across Manitoba when it comes to the health care that Manitobans desperately need and are being failed under this NDP government.

I'd like to talk a little bit about a meeting that was hosted at my office. The MLA for Roblin joined me because our party was the only one that reached out to a letter of distress sent from ER professionals in Brandon.

That letter was sent to the Minister of Health, it was sent to the MLA for Brandon East, it was sent to the Premier (Mr. Kinew) and it was sent to my office, as well as copied to a number of other professionals. I got a hold of them the next day and arranged for a meeting. That meeting took place six days later. Still

at that time, nobody—nobody—from the NDP government had reached out to them—not one word.

* (11:40)

When we brought it forward in this House, honourable Deputy Speaker, and the media picked up on this and we questioned it, they received a phone call that day. Coincidence? I think not. I think that shows that they're ill prepared. And when they talked to the people that brought this forward, it apparently slipped through the cracks. And I don't know how, when you send it to four different NDP mailboxes, it slips through the crack. To me, that's a very, very large crack. As a matter of fact, I'd call it a valley.

And when we look at that, how is that serving Manitobans? These individuals that we met with were extremely passionate. They care about their community and they care about health care. They were sounding the alarm because they were unheard. They said that they brought this up during a listening tour and nothing was brought forward, nothing more was done to help them out.

Not only are they seeking capacity with nurses that are leaving the area, not only are they losing capacity with doctors, they also have a space issue. There is not enough space to have there. They have moved in security into the waiting room of the Brandon Regional Health Centre because of the epidemic that is continuing under this NDP government of the people coming in that are highly intoxicated on drugs that are readily available within the communities that the NDP serves.

These individuals are causing issues in the health-care system and causing disruptions to the point of where families with young children are walking out of the emergency room because they fear for their safety and they fear for the safety of all of the people that are there.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, when somebody runs on a platform of health care, we would expect more than just five bullets on a Friday afternoon publication coming out of this NDP government.

I know I will continue to advocate for my community and all of Manitobans, but just to reiterate: the minor injury clinic that was opened in Brandon, I would just remind the NDP that six days out of 31 days in December are staffed. When I asked the professionals from the emergency room: Is this helping? They said, absolutely not, as there is no diagnostic services available, there's no walk-ins available and there's no time available.

Thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Springfield-Ritchot.

We need you to unmic, member from Springfield—sorry, unmute.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): Is that better?

The Deputy Speaker: That is, thank you.

Mr. Schuler: Okay, I'm having some technical issues, thank you.

And I do wish to take my colleagues back to a time under the Selinger NDP, when Manitoba had the longest wait times in Canada. And it wasn't that we were 10 out of 10. It's that the distance between ninth and 10th place was long and growing.

It was so bad. The wait times were so long in our emergency rooms, for instance, that you could actually get on an airplane, fly to Toronto, get treatment, fly home and you still would've spent less time than you did in the NDP emergency rooms under the Selinger government.

Which brings us to today's resolution: I would like to point out that, under Greg Selinger, concrete piles were pushed into the ground, what is now the Selkirk hospital, and they stopped there. So if you would drive by the location where this new hospital was supposed to be—and for years these concrete piles in the ground sat there.

Fact, it was often pointed out to me it looked like a concrete mushroom farm. So, the NDP started putting concrete into the ground and then they cut it. And if there was ever an odd approach to health care that we have, is that the NDP has actually been the cutbacks-in-health-care party.

The Selkirk hospital, which evidently now is going to get the 800 new surgeries, wouldn't even have been in conversation because, left to the NDP, that hospital would have never been built. It would still be the NDP concrete mushroom farm.

And it took a Progressive Conservative government to get that project back on track. That hospital was built, it is a magnificent facility. It is nicely staffed—thank you to the previous Conservative government.

In fact, I've had the opportunity to visit there and Selkirk, very much deserving—Selkirk and area is growing, lots of dynamic families, they've got great

buildings taking place, lot of seniors blocks going up. So a very much deserved hospital that the NDP never got done. I mean, they basically created a concrete mushroom farm and then it took the Progressive Conservatives to come along and actually build the hospital.

So we wouldn't even be having this debate—the member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton) couldn't get up and pontificate about all the things that are supposed to be done, which we probably know aren't going to be done. It wouldn't even be—we wouldn't even be having this conversation if we had left it up to the NDP, because there wouldn't even be this new hospital in Selkirk. It took the Progressive Conservative government, when elected in 2016, to get it done.

And what a magnificent hospital it is. Much deserving, and I know that the current member for Selkirk (Mr. Perchotte), who is an incredible businessperson—I know he was involved in the background and behind the scenes in this whole project and we thank him for that because frankly it serves our region, including where I live. So to be able to go there and get services is fantastic.

So the NDP are, today, using their rubber arm to pat themselves on a back for a hospital that didn't build that would still be a concrete mushroom farm if left to the member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton) and the rest of her colleagues. And they're going to do these procedures. The facility is magnificent and the staff are just amazing. I can't speak highly enough of how great of a place it is to go and visit and get services.

But every time the NDP announces something, they tend to announce it again, and then more press releases, and a percentage of the Amazon forest has been taken down because of previous and current NDP governments and all their press releases.

Thing is, is usually they don't deliver. We've heard all kinds of projects at hospitals that were going to be imminently done—and I believe the Victoria Hospital is one of those—and then it's going to be done soon, and then it's going to be done later. and then it's perhaps going to be done. And strangely enough, they tend not to get these projects accomplished.

And I think that's the concern we have with this resolution. And I know the member for Tuxedo, she's the newest member in the Chamber and probably well intentioned and comes in as everybody does, wishing to see, you know, the best taking place. But I would point out to her and to her backbench colleagues that

there's a pattern that takes place within NDP governments, and that is they cut health care. They fail at health care.

The health-care system in 2016, when the Conservatives took over, was in shambles. We took a system that was in shambles, we took it through a pandemic, of which we hadn't seen for over 80 years, and we came out on the other side with good solutions, good ideas.

* (11:50)

And we actually got the hospital built which now the member for Tuxedo wants to brag about—the hospital that was built by Conservatives.

So I would like to point out to members that hip and knee waits have shot up, and they're highest that they've been in at least five years. So good thing Rip Van Winkle, the NDP, this current government woke up and realizes, it's probably time we do something on hip and knees because now we have one of the highest rates.

There was a great program, and kudos to the previous Conservative government, that if you could get the service done in a different jurisdiction, Manitoba Health would pay for it. They would get those who were in the most need, those who were in the most pain could go and get it done and brought the wait-list down.

Well, we know that this current NDP, the hack and slash of health care—though not according to all their press releases—that they put their ideology far ahead of health care. That is one of those programs that should've been kept; it was a good program.

And it took a lot of the sting out of the waiting list, especially people who were in agony, and we all know individuals like that, or perhaps are related to some and they complain about how painful it is. Now we have this new announcement that the NDP are going to take and put 800 new hip and knees in the hospital that the Conservatives actually got built and want to take credit for all of it.

I would suggest that there is probably a good chance that those 800 hip and knee surgeries aren't going to really get done. And I'd say to the member for Tuxedo, I'll give you a piece of advice: don't bet the ranch on those 800.

There's a very good chance, built on the data of all the previous NDP governments, they're not going to get it done. But, boy, they're going to press release

the heck out of those 800 and then not accomplish it, and move on to something else.

It's like the listening tour, which, you know, it's kind of like vapour. It was this big, big tour, and all kinds of press releases, and, you know, 10 per cent of the Amazon forest disappeared because of NDP press releases in Manitoba. It's a pithy little one page with a couple bullet points on it, and that's the end of the listening tour.

This one is serious. They should've left the program in place that those in great need could find a different jurisdiction and Manitoba Health would pay for it, to take the pressure off the system. It's the highest it's been in five years.

Now you've come up with a program in a Conservative-built hospital which most of us know the 800 are probably never going to take place. And if they do take place, it might take over the next certain amount of years because instantly there won't just be staff at the hospital in Selkirk. And the employees at the Selkirk hospital are second to none. They're fantastic, but you can't put unreasonable expectations on them.

Where are the staff? Where are the extra doctors? Where are the extra support staff that are going to do all of this?

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

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North): It certainly is always a privilege to get up in this House and speak to Manitobans on a daily basis, and I'm happy to be able to have the opportunity to speak to the MLA from Tuxedo's resolution this morning.

First off, I thank the member for bringing it forward and, again, will extend a thank you for her 18 years serving in the health-care system as a hemodialysis nurse. Certainly we know that diabetes across not only Winnipeg but right across Manitoba is moving in the wrong direction, honourable Deputy Speaker.

We know that more and more young youth and adults are being diagnosed on a daily basis, and we know not only the challenges that that provides in the health-care system, but also the challenges it presents to folks that are living with dialysis.

So again, I have my sister of 41 years. She served in the health-care sector as a registered nurse, and she too, as well, spent the lion's share—almost 35 of it—as a human dialysis nurse as well, starting her career at

Seven Oaks and moving on to the Selkirk general hospital before retirement.

She is, however, working to support the health-care system again, still, because of the lack of qualified support staff, nurses, doctors that are required, and under a year of the NDP, nothing has changed.

As a matter of fact, her schedule has increased and thank God for those folks that are out there and the retired nurses that are coming back to the system because they understand that there's failure on that side of the House, and they need to step up and support Manitobans on a daily basis. So again, I'd like to thank my sister, as well, for her 35-plus years as a nurse.

We know that under the NDP watch, as we've heard from my colleagues this morning, surgical and diagnostic wait times have skyrocketed under the NDP, with hip and knee, in particular, wait times, the highest they've seen in the last five years.

So we know that the lack of a plan is now coming home to roost, and we know that Manitobans are at home or with loved ones, waiting for very necessary life-changing, life-altering surgery, particularly in the hip and knee end of things. Plus many other areas at wait times have gone through the roof under this government.

We know that the NDP are taking credit for PC health-care capital staffing—capital and staffing initiatives. We know that, as my colleague from Springfield-Ritchot alluded to in his comments, we know that the Selkirk general hospital is—has been expanded, again, under the former Conservative government.

We know that we added additional rooms, additional capacity, in turn also building the support network that was required to ensure that staffing would move in the right direction as well, and we were certainly well on our way.

I wanted to take some of the newer members back, maybe the class of 2023, and just talk a little bit about where the health-care system in Manitoba needed to go in order to ensure that Manitobans were getting the care that they deserve and expected.

And under the former Selinger government back in the early 2000s, when the premier at the time was looking at ways to try to change health-care wait times and concerns with health care in our province, they commissioned a report. And that report was the Peachey report.

I know that some of the members that have been here for a few years will recognize Dr. Peachey and understand that Dr. Peachey's work is world renowned.

They know that when Dr. Peachey came up with a plan, that plan was destined for sure to move forward in a positive way in the health-care system. And what did the NDP do with that commissioned report, honourable Deputy Speaker?

It sat on the top shelf collecting dust under the former NDP government. We know that that plan—when we formed government in 2016, we reviewed that plan and sought forward with it to ensure that Dr. Peachey's commitments and Dr. Peachey's report was implemented. And what did that call for, honourable Deputy Speaker? It called for a number of things.

We knew that worldwide health-care resources—nurses, doctors and support staff as well—we're essentially, we're losing them to other jurisdictions.

And certainly we know that those issues have blossomed over the years. We also know that

Dr. Peachey talked about, we need to ensure that we're not spread out too far and too thin, and with a short—with a number of staffers that weren't available, we knew that we needed to consolidate.

And Dr. Peachey called for that consolidation. He said, you're the only jurisdiction in Canada that has five active emergency rooms.

And this is Dr. Peachey's words, honourable Deputy Speaker, not mine. And he said, the way you're going to consolidate is put—make sure that you have all your resources in three major hospitals—three major ERs—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

CONTENTS

ORDERS OF THE DAY		Resolutions	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS		Res. 2—Supporting the Provincial Government on 800 New Hip and Knee Surgeries	
Second Readings—Public Bills		Compton	303
Bill 210—The Indigenous Veterans Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended)		Questions	
Pankratz	293	Cook	305
Questions		Compton	305
Perchotte	295	Dela Cruz	306
Pankratz	295	Balcaen	306
Cable	295	Bereza	306
Bereza	295	Hiebert	307
Byram	296	Debate	
Loiselle	296	Cook	307
Jackson	296	Balcaen	310
Debate		Schuler	311
Perchotte	297	Wharton	313
Bereza	298		
Byram	300		
Cross	302		
Jackson	302		

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