

**Second Session - Fortieth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Daryl Reid  
Speaker*

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Fortieth Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	NDP
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
ROWAT, Leanne	Riding Mountain	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	St. Paul	PC
SELBY, Erin, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	NDP
WHITEHEAD, Frank	The Pas	NDP
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Morris	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 6, 2013

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**Mr. 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, 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.

Good morning, colleagues. Please be seated.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, could you seek leave of the House to move to Bill 202, The Increased Transparency and Accountability Act (Various Acts Amended), sponsored by the honourable member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson).

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to proceed directly to Bill 202, The Increased Transparency and Accountability Act (Various Acts Amended)? *[Agreed]*

#### DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

**Mr. Speaker:** So we'll now proceed with Bill 202, The Increased Transparency and Accountability Act (Various Acts Amended), standing in the name of the honourable member for Selkirk, who has nine minutes remaining

#### **Bill 202—The Increased Transparency and Accountability Act (Various Acts Amended)**

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** Good morning to all my colleagues on this beautiful Thursday morning, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk this morning about, of course, the bill before us, Bill 202, but it gives us an opportunity to talk about the budget, opportunity to talk about the contrast between our government and the members opposite when they were in government, and the approach of austerity which is one that's advocated by the members opposite, and

the approach of investment which is advocated by this side of the House.

And you know we—I had a chance to listen to the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), and I understand we'll have opportunity to hear from him in the days ahead, Mr. Speaker, and we're always—we're very eager to listen to what he has to say. And he was talking about the—what their party would do in government to try to make up for some of these—some of the tax increases that have been proposed, and all I've heard him say—I listened to him. He's sort of fixated upon only one reduction. I heard him say he's going to fire the military envoy.

And that's how they're going to solve all their problems, Mr. Speaker. They all—they're going to solve all their financial problems by firing the military envoy. Well, you know you have to fire her three and a half thousand times—three and a half thousand times—to make up for the cuts that they promised to bring forward in this House.

You know, and then so—but, you know, we know their history. We understand their history when it comes to firing things, individuals, and—when they were in government. We know that they fired a thousand nurses. You know, we know that they brought in Connie Curran and know they brought in frozen food. They know that they wanted to privatize home care. We know that they bought a money-losing gas company, Centra Gas, and they sold a money-making utility, Manitoba—whoa, that's next—Manitoba Telephone System, after they invested—a Howard Pawley government and the Filmon government—they invested a billion dollars into upgrading the Manitoba Telephone System. Members opposite decided it looks like, Mr. Speaker, opposite decided at the time that they needed some cash, and they sold off the telephone company at—someone was saying \$13 a share. Immediately the shares doubled in value. Members opposite became millionaires—certain individuals—certain members' families across the way became suddenly quite wealthy. Clearly, it was the boondoggle and the—really, one of the great tragedies—one of the great tragedies of the—a scandal, really of the Filmon years, was the sale of MTS. You know, and as members opposite, there were, of course, there were many.

The other thing to talk about is the bipole line, and they're going to save money on the bipole line, Mr. Speaker. Well, again, it shows the lack of understanding of members opposite. They talk about their—again, their—you know, these captains of commerce, you know, these titans of industry across the way, they don't understand the difference between a capital expenditure and the current expenditure.

Well, I have the budget here in my hand, Budget '13, Estimates of Expenditures and Revenue, and I've looked through it several times. There's not one line item in here that talks anywhere about an expenditure on a bipole line. It simply does not exist within this document. It is a capital expense of Manitoba Hydro. It's not a current expense of this government, Mr. Speaker. That's one point.

Even if it was—you know, a man, a leader in this country once said, you know, you can't balance today's budget on an expenditure you're going to make in the future, Mr. Speaker. You cannot balance today's budget on an expenditure you're going to make in the future. Well, that was none other than Stephen Harper. Stephen Harper was talking about an expenditure and he said, you cannot—how can you balance today's budget on an expenditure you're going to make years from now?

And they know that it's—they know that the most—the—when bipole line construction begins, the majority of a cost are towards the latter part of the project, obviously, Mr. Speaker. Right now, Hydro is spending 20 or 30 million dollars on preparation for bipole. The major expenditures of bipole would occur when the actual construction begins—will not be for several years away.

Now we know that there's a split in the Conservative caucus when it comes the routing of bipole. We know that the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler), they really want that line. They're really happy that line is going down the west side, Mr. Speaker. We know that they're very happy because the member for St. Paul, when he was first elected, I remember he was tabling petitions in this House, saying he wanted us to politically interfere in the construction of a power line in the St. Paul area—East St. Paul area. He brought in petition and petition saying, please, please, government—please NDP government—please interfere—politically interfere in the routing of this line, because—what was he claiming? He claimed in the petition that these

overhead lines cause cancer. He says that they cause cancer.

And we had—and we had the—and we have some of the members opposite saying that the bipole line will do a number of things. It will kill cattle. It will decrease the power value of ag properties. It would mess up and interfere with the GPS of tractors in the area. It will also interfere because of the lines will hang low and it could possibly capture some of the—interfere with the machinery.

\* (10:10)

So that is that—if that happens—if that happens in the west side, why doesn't it happen on the east side? Why doesn't the member for St. Paul care about the value of the property of the farmers in his area? He doesn't, Mr. Speaker. He said, please build that line, please build that line right through East St. Paul. Take a route, go down to—go—put it right through Dugald. [*interjection*] Oh, yes, and so is the member for Lac du Bonnet, same way. The member for Lac du Bonnet says, please, build that line right through Beausejour. Put it right through Beausejour, right down Park Avenue, right through Beausejour and then make a little, you know, sidetrack, go through Pinawa, go through Lac du Bonnet.

No, they don't say that; they say nothing outside. They may talk big in the House, but when they get back to their own constituency they don't say a word, Mr. Speaker. They do not say a word about this—where this line goes. They're more than happy, absolutely more than happy to allow the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) to take it.

Mr. Speaker, anyways, we know that there's a split in the Conservative caucus. It's not the first split. We know that the member for Lac du Bonnet supports Bill 33. He supports amalgamation. The other day the member for Lac du Bonnet was in this House demanding that we increase red tape. So the member, clearly, he's a rogue. He's offside with many of the members opposite.

But it gives us a chance, as well, to talk about tax cuts. You know, Mr. Speaker, did this government that cut \$1.4 billion annually in taxes—not a single member across the way cut a single tax in their lives. The member for Steinbach likes to talk about it, but he's never cut a single tax in his life. The member for St. Paul, he never cut a single tax in his life.

You want to see a tax cutter? The member for St. James (Ms. Crothers), she's a tax cutter, Mr. Speaker.

The member for Kirkfield Park (Ms. Blady), that's a tax cutter. The member for Assiniboia (Mr. Rondeau), he's a tax cutter. The member for Southdale (Ms. Selby) is a tax cutter. The member for Thompson's (Mr. Ashton) a—Elmwood, Kildonan, St. Norbert, Interlake, these are tax cutters.

The members opposite are not a tax—they've never cut a tax in their life. They talked, but they talk big, Mr. Speaker, but they do not deliver. This government has delivered.

Thank you so much.

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain):** It's a pleasure today to put some words on the record with regard to Bill 202. I want to congratulate the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) to—in her efforts to bring more transparency and accountability to this Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

Manitobans need to know the truth about the province's finances, and especially now more than ever, Mr. Speaker, with the increase in PST not being addressed during the election and coming in very shortly after the Premier (Mr. Selinger) saying that it was nonsense by—when he was challenged at a Brandon public debate, by him indicating, that's nonsense, we won't be raising the PST, we have our budgets under control, we have our spending under control. You know, that really leads to the need for Bill 202.

Manitobans cannot trust a government that would hide a billion-dollar deficit until after the 2011 election, Mr. Speaker, and I think that Manitobans are becoming more and more aware of how desperate this government is in trying to, you know, tax Manitobans for their out-of-control spending.

And we know that with the debt servicing amount going up in an increasing manner, \$1.2 billion is now being spent on addressing the debt deficit. You have a government that now has probably the fourth largest department in government being the debt servicing department. And, you know, \$1.2 billion, I know a lot of different organizations and even departments that could use those dollars to assist Manitoba families. And when you talk about what matters most to Manitoba families, I believe that \$1.2 billion could address a lot of those needs for Manitoba's families. Winnipeg Harvest has indicated that they never asked for the PST. They wouldn't support a PST increase, Mr. Speaker, because we know in Manitoba we have the largest population of children using food banks, and

to me that's very concerning. We have a population within Manitoba who are hungry, who are not getting the resources or their food that they deserve by a—from—through this government and they have been using food banks.

And what I've been told is that when you look at how well a province is doing economically, socially, you look at things like a food bank, and if there is an increase in the use of food banks, then you've got some serious systemic issues within your province. And I believe that, when we see the record numbers of children using food banks in Winnipeg and in Samaritan House in Brandon, talking to Ms. Somersall, there are more families—working-poor families that are using their food banks than ever before. And again, that speaks to this government's inability to pay attention to families that are struggling. Working-poor families in Brandon who have to go and ask for food to keep their families fed and healthy is very concerning and not anywhere near where this government should be with regard to the care of Manitoba families.

And, again, \$1.2 billion servicing of a debt is not helping anybody, Mr. Speaker, and there's ways that that could be done differently.

In September 2011, the Premier released the 2010-11 budget accounts, and it showed that he had a five-year economic plan and indicated that he was on track to return the budget to balance by 2014 while protecting jobs and services without raising taxes. Well, the timing was suspect, because it was just before the provincial election, and we see after the election that he really wasn't being truthful to Manitobans. The government lied with regard to the books that they were keeping and that they weren't even close to being on track.

Now the NDP is breaking its election promise again by the 1 per cent increase. And last year, we saw what was an astounding increase in the amount of tax that Manitobans faced—the highest tax increase in 25 years—and this move alone cost Manitobans \$106 million by adding PST to things like insurance, which took a lot of people by surprise, when they would go and make their payments on their insurance and realize that there was an extra PST attached to that.

And I—you know, I guess what we're wanting to see through the member for Tuxedo's bill is a breakdown—an accountability of the taxes that are going to be increased, the service charges that are going to be increased. The hidden fees would

become, then, transparent, and I think Manitobans deserve to have that type of transparency when it comes to their hard-earned dollars, Mr. Speaker. This bill would make sure that all Manitobans know what tax hikes and user fees are increases—are mandating the budget papers, including a schedule so that when people look at it, it's very easy to read; it's transparent. And Manitobans have asked for this provision. Transparency is how and where they are being asked to pay more and is what is—they need to see so that they can actually budget their own lives.

And I think I—on the radio I heard the other day that Canadians are—and Manitobans are looking at reducing their debt—their consumer debt. They're looking at ways to make ends meet and actually to provide some sense of accomplishment in their households to have a reduced debt, teaching their children that, you know, you earn an income and you save and you then purchase what you can afford.

And that's really how we raise our children is letting them know that if they want to go the San Antonio Spurs game in San Antonio next week, the tickets are \$400 and if Cameron wants to go, he's got to identify a way that he's going to actually help pay for that ticket because his mother's not going to be paying for that ticket.

So we've had a discussion, and if he wants to go, we've identified ways that he can help make that happen, and I think that's important, Mr. Speaker, that you teach your children that if they want certain things, then they then have to learn how to pay for them prior to that expense being out there.

\* (10:20)

So, you know, Mr. Speaker—Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, members opposite really don't get it. It's talking about how to make things affordable for families. And you know, free Jets tickets, let's talk about free Jets tickets. And again, that's about transparency, and I think what we have to realize is that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Struthers) has indicated that he inadvertently misled the House when he got Jets tickets.

And you know, Manitobans have seen over and over again that this government doesn't understand what transparency and accountability is about, Mr. Speaker. And I want to congratulate the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) for bringing this forward because I think what it does, it shows that on this side of the House, we take that very seriously.

And this bill will increase the accountability of this NDP government for their decisions and make information easy to access for all Manitobans. So I urge all parties in the Legislature to support this bill and the concept of a transparent and honest accounting system within government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to recognizing the next speaker, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us from Elton Collegiate 27 grade 9 students under the direction of Leslie Kowalchuk, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen).

So on behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this morning.

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**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I find it a rather interesting topic, you know, in terms of accountability because one of the things I actually have been struck by over the last period of time is having been in opposition for a few years, watching oppositions—you know, one of the ways you sort of get some sense of what oppositions feel is an issue is the kind of questions they ask, which ministers they ask questions to. And there's nowhere where you see the accountability of this Legislature more than in our daily question period.

What struck me, Mr. Speaker, if you want to see the real priorities of members opposite, you can pretty well look at not so much the questions they do ask but the questions they don't ask.

I talked to a number of my colleagues because certainly I have been on, you know, the receiving end of a number of questions recently. But I've got a number of nominees for the Maytag repairperson in our Cabinet because they sit here day in, day out, Mr. Speaker. You'd think that members opposite might occasionally get around to asking them a question, but they rarely, if ever, do.

And, of course, some of our members do ask questions, but we found out yesterday, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite—for example, the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau), you know, they got a new strategy. If they can't beat him in election, they're going to try and muzzle him so he can't ask questions in the House; so much for accountability

and transparency where members opposite take objection of the fact that a government member asked one question in question period. You know, I guess they can dish it out but they can't take it.

They particularly can't take some of the answers, which invariably are actually some of the good things that are happening in Manitoba. And I realize members opposite have an aversion of that as well.

But, you know, I'll start with the obvious candidate, the Maytag repairperson, Mr. Speaker; it's the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Robinson). I mean, I actually am the acting minister; on occasion I get to fill in for the minister. And I have to tell you, I pretty well know, coming into question period, I don't have to study up on too many issues. I can't remember the last time they asked an issue involving northern Manitoba.

Now I appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite, they have one of those old highways map which didn't go—it didn't include half the province. You know, northern Manitoba. And I realize that members opposite, some of them may still, I think that they're still with the Flat Earth Society. They're probably afraid if they go too far north they're going to drop off the end of the earth.

But literally, they do not ask questions about northern Manitoba other than, Mr. Speaker, their critic for Hydro criticizing Tataskweyak Cree Nation, a community I represent, a flood-impacted community, day in, day out, because of an agreement that put in place funding that it goes back to that committee to represent that.

So I've often said, Mr. Speaker, that there have been more sightings of Elvis in northern Manitoba than there have been of Tory MLAs. And literally, I cannot remember the last time a Tory MLA managed to find their way, you know, up Highway 6 and end up in Thompson, let alone visit any of the other communities in the area. And I think it's probably one of the reasons why there hasn't been a conservative MI elected in northern Manitoba since 1977.

And I want to note, by the way, I do give credit to the Liberal leader. I don't necessarily agree with him, but you know the Liberal leader has actually been in northern Manitoba than the entire PC caucus has, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think the Liberal leader at times is—he gets a bit lost politically, but you know, I do—I'll give credit where credit is due, and you know,

I don't know what aversion members opposite have to northern Manitoba, but you see it day in, day out with our Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs.

Well, there's another candidate as well for the Maytag repairperson. It's the Conservation Minister, and I must admit, the ultimate oxymoron, apart from Progressive Conservative, is actually Progressive Conservative environment critic, because do you notice him getting up day in, day out, you know, talking about environmental issues? Do they talk about climate change? Do they talk about water quality? Mr. Speaker, do they talk about anything to do with the environment? In fact, I don't even know who the environment critic is over there. That's how inconsequential that is, and you know, certainly our Minister of Conservation (Mr. Mackintosh) was used to getting a few questions on Justice.

Well, what's interesting, Mr. Speaker, recently, little bit of a critic shuffle, our Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan) is now a candidate for the Maytag repairperson. I think he's had one question the entire session, the Minister of Justice, and I guess it shows the degree in which members opposite really aren't all that concerned about justice issues.

Maybe it's because of the significant initiatives we've taken that they've done, Mr. Speaker. But, you know, the amazing one is I sit next to the Minister of Education (Ms. Allan), and if it wasn't for questions for government members, I don't think she's been asked a single question by members opposite on education.

Now, I could reference the elephant in the room, Mr. Speaker. I think it's Bill 18, and I do note that the Conservative Education critic, you know, is a strong opponent. [*interjection*] Well, the member just called the bill. Be careful what you ask for. You might get it. And I look forward to the member's contribution on that bill, but you would have—you would think that with Education being the second largest department in government, you think with a lot of the important issues we're dealing with—and not just Bill 18, but many of the important issues like, you know, reducing class sizes, some of the significant work that's being put into increasing our graduation rates.

And by the way, we are increasing our graduation rates, Mr. Speaker, so a lot of good news there. You know, maybe members opposite are afraid that if they get up and they ask questions about education, that people might be reminded of what

they did in the 1990s to education. You know, I know that, you know, the member for Gimli (Mr. Bjornson), you know, a former teacher, often talks about the, you know, the CNN weather map, right, and sort of funding in the 1990s, the zeros and the -2s and the -2s.

And you know the member from St. Paul, I know, was a school trustee at that time, and he's proud of the fact he hacked and slashed as a school trustee, Mr. Speaker. You know, I could tell you, why don't they ask questions about education? Maybe it's because they've got nothing to say about education. Maybe because of their record. Maybe because they just don't get the fact that this government is the education government. This party, the New Democratic Party, is the education party, the best in Canada.

And you know, when they do ask questions, we get some sense of their priorities, and I think what's been clear in question period over the last period of time is that they are the two-tier party, okay. And nothing sums it up better than Assiniboine downs because, you know we are moving to the same VLT arrangements for Assiniboine downs that every other commercial site holder in the province has. Now, more machines. It's not capped at 40. There will be 140 machines as there are currently but we are—yes, we are reducing the take to exactly what every other commercial site holder in the province has. They disagree with that. They want a two-tiered approach for VLTs.

Now let's remember—you know that's the one side of the ledger. Now what have we said we're going to do with the \$5 million? We've said it's going to go to the priorities of this province, and instead of going into purses—this is prize money for horses, it's going to go into our hospitals.

\* (10:30)

But they also have an agenda there too, Mr. Speaker. They have a two-tiered agenda for hospitals and health care. We now have the Leader of the Opposition—and I must say, by the way, I give the Leader of the Opposition some credit here. I mean, every week he reveals one more element of what they really stand for, and we—you know, those of us who remember the 1990s, you know, we know what he stood for when he was part of that government, but he came out, asked the question. He was very upfront. He said, well, you know, there's a real role for private health care. He said he supports a two-tiered system for health care. Now, I just want to

remind people what that results in. It results in: if you've got the money, you get the best care, and if you're like everybody else, you go to the back of the line. And I think that really typifies members opposite approach. You know, they can raise questions about this or that or the other issue, but it's the questions they don't ask that I reference show their complete lack of interest in the environment, in terms of education, whole parts of this province like northern Manitoba. But when they're more concerned about prize money for horses, maintaining a two-tiered system for VLTs, and when they still believe in two-tiered health care that speaks volumes about what they really stand for.

So if we're talking about accountability today, I want to promise members opposite one thing. If they can hold us accountable in question period, or maybe not depending on what their priorities are, but we are going to hold them accountable, Mr. Speaker, for their agenda in government under the Leader of the Opposition of the 1990s. And going in over the next few years into the next election we're going to remind people there is a real choice: the two-tiered Tories, or New Democrats who believe in one-tier public health care and fairness for all Manitobans.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden):** It's my pleasure to speak to a fine private member's resolution brought forward here—or bill brought forward, pardon me, by the member from Tuxedo which talks about The Increased Transparency and Accountability Act.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to add that we certainly didn't get any of that clarity out of the last presentation that was made in this House by the member from Thompson. That whole presentation is the reason why we brought this bill forward, and it's to provide accountability, to provide transparency, not to make diversions away from the tactics that the government brought forward in its Throne Speech and in its budget speech, tactics that involved no consultation with people across the province of Manitoba. And I would refer to the forced amalgamation of municipalities that was announced in the Throne Speech last fall and never took place with any consultation with the executives of a total other level of government. Sort of similar to what we've seen in the news today about making a big announcement to help fix roads in the city of Winnipeg, but not even inviting the mayor and the councillors of the city of Winnipeg to come to the announcement. It's a dictatorial type of an attitude that has been brought on by a lot of arrogance around



this government over the last while just thinking that they can go ahead and do whatever they like and don't have to bring forward accountable legislation or have discussions with individuals on where they're at.

Mr. Speaker, the questions that we continue to ask in the House every day are the questions that we're getting from Manitobans as we listen clearly to what they are saying about the horrendous increase in PST that they say is being brought forward by this government. But what irks them even more is the fact that they are concerned that the transparency and accountability part of the balanced budget taxpayer legislation is being denigrated by the Bill 20 that's been brought forward in this House to increase the PST by 1 per cent, but it also takes away the right for people to have a vote in a referendum that was part of the legislation.

We all know that government has the right to change legislation and to move forward with new changes in legislation that they might want to bring forward. And so as an opposition party, we can't stop them from bringing forward a 1 per cent increase in PST if that's how they choose to deal with the priority of lack of accountability and the transparency of their own spending. They think they can spend Manitobans' money better than leaving it with Manitobans to spend for their own futures, even though they ran an election campaign that said not only that they wouldn't increase the PST by any amount, but also that they had said that they would find 1 per cent efficiencies in their government on the spending side. And, of course, that was forgotten very quickly as part of the whole package that was stated prior to the election and during the election where every one of the members across the way ran on the fact that they knocked on doors saying, we will not increase taxes and it didn't matter where they were from.

And so, you know, I think if they'd have been honest with people and said, we are going to increase your PST, we're going to take the vote tax and put \$7,000 in each of our pockets, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to taking \$1,600 out of yours, as we have—as the NDP has with their increased taxation over the last two budgets since they came in, which was only—it's only 18 months ago since they won that last election—19, 20 since they won that last election. And already they've taken that much money out of every family of four's pockets in the province of Manitoba just in the amount of taxes that they've increased.

Mr. Speaker, I would have to put on the record, as well, that transparency is not raising the PST after you've said the following statement that I want to quote from Premier Selinger—or from the Premier. On September the 2nd, 2011, he stated, and I quote: Today's release of the 2010-11 public accounts show that Greg Selinger's five-year economic plan is on track—or, pardon me, the member from St. Boniface's five-year economic plan is on track to return the budget to balance by 2014 while protecting jobs and services without raising taxes. That was stated by the Premier himself, the member from St. Boniface, in an NDP Fact Check news release. So, that's hardly accountable. You know, it's like saying one thing, doing another totally.

And it's not what a can-do government—I mean, former Premier Doer always tried to state that it was a can-do government. Well, we had a—the only real government—or the only real operating company in Manitoba that was can-do was Cando Contracting out of Brandon, led by Gord Peters from the city of Brandon—a very successful and visionary businessperson in the province of Manitoba in relation to the way he held—dealt with not only the integrity of his company and the way that he has developed it from basically nothing with his family, but to the way he has included his staff in regards to the management of his business in this province. And I know many of those personally, and they speak quite highly of the role that they play in that company and how hard they work in that company, Mr. Speaker, because there is results. It's results-oriented, and that's not something that this government is familiar with.

They need to take a lesson from companies like Cando Contracting Ltd. out of Brandon and develop business plans for the management of the Province that would be based on a similar relationship with not only those in the private industry, but also with the bureaucracy that's presently working on behalf hard-working—working hard on behalf of the citizens of Manitoba and deal more straightforwardly with them—instead of trying to take another \$1,600 out of each of those families' pockets every year as well. And that money has been taken out since the government came in, Mr. Speaker, but I have to emphasize that it will be taken out every year because those tax levels are not going to decrease under this government. So, on the 1st of July and every 1st of July thereafter there will be another \$1,600 coming out of those people's—those families of four.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans have indicated in several polls, and they've indicated to us privately in every meeting that we go to across the province, and certainly in my own constituency, that they are very, very disenchanted with the present government whether it's in the areas of the way they manage their finances, the dictatorship in regards to forced amalgamations of municipalities, whether it's the amount of doctors that we don't have in Manitoba, the amount of emergency rooms that have been closed that were said that they wouldn't be across the province, in health care, whether that's the weakness of other bills that they've brought forward in this area and also even in areas like conservation.

\* (10:40)

But I want to finish by saying that there's an area that lacks extreme accountability in this, and that is the whole development plan that the government is leaping forward with on an ad hoc basis in regards to the planning of the development of hydro for the future benefit of Manitobans. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Mr. Graham Lane, a former chair of the Public Utilities Board in Manitoba, indicated that—you know, the member from Thompson wanted to talk about an elephant in the room a minute ago. Mr. Lane indicated yesterday, publicly, that there was an overweight elephant in the room and that that overweight element—elephant, rather, was the unaccountable spending in regards to the development plan for Manitoba Hydro's future. We all know that the government had indicated that Wuskwatim would be built for a cost of \$900 million, and it came in at \$1.8 billion.

The hydro rates for—that they're attaining now are 3.3 per cent, exporting that power to the United States, Mr. Speaker, when the development plans said they would be getting 8 cents for that hydro.

It's indicated that just out of that one dam alone, we are losing over \$100 million a year by doing what the government has done with that. And now they expect us, Mr. Speaker, to understand that we'll go ahead and build Conawapa and others, with the type of need for a hydro line that is coming down the wrong side of the province, and a line loss, and an extra cost of over \$1.4 billion.

But that's not the true concern here. It's the fact that every major project that this government has directed Hydro to do over the last five to six to 10 years, has come in at least double the cost, Mr. Speaker, and many of them at triple the cost.

And it's been indicated that the rates that'll be charged in the future, Mr. Speaker, will be triple what they are today and what our homeowners are paying in this province, and that's in the very near future.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I'd like to commend my colleague again for bringing forward a bill to provide increased transparency and accountability in the government's finance.

#### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Before recognizing the honourable member for Kirkfield Park, I just want to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today, from Taking Charge! for opportunities, 11 visitors under the direction of Ms. Carol Haug. And this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Ms. Marcelino).

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this morning.

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**Ms. Sharon Blady (Kirkfield Park):** And welcome to our guests in the gallery. It's not often that we get to, during private members' hour, have guests in the gallery here, as we often debate a variety of things. It's a little bit different than question period, when we have guests, and I'd like to think that maybe our behaviour is a little bit better at this time. So welcome to the gallery and I hope that everyone here can be on their best behaviour, because I know the acoustics up there don't always mean that you can hear everything clearly.

But in having the opportunity to speak to this piece of legislation, I guess what I always find interesting, when given the opportunity to speak, is again, the contrasts on both sides. Having come from a situation where I have been an educator, I've also been a single mom living on student loans, and I've seen what it's been like to live under Filmon government and the Harris government, and coming into this province at the time when the NDP had come in—first come into government under Gary Doer, and then having the privilege of being asked to run and join this team, I've been able to see, from a variety of perspectives, just the kinds of changes.

And so, when I hear members opposite talk about transparency and accountability, again, I go back to a reference that I made earlier, you know, in

the week, in another debate, and the reference to Inigo Montoya, and I don't think that word means what you think it means because of the way you keep using it, and the way—the examples that you provide. Because when I think about transparency and accountability, and judgements, and advice, coming from folks, you know, bringing forth this kind of legislation, I have to stop and sit there, and go, well, but when you guys were in government, Mr. Speaker, I do believe, didn't they have two sets of books? You know, so, it's one of those things. You know, actions speak louder than words. And that's the thing, is this Chamber does become very filled with words. And in—what I would like to talk about, is the actions that have—that this government has really put forward, in terms of looking after its people.

And I guess that's the other thing, too. We hear discussions of taxpayers. Well, I'm sorry, those are my neighbours that I represent. I don't represent just taxpayers; I represent people that I grew up with, that I go to school with, that look after my children, that teach my children, that are friends of my mother's and my father's, I go—people that I, you know, not only went to high school with, but now my kids are attending school with their kids. So I don't represent taxpayers; I represent my neighbours, and I work for my neighbours.

And so, when I have someone giving examples, like the member from Riding Mountain, and she's trying to use a fiscal example of her—of—you know, being able to raise money—a child—her child raising money to go to San Antonio. Raising money to go to San Antonio? If this was Twitter feed, you know what that statement would have behind it? Hashtag First World problems. I'm sorry, but we—when we are budgeting around my house, trust me, the idea of one of my kids being able to make a trip to Texas, that's not even on the radar. Sorry, I guess it's right up there with the examples and the questions that come up in QP.

The Minister for Infrastructure and Transportation made an interesting comment about, Mr. Speaker, the kind of questions that are asked and not asked, and one of things that keeps coming up in question period is the reference to PST and how it's going to cost people 16—a household \$1,600. Well, if it's 1 cent, \$1,600 means you have to have a disposable income of \$160,000—\$160,000 of PST taxable items. So you have to then include all of those items that you would be spending money on. I'm sorry, but I'm not sure. Is there anybody in here

that's got a \$200,000 disposable income? Because I can tell you, it's not me.

And what's really interesting, as well, when that math comes up, I've been at a couple events in the past evening and I had a wonderful conversation with a young medical student, someone that I've known through—for a number of years now, and I first—I remember meeting him when he was in high school and we were part of the Manitoba-Israel Shared Values Roundtable. And I remember watching him, at his eagerness going into university and now as a young med student and how he's looking—what he's looking forward to doing when he comes out of practice. And he and I had a wonderful conversation about a variety of things including the fact that he and his friends are talking about how amazing it is to be part of a province where not only have they been able to go to school in this province through their early years, but he came up, went straight into U of M, and he's happy with the fact that he and, again, his friends are looking forward to practising here, that they are going to be able to stay in Manitoba, stay with their families and grow their careers because of the investments that were made for them.

But he also made an interesting observation about the PST. He says he finds it really unusual to hear so much kerfuffle. Because he remembers—and I love this when young people have this kind of insight and continuity and they don't have the short-term memory loss that seems to be running rampant with members opposite. But the idea that—a couple years back when the feds cut the GST by 1 cent, a lot of people got really upset because what that meant was there'd be less revenue to invest back into our citizens, back into our country, back into health care, back into so many different things. And so all that Manitobans are being asked to do is to pay that additional cent because, frankly, we're having to backfill. I remember the year that I ran, the fact that the feds cut the national daycare program and we had to backfill, what was it, \$14 million to cover—or was it 14 or 40 million dollars to cover costs that the feds had pulled out on. We had to backfill.

There's so much that we do for our First Nations because of over a century of neglect by federal governments in terms of looking after First Peoples, and so this government goes out of its way to try to find ways within its jurisdictional parameters to invest in our First Peoples. Our First Peoples, Mr. Speaker, are the fastest growing demographic in our province and the success of our province will be

made, in many respects made or broken, on the success of our First Peoples. I'm proud to be a part of a government that invests in our First Peoples in any way we can.

I used to teach in the ACCESS program and the Inner City Social Work Program and I taught at Brandon University. And I have been part—I was hired under the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, the Aboriginal child welfare program. And so I've seen the value. I've seen it come up and that's another part of the conversations that I've been having recently.

I was at an event last night with folks involved with the child and family services, Jewish Child and Family Service, and again, a wonderful conversation with a friend, Ariel, and he was talking about how can we talk about these things as costs; they are investments. How do you look at investments in child welfare as strictly costs? How do you put a price tag on a child being taken into foster care as an infant and the continuum of supports that are provided there? We had a wonderful speaker that talked about the kinds of programs that are available. But, again, it was one of these things, the commitment level, there are so many things you can't put a dollar value on and talk about what's your return on investment.

Now, we have had some that were able to do that. One of the ones that I'm most proud of is PAX. PAX is phenomenal, the good behaviour game is something that in some respects it seems so obvious. Dr. Emberly, when he talks about it, says that it's really about grandma rules. It's, how would grandma handle this? But not all of us have the benefit of our grandmas around in terms of the consequences, but this provides an investment. But for every dollar invested, there's a \$96 return.

\* (10:50)

So if they're looking at transparency, accountability and proper investment in funds, I'm sorry, but I have a hard time taking that advice from people that sold a publicly owned phone company and, you know, and that seemed to chomping at the bit to do the same thing with our hydro company, when, in fact, when we collectively own and manage these things, we can be more transparent, we can be more accountable and we are doing those things and we are investing back, and that is one of those things.

So coming back to an earlier point where I don't represent taxpayers; I represent my neighbours. And I believe my job and the job of this team and this

government is to work to make sure that investments are being made properly, to look after our neighbours and I think we're doing it very well; especially in light of the track record of members opposite.

And, again, it is one of those things that's a little bit different when you're in opposition; I get it because you don't actually have any direct control over things, other than maybe rising on points of order during question period. But, you know, let off your steam where you can. But in terms of actual things that you can do, I'm sure it must be frustrating.

Whereas on this side of the House, we're actually able to back up our actions and words and build the province. And that's what we've been doing, ten years of balanced budgets and ongoing investments in tough times because that's what they are; they're investments, they are not costs, they are not expenditures. They are investments in our children, in our families, in our grandparents.

So I will continue to work with all the members on my team because I'm proud to be a part of a team that keeps building this province, Mr. Speaker. And I think if anybody has got a track record on transparency and accountability, it is members on this side. And maybe members on the other side need to stop and reflect before they try to give pronouncements to us.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Prior to recognizing the honourable member for St. Paul, I'd like to draw the attention of the honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from Hugh John MacDonald School 20 grade 9 students under the direction of Glen Henson. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Ms. Marcelino).

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this morning.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul):** And it's always a great morning to get up and speak to bills like Bill 202, the bill that was put forward by the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson). If there's one thing this Legislature has been lacking in the last 12, 13 years is transparency and accountability. And it's unfortunate that with an NDP government like this that we have to start legislating what should come naturally to politicians, but doesn't with this NDP government.

It was interesting listening to the hurricane speech from the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), which was quite a whirlwind in this Chamber. What I find just amazing is the other NDP members sit around there like storm chasers, you know, and they sit around this hurricane speech. And what they don't realize is that the end of the hurricane, you know, you watch it from a distance and it's lots of clouds and lots of wind and lots of blowing and it's very loud. What they don't realize at the end is the damage left behind. And the member for Thompson certainly left a lot of damage behind in his speech.

But, you know what? There is a positive that comes out of every session. And today I have to thank the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar). And it's not often that you get a member from a different party get up and sing the praises of another member from a different party. And that's what he did today and I'd like to thank him.

He pointed out to this House how hard-working I am, representing the community of St. Paul and how I stand up for my community. And, you know what, it's one of those nice moments, you know. And it's too bad the media doesn't cover those.

The member for Selkirk put on the record what a hard-working MLA the MLA for St. Paul is—who happens to be me—and how good I am at representing my community. And I want to thank him. I mean, there's probably very little I'd like to thank him for and very little that we agree on. But on this one I'd have to say that I am unanimous in my agreement with the member for Selkirk and the kinds of hard work I do for my community. I thank him for that.

And, Mr. Speaker, I do want to go on and talk about transparency and accountability. We have the member who just got up and put one of the most incredulous quotes on the record. It's the member for Kirkfield Park (Ms. Blady), and she said, I wish to be very clear that I do not represent the taxpayers in my community. And she didn't just say it once.

You know, the first time around we actually thought she misspoke herself, but then she said it again. She said, I do not represent the taxpayers in my community. And that's why she said she is okay—she is okay supporting a PST.

But, you see, there's more to it. There's an accountability component to that because in the last election in 2011, the member for Kirkfield Park went

door to door, knocked on the doors and said, please open the door. I have a message for you. And the message is that, read my lips, no new taxes. Number one, she said that there would be no new taxes raised to pay for their onerous and incredible spending spree that they promised in 2011. They—she said at the door in Kirkfield Park that they could pay for it all without any tax increases.

But then it got better. Then she said, oh, and I also want to make this very clear that there will be no PST increase. In fact, her boss, the Premier (Mr. Selinger), the member for St. Boniface, made it very clear after a debate in which he said the idea of raising the PST is nonsense. And the member for Kirkfield Park ran around her constituency, promising no tax increases, promising no PST increase, and now we get the truth. Number one, the PST increase is a reality. They did increase taxes and now she said—it's sort of like the member for Selkirk who spoke some truth today about, you know, the hard-working member for St. Paul. She actually put some truth on the record and said, and the reason for all that is she doesn't represent the taxpayers of Kirkfield Park. That's what she said.

And you know what? We finally are starting to get the truth coming out of members, and that's why we would like to see them get up and debate Bill 20, for instance. There would be an act of transparency and accountability. They don't get up and debate it. They don't get up—the hurricane speech we got from the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) talked about the fact that Bill 18—which he hasn't spoken on; the opposition has—we have one member who, on his own, has spoken more than an hour on it. We're prepared to debate bills; they won't call bills.

Why don't they call the bills? They're fixated on one piece of legislation, Bill 20, which strips away accountability, which strips away transparency. That's the only thing that they are bent and determined to get through, and we would suggest they look at this Bill 202, pass it, because if there's anything that we need in this Chamber right now, it's an increased transparency and accountability and it's too bad we have to legislate it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade):** Mr. Speaker, it's indeed a pleasure today to stand in the Chamber as one of the 57 members of the Legislature who are entrusted by the public every four years to serve the public.

And I'm certainly proud to be part of a team that is a very transparent team, and it gives us an opportunity to talk about the contrast between members opposite and our party.

Now, you don't have to look very far to—in history—to see what members opposite did, didn't do and how they were held accountable or how transparent they may have been, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, if you were going to take action on an issue, you take action on an issue; you come up with a plan, you develop a plan, and you're transparent and accountable for the issue. Members opposite ignored issues. It's as if they didn't recognize a problem, didn't try to fix the problem, then they weren't held to account and there was no issue of transparency and accountability.

Case in point: bullying in schools. I know we've talked about that a bit, but in 1993, Manitoba Teachers' Society, which I was a proud member of at the time, said to the government of the day, we've got a problem in our schools: people are being bullied; teachers are being physically abused. They ignored it; didn't do a thing about bullying in the schools. If you ignore a problem, don't recognize that a problem exists—in fact, I think it was the member from Charleswood who said, bullying didn't exist when we were in government. That's what the member from Charleswood said. So, if you ignore the problem—thank you very much Hansard—if you ignore the problem, you don't admit that there's a problem, then you don't do anything about the problem, you're not held to account for that problem. So that was one thing.

Crime in Manitoba: members opposite did nothing when we had car theft out of control—car theft completely out of control. And I think it was the former member for Morris who said, there was no cars stolen when we were in government, or at least not very many. Again, you ignore the problem, you don't accept responsibility that there is a problem, you don't try to address the problem so you're not held accountable for that problem.

I'd rather be on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, where we recognize that there are issues to be addressed, that we tackle those issues, that we bring in good public policy, that we provide the supports that are necessary to address these issues—

\* (11:00)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable

Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade will have seven minutes remaining.

The hour being 11 a.m., it's time for private member's resolution, and the resolution we have before us this morning for consideration is sponsored by the honourable member for Brandon West, entitled "Support for Manitoba Hydro Power Smart Program".

## RESOLUTIONS

### Res. 14—Support for Manitoba Hydro Power Smart Program

**Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West):** I move, seconded by the MLA for St. Paul,

WHEREAS in 1991 Manitoba Hydro unveiled their Power Smart program to conserve electricity; and

WHEREAS the Power Smart program has reduced annual generation requirements by 577 megawatts over its lifetime; and

WHEREAS the 2011 Power Smart program plan targets reducing generation demand by 329 megawatts over the next 15 years; and

WHEREAS the Public Utilities Board urged Manitoba Hydro to incorporate higher energy efficiency goals into the Power Smart program and to maintain or increase its financial support for the program.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Manitoba Legislative Assembly of Manitoba commend Manitoba Hydro for their innovated Power Smart programs that improve Manitoba's environmental sustainability; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge Manitoba Hydro to continue to invest in the Power Smart program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge Manitoba Hydro to cancel its 'sunder'—\$750,000 advertising campaign and redirect those funds to the Power Smart programming.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable member for Brandon West, seconded by the honourable member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler),

WHEREAS in 1991 Manitoba Hydro unveiled their Power Smart program—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense? Dispense.

Is there leave of the House to consider the resolution as printed in today's Order Paper? [Agreed]

*WHEREAS in 1991 Manitoba Hydro unveiled their Power Smart program to conserve electricity; and*

*WHEREAS the Power Smart program has reduced annual generation requirements by 577 megawatts over its lifetime; and*

*WHEREAS the 2011 Power Smart program plan targets reducing generation demand by 329 megawatts over the next 15 years; and*

*WHEREAS the Public Utilities Board urged Manitoba Hydro to incorporate higher energy efficiency goals into the Power Smart program and to maintain or increase its financial support for the program.*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba commend Manitoba Hydro for their innovative Power Smart programs that improve Manitoba's environmental sustainability; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge Manitoba Hydro to continue to invest in the Power Smart program; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge Manitoba Hydro to cancel its \$750,000 advertising campaign and redirect those funds to Power Smart programming.*

**Mr. Helwer:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to the resolution that we've just put on the record, and it is, indeed, an honour to talk about a program that Manitoba Hydro began under the Gary Filmon government in 1989 and these programs debuted as the Power Smart program in 1991.

It's a very interesting program, I think, Mr. Speaker, quite different from building dams, and we know that Manitoba Hydro is, indeed, very, very good at building dams. They're very good at maintaining dams. They're very good at building transmission lines. They're very good at maintaining transmission lines. There's a question of the government interference in the cost of those lines and the dams and production and such. We know that they are over budget on some—several things, and political interference, I think, can go to a lot of that over budget.

But this is one program that Manitoba environment has invested in that has a very good return, Mr. Speaker. It's an incentive program, and incentives work much better than sticks. And this is something that I believe this government, indeed, does need to learn: that incentive programs can be very effective, and the population of Manitoba has indeed responded to programs such as Power Smart.

It's introducing environmental sustainability, Mr. Speaker, and reducing use, allowing excess capacity to be used by other Manitobans and sold into the American market, of course, which, at this time is not producing very good returns. But those are things that at one time did produce returns for Manitoba and we don't know when that will happen again. But somewhere down the road, 10 years, 20 years, 30 years, who knows, that that may, indeed, return, unless the 'ecoelectrical' environment as a whole has changed such that it will not come back to that. And those are things that we cannot predict; the business cycle, of course, is not predictable.

You know, it's very interesting in a efficiency program, that this type of a thing is out there in Manitoba, and the Power Smart program, as I said, has been successful. There is a question, now, of cuts that this government is looking at making in it through Manitoba Hydro that it may not sustain the same type of success that it has.

When I talk to people around the world that are involved in hydro generation, electrical generation, one of the things they do talk about is that they have trouble getting the attention of Manitoba Hydro for programs such as this. They have trouble getting the attention of Manitoba Hydro to talk to them about new types of meters, about new types of management, about anything that would produce more electrical efficiency and use of electricity in an efficient manner. Because Hydro, as I said, they build dams, they build generating stations, they build transmission lines, and that's what they know. But this is something that, unfortunately, they have seem to have lose—lost some focus on. And these people around the world are travelling and they're working on more efficient programs in many other utilities, such as Manitoba Hydro, but not in Manitoba Hydro. And it's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that they won't even return their calls, because these companies can help Manitobans, and can help Power Smart, and can help the program become more efficient and more sustainable. And, indeed, those are the things that are a very small investment, that can be made by this government, very—with very good returns. But,

unfortunately, those are things that this government doesn't seem to want to do. It doesn't seem to direct Manitoba Hydro to look into those areas and we may be losing those opportunities, because those opportunities are gained over time.

You know, these are things that can help the environment. And this government talks about the environment a lot, but they don't do very much. In fact, their record is quite poor, Mr. Speaker, and we see it time and again. We saw it last year. I've spoken in this Chamber about environmental permits and applying for them, and the cost, and the time that it takes to do that, and the angst, and you put them together, and you submit them to the department, and the department comes back with them, and may make some changes, but then they do give the permit. And the fear of the private sector on government regulations such as this, is that we wonder if we're doing it into a vacuum. And, indeed, we saw last year, that that's what happens.

We had the unfortunate fire at Speedway International, and it turns out Speedway International had an environment permit. They did. But the minister here didn't know. The minister responded in this House, and they didn't know what was held on that site. Well, it's very clear, Mr. Speaker. It's all detailed in that permit that that company filed with this government.

The first thing you do when you have a disaster such of that—such as that nature, when you have a fire, the first thing you do, is you go to your hazardous plan. You look at what you're going to do, and that—part of that is that environmental permit, and it's all contained in there, what is detailed on that site, what's held on that site. The government knew, but, again, that's what happens to their environmental plans, they just ignore them, they file them away in a book. And that is the fear, Mr. Speaker, that private sector has when they do such a thing as an environmental permit, that you submit it, the government looks at it, maybe, files it away in a book, it goes on shelf, it collects dust, never to be looked at again. And that is this government's response to the environment. That's one of them.

And again, you know, we have the Kyoto Protocol. This government was very adamant that they would meet their targets—we will meet these targets. And then we find out, well, you know what? We didn't miss that target—didn't meet that target—we missed it, so, well, let's revise the target. Okay, let's do that. Well, then the government finds out, well,

you know what? We missed that target too. Well, I guess we'll revise it again. In fact, I think we've lost count—maybe five, six times—how many times they've revised these targets and not met any of them.

In fact, you know, we went through some of this Public Accounts, and couldn't get a lot of answers from the government on the—that type of thing, and at the end of the day, that report wasn't passed. And there was a comment from an NDP member that said, that was all political. I said, really? Did you really think that was political, when the government could not answer any questions about their targets, about what they had done about what they planned to do. Is that political? That means that this government didn't pay any attention in this respect, and that environmental plan went off target. So again, the government talks about environment but really doesn't do much.

And then we have the dams, Mr. Speaker. And the member from Thompson talked about members here not being up in northern Manitoba. Well, I have. I've been to some of the dams and I've seen them. And I've seen the environmental impact. I've seen the cultural impact. I've seen the societal impact of those dams on those particular areas.

\* (11:10)

And it's an easy thing to talk about here in Winnipeg, because it's not in our backyard. We don't see that. We think that electricity just happens. We think that, it must be bus more—much more friendly than gasoline. It must be much more friendly. But we don't see the environmental impact of those dams here because it's not in our backyard. It's in the backyards of the northern Manitobans, and that is where you need to go to see that impact on the environment.

So by investing in a Power Smart program, we can help some of that environmental degradation. We can make it more efficient in this regard. We can put money into a program that can help Manitobans and Manitoba Hydro. This government has said to Manitobans: You know what? It's your turn to invest in Manitoba Hydro for the future. Well, we've invested in Manitoba Hydro every year as ratepayers, Mr. Speaker. And the government's supposed to take—Manitoba Hydro is supposed to take that investment, what we pay for that, and then, you know, that's how you continue your production; that's how you continue to do development.



But now this government's saying that's not enough. We're going to have to increase that and we want more. Well, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba, I continue to believe, has some of the greatest opportunity of any province in Canada. The Power Smart program can go a long ways to helping that, but it's being ignored by this government at this time. This whole area is being ignored, Manitoba's opportunities, and it's really disappointing to see that, because we see this passing Manitobans by.

So I think we need to spend more time on Manitoba's opportunities and spend more attention there and see where we can help Manitoba as opposed to just tax them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines):** Mr. Speaker, in talking to this resolution, I'm astounded. Never was so little known by so few about so much. I am absolutely astounded.

Manitoba Hydro is investing \$60 million in Power Smart this year—\$60 million, and the member opposite says they're not doing enough. I looked at the programs that the member talked about that the Tories brought in in Power Smart: five programs; one was a survey and was all consumer commercial projects. We have 27 programs that will save \$1 billion to consumers by 2016. What a bunch of pap from members opposite. I'm astounded. I am shocked.

And the contradictions, Mr. Speaker. I've let—the members opposite suggest that we are always politically interfering in Hydro. They're *[inaudible]* and they want us to go to Hydro now and say: Hydro, you're doing an advertising campaign. Go do it. They want us to politically interfere. What a bunch of hypocrites. What a bunch of hypocrites. They don't even know what they're talking about.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about American exports. Don't they know that Hydro's making money still? Did they look at the charts in Crown corporation committee? The three and a half cents or the two and a half cents in power that we get from the US on the stock market would get zero if we didn't export it. It's the power that gets spilled over the dam. The power that's in commercial contracts is worth way more, and it's going to bring in right now \$7 billion in the next 20 years, and \$29 billion when the contracts roll over. They don't know what they're talking about. They don't have a clue.

I am astounded, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, they attacked the PUB. They attacked the PUB. We've

sent NFAT. They stand up every day; they do 17 petitions asking for an NFAT review. We've already sent an NFAT review. It's already started. And who do we ask to do it? The PUB, the independent third party. And what did they say yesterday? They attacked the PUB. They said the PUB was—they used Graham Lane's example; they said—I don't know—it was irrelevant or—it's unbelievable. They attacked the PUB yesterday and now they say, oh, by the way, interfere, go to Manitoba Hydro and take that money; put it into Power Smart. That's \$750,000 they're spending on the advertising campaign.

Did you know we're spending \$60 million this year and are planning to spend \$1 billion over the next 10 years, Mr. Speaker? In fact, yesterday, I had occasion to do a press conference where I announced publicly we'd be doing some consultations about Power Smart and hearing from the public good ideas. There's tons of ideas. Manitobans are very, very bright. You know, we have some—let me talk about some programs.

Yesterday's program was at a company that recycles refrigerators. They take 95 per cent of the content of refrigerators and they recycle it. The compressors go to Third World countries. Everything else is recycled. They've recycled 20,000 fridges and receivers that don't go into landfill, and they do it 95 per cent. Now, members opposite, what program did they have when they were in the government? Oh, you know what they did, Mr. Speaker? In 1998, they did a Power Smart recreation facility survey. Oh, wait, they did a survey. My gosh.

The BEEP and the BUILD programs get people who perhaps have difficulty finding a job, train them to do retrofits, go into low income—not people who want to get tickets to San Diego to go to a basketball game, but people who are on low income, and they go to those people and they retrofit and the cost goes onto their bill and the bill's reduced and the savings are paid out over years and the savings stay with it. So, you get people working, you get cost savings, you protect the environment, and it's a win-win-win, and members opposite voted against it. You know, every province in the country is looking at that program; they voted against it. Oh, I talked about PAYS, didn't I? I flipped over to PAYS. In BEEP, we do the same thing in Brandon. Did the member ever talk to the BEEP people in Brandon? He says he gets all these comments from people who don't take advice. Did he talk to the BEEP people in Brandon? Have you ever talked to that group that goes out and retrofits homes? Low income, do you know what that

is? Do you ever talk to them? Do you ever talk about the LIEEP program that provides benefits to low income—*[interjection]* You never had that program when you were in government. You don't have the 27 programs. If they want to talk about advertising, which I don't really want to talk about, but if they want to talk about advertising talk about their former premier used to get Hydro and MPI to pay for his trips. Ask him about that. Has the federal government done any advertising lately? Has anyone seen any ads? You know, Mr. Speaker, what a bunch of hypocrites. Hydro does an advertising program to talk about the future, to talk about dams, to talk about some of the issues that are raised every day. And they want to take the money and put \$750,000, maybe—what would that be—75 cents for every Manitoban. Their program will be 75 cents for every Manitoban to do Power Smart. We're doing 60 million this year alone. We're going to do more, plus we're doing PAYS, plus we're employing people.

**An Honourable Member:** Go talk to your buddy Tim Sale.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Oh, he—oh, the member for—the member gets a smart comment, talk to Tim Sale. I'll talk to Tim Sale. I'll talk to Ed Schreyer. I grew up with him. I was, in fact, here—I was here the day that you set up the Tritschler commission that tried to attack Schreyer. I walked here in the Leg., I was disgusted that you were going after a former Premier for doing Lake Winnipeg regulation, Mr. Speaker, rather than flooding communities like Grand Rapids. The member wants to talk about old hydro, talk about members in this House who grew up in a place like Grand Rapids where they flooded your house out with no compensation, and we had to go back 20 years later and we're paying a billion dollars to those communities in retroactive payments because they flooded out those communities. Go to Wuskwatim; there's no flooding. The local First Nation community has a participation and equity interest in that dam. You want to talk about the north? Go visit, go talk to Jerry Primrose, the chief.

So, Mr. Speaker, we don't have to take any lessons about power smart or green energy from members opposite. How many windmills did they develop? Zero. The member says you should do some more windmills—you should do more windmills that are at 40 per cent capacity.

**An Honourable Member:** No, I never said that.

**Mr. Chomiak:** No, I didn't say you said that. Your leader did, and I don't know whatever there—but they're all—they say whatever. So many said so little about—you know, about knowing hardly anything, Mr. Speaker. Come to some of the seminars. Talk to some of the US people that are up here this week to talk about how important the 250-megawatt sale is to Minnesota or Wisconsin.

And, you know, the beauty of it—and I hesitate to give real intimation to members opposite, but, you know, one of the really good things about our power exchange with the United States is that we send our power at peak in the summertime to them for the air—to use their air conditioning. And in the wintertime when it's—when we need peak they send their power, their wind power, back to us—their wind power that's subsidized by both the state and the federal government in order to make it affordable.

\* (11:20)

We can't even compete with the US subsidies on wind, but we have an arrangement where they send back their wind power, their clean wind power, to us while we send our clean hydro power to them. That's part of the agreement. That's why we're going forward with further agreements. That's why the 20-billion-plus in contracts that are going to continue to be flipped over are going to make sense, Mr. Speaker. But if you build our more expensive wind here versus hydro which is cheaper, we lose out some of that competitive advantage. They understand in the United States that you need a portfolio mix. This is a hydro province. It would be a sin to not build hydro.

You can—look at what Ontario's doing. Ontario's paying twice the prices that we pay for their electricity. Saskatchewan's paying even more. Saskatchewan's spending \$15 billion on coal and buying energy. We're building hydro to last a hundred years for \$20 billion. Don't you get it, Mr. Speaker? And at the same time we're investing over a billion dollars plus in smart demand, smart energy efficiency.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on for, in fact, I—*[interjection]* Oh, I know that many of the members want to speak on this and I just—it's such extraordinary, naive comments that I've heard on hydro, a complete lack of understanding prompted me to try to attempt to set some of the record straight and try to get some information across to members opposite, who are completely—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The minister's time has expired.

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** Well, Mr. Speaker, and I'm glad the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) has got that off his chest. I'm sure he feels better now. There's nothing like a good rant on a Thursday morning to make you feel better.

So, Mr. Speaker, on this resolution—and it simply calls for them to invest in Power Smart and to stop advertising when they have a monopoly position and to use that money instead on the Power Smart program.

And I know the NDP loves to look back, but it's interesting, too, on the member from Kildonan on his presentation, that he thoroughly trashed Graham Lane who made a very interesting presentation yesterday, and I actually have the document if any members opposite would like to read it. It certainly makes interesting reading, but pretty well everything that the member claimed, he was trashing Graham Lane and—who was a former chair of the Public Utilities Board. And Graham has very methodically laid out his ideas of where Manitoba Hydro is headed and the dangers that's fraught with that.

But dealing with Power Smart, it's—certainly the members opposite always love to look back, and so looking back, it was in those—in—it's even amazing that they were willing to talk about it. The Power Smart program was actually started in the 1990s, and when it was started—it's interesting to look back at when it was started because at that time we had a low Canadian dollar, the exports of power to the US were very profitable and, yet, the idea of not consuming more power here in Manitoba to help Manitoba Hydro was somewhat a radical thought at that time, that we would actually use less power in Manitoba—of homegrown power. But it was foresight that the Manitoba Hydro had at that time in order to capitalize on the low Canadian dollar and the lucrative sales that they were developing in the US at that time.

Now, looking forward, which is something that the NDP is not good at, we have a Canadian dollar at par and near par. We're losing money on our export sales, and no matter how the member 'fro' Kildonan wants to put it, it's costing to sell power into the US. It's costing Manitoba rate—and Manitoba ratepayers are picking up that difference. And you can sell more power into the US. Of course the US wants to buy more of Manitoba power right now when they can buy it at a loss, but—buy it cheaper than what they

can produce it for themselves. Of course they want to buy more. They would certainly encourage Manitoba to increase sales to them, but that doesn't help Manitobans, and as a result Manitobans are going to pick up the cost difference and the loss in there.

And we know that the member also talked about Wuskwatim and that is—that's a real classic case in Hydro and NDP mismanagement because that project was projected to cost \$900 million and it was also projected to sell power on the export market at 8 cents per kilowatt hour. But unfortunately, what's happened, the cost of Wuskwatim doubled, it went to \$1.8 billion, and instead of selling the power for 8 cents, we're selling it on the cash market for 3 cents.

And as a result of that we're now losing a hundred million dollars a year on Wuskwatim. Manitoba ratepayers, Manitoba Hydro's customers in Manitoba have to pick up the difference; they have to pick up that hundred million dollars. And that's projected for years to come; this is not a one year—one off year—for Wuskwatim. We're going to lose a lot of money on Wuskwatim in the foreseeable future. And yet this government is bound and determined to not only build more dams at this production cost, they project to lose even more money.

Now all we're saying is sit back, take a second look at this, include Bipole III in an honest, needs for analysis of this—of these projects. This shabbily put together, hastily drawn together NFAT study that they—the government has proposed for Keeyask and Conawapa doesn't include Bipole III and the terms of reference are very narrow and we really have suspect about the quality of this study when it does come back because the parameters are so narrow on this.

So we're going to build more power, according to the NDP, but you have to realize and Manitobans have to realize that for every \$10 billion that the Manitoba Hydro borrows and this—they're projecting over 20. And given the record of Wuskwatim and we haven't even started Bipole III yet, given their record it could double in cost.

But for every \$10 billion borrowed, it generates another hundred million dollars a year for the government because they underwrite the borrowing for this, for Manitoba Hydro.

So this NDP is looking at it as a cash cow. They don't care about the rates, they don't care about Manitoba tax—ratepayers, they certainly don't care

about the people who will be using this power in Manitoba and will have to pay for this; the low-income families, the everyday customers who are going to have to pick up this because we know that the rates and the PUB has already stated this, that rates will increase at least 4 per cent per year for the next 20 years. And, Mr. Lane projects, in his comments yesterday, that given their—the Hydro's ability to underestimate cost, they're also underestimating what Hydro rates—that Hydro rates will actually increase even more.

So, Mr. Speaker, this—Manitoba Hydro has been a great company, can continue to be a great company but what the—what has to happen is that the NDP have to let Manitoba Hydro run its affairs and not them. Right now it's a company owned and controlled by the NDP party, it's not owned and controlled by Manitobans and that is the essence of the problem at Manitoba Hydro right now. It's as Mr. Lane outlined very, very succinctly yesterday in his comments.

So, Mr. Speaker, this resolution should be supported by all members here because all it calls for is to continue to invest in Power Smart program, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) was very adamant that they are, so that—therefore, he would support this resolution.

And there is no need for a \$750,000 advertising campaign when you have to try and soft sell a \$20 billion plus capital program that this NDP government has forced upon Manitoba Hydro. And we know that they are doing it for their own—for the government's bottom line, it's not about what's best for Manitobans and Manitoba Hydro itself.

\* (11:30)

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that it's very prudent to support this resolution. There is, again, just going back in history when the purpose of the Power Smart program was to promote energy conservation, that still works. That is—that should be part of the NFAT study that's going to happen for Conawapa and Keeyask and should be included on Bipole III.

How would energy conservation affect the plans to build more generation and transmission lines? Can we mitigate some of those costs? Can we reduce, perhaps, some of the generation needs? And of the current generation that's happening right now, how much of that can we use in—can we save by conservation programs?

And, therefore, we certainly want to see this Power Smart program continued, and, in fact, what we would like to do is to see it enhanced because it's in the best interest of Manitobans. It's in the best interest of Manitoba Hydro and ratepayers all across this great province. Thank you.

**Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert):** It's a great pleasure to get up and speak today to our Crown jewel, Manitoba Hydro, and I think that I want to put a couple of words on the record that clean up some of the misinformation that has been put forward today on the other side of the House.

First of all, the member for Riding Mountain (Mrs. Rowat), let's start with that one because she quoted saying that she heard that people were trying to pay down their debt, that she heard about this article that was going on. In fact, the article and the talk that was going on was that people are paying down their debt more than ever, and that we actually have less debt. People are looking at less debt. So I think we have to give our government some credit in that, that we're making things affordable here, and people are actually paying down their debt. Once again, she's just misquoting the article, but that's okay.

I think it's also funny how the members opposite are saying that we should put this money into this advertising campaign for Power Smart when we spent \$16 million on our Power Smart campaign, Mr. Speaker. Just to put it into perspective, because I know that math is not their strong suit, that's 10,000 times what the Leader of the Opposition spends a year on his PST.

So he's talking about how he spends \$1,600 a year on PST because he spends \$160,000 a year on PST-related projects like, you know, the average Manitoban would spend. That's 10,000 times what he would spend on PST, just putting it into perspective for him, Mr. Speaker, because I know math might not be their strong suit, and you know, they just don't seem to get it.

The member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen) spoke about how, you know, we're only selling power for 3 cents. It's only 3 cents. Mr. Speaker, this is excess power, water that would go over the dam. I don't know how to be more clear than our Minister for Hydro said that this is excess water that would go over the dam. If we didn't sell it, we wouldn't make any money. So you know what? Three cents is better than no cents. But then again, they don't have sense on the other side of the House. So, you know, the

whole sense aspect of it, they just don't seem to get it, that having 3 cents is better than no cents.

You know, we're going to build a \$20-billion build to Manitoba Hydro and it's good for a hundred years' worth of power. Saskatchewan, the land of milk and honey, according to the members opposite, where they—you know, they claim it's the best place in the world to go live, they're paying \$16 billion for coal—coal, Mr. Speaker. Coal is dirty. It pollutes. It's carbon in the air. It creates greenhouse gases. It hurts the environment. But no, no, they would rather that we would wait 'til 2022 when our hydro runs out of power and then we would go and build more coal-fired plants because that's where their land of milk and honey, Saskatchewan, is.

See, Mr. Speaker, I love Manitoba and I'm positive about Manitoba and I'm positive about our outlook in Manitoba and I'm positive that Manitoba Hydro is going to build for the future of Manitobans, not just the ones that can spend \$1,600 a year on PST because they make two, three hundred thousand dollars a year—you know, the average Manitoban.

I think that, you know, the flip-flop that they have on hydro is something that we should all take notice in this House. They talk about, stop Hydro, stop the build. Don't build. Oh, but now put more money and put more resources into it. It's kind of interesting how they talk about that.

I also find it interesting that they talk about two-tier health care. They talk about a two-tier hydro. At one point, hydro was more expensive for rural members, which most of the opposition is. You'd think they'd be happy with the fact that we've equalized the rates across the province. Everybody pays the same rate across the province, Mr. Speaker. No, they're advocating for two-tier rates, I guess, and they're advocating for two-tier health care. They're also advocating for two-tier VLT systems.

So I think that the new thing should be the two-tier Tories. I think that that's their whole slogan for the next election, two-tier Tories. We want different VLT rates for our horseracing. We want different power rates for people who are out of town versus in town. We want different health-care rates. If you can spend \$160,000 on PST-related products like the Leader of the Opposition can, he can obviously afford to pay for health care. He doesn't care about the other people in his area, Mr. Speaker.

And I find it interesting yesterday, and maybe it'll happen again today, maybe debate will be stifled

based on my—what I'm saying because they find me such a threat. I'm not sure, but the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister) had his leader of his opposition—or the House leader from the opposition—stand up and give my statement about asking the member for—the Minister for Local Government about spending on roads and infrastructure. You know what's interesting? He said it wasn't important. It's not good information. We don't want to hear about it.

You know what the member for Fort Whyte might wanted to hear? That most of that money is being spent in his riding. Well, you know, he doesn't want to hear that, Mr. Speaker. It's not important because he's never in his riding, doesn't even live in his riding. He lives in a different riding. So representing his riding, obviously, that's not important either. He had his House leader stand up and make a big deal about my point of order, that I'm not informing people things. Maybe if he would have stay tuned and listened to what the member—or the Minister for Local Government would have said, he would have actually heard the answer and go, hey, you know what? This is good for my constituents. I'm wondering if he's going to put that in the mailer. You know what, twinning McGillivray is not important to my constituency. I wonder if he's going to put that in his mailer? I think I might use some of my personal money and mail out to his riding to say that the minister, that the member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition doesn't care about twinning the roads in his riding. He also doesn't care about Hydro. Let's sell it or let's not even sell it. Let's just do market rates—[interjection] Oh, yes, because people like him with his million-dollar homes can afford to pay twice as much in hydro. They talk about the PST and they complain; the average cost to the average family is about 20 bucks a month. Double your hydro rate, \$120 a month, at least that's what it is in my household and more in other households. I think the average household it's \$79, so you would double that. So that \$20 more in PST is obviously looking pretty good.

The member for Riding Mountain (Mrs. Rowat), she also said that the \$1.2 billion in tax cuts that we've given, that they could use that money for something else, that they could put that into the government. Well, obviously, she's for us raising the PST then. It's funny how they flip-flop on all of these numbers, but like I said, numbers aren't exactly in their strong suit. The member for Riding Mountain also made a ridiculous statement in the House talking

about how, you know, is the member for Morden and Winkler going to be able afford his tickets to go see a San Antonio game down in the US, to take his flight there because the PST is going up? If we take the ticket at \$800, Mr. Speaker—let's say it's a high ticket. Let's say he flies first class, because I'm sure they fly first class on that side of the House. So he flies the \$800 ticket; that's \$8 in PST. He's going to cancel his trip to San Antonio for \$8. But you know what it means for members on our side of the House, like the member for Kirkfield Park (Ms. Blady) and in my household? If we were saying \$800, we would use that at actually paying on bills. We would pay for food. We would pay for clothing and housing. We're not taking tickets to go to San Antonio for a weekend to go see a game.

So I find them First World problems on their side of the House. Oh, yes, we're going to have to go and spend \$8 more because I'm going to go San Antonio, Texas. I'm so sorry. You know what? I'm actually—I'm saying it right now on the record, when the member wants to go to San Antonio and the PST is up—I am saying this on the record and you can hold me to this—I will give him that \$8. I will give him the \$8, because I know it's such a hardship on his family to go to San Antonio. I will give him that 8 bucks. I am so down with that, it's unbelievable.

The—[interjection] You know, they talk—the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer), he put forward this motion and he continues to put false things on the record, and I invite him to stand up right now and table the so-called companies that Manitoba Hydro did not get back to regarding the Power Smart program. He says, oh, well, lots of companies are asking about it and Manitoba Hydro doesn't get back. So I invite him to stand up and table it. He said it in his speech. He said that people can't get Manitoba Hydro to answer. You know, he talks about being power smart, you know what? The member for Brandon West—or sorry, Brandon East—he did a Power Smart thing; he recycled his refrigerator. Called them, within two weeks they came and picked it up. He actually took action, that's leadership, Mr. Speaker, not just talking big about this is what we should do and we should spend money here. You know what? The member for Brandon East (Mr. Caldwell), he actually did it. He lives what we talk about. He recycled his refrigerator. That's leadership, not standing up in the House and giving false statements saying that some company, somewhere in the world tried to get hold of Manitoba Hydro and they didn't return a phone

call. It's the boogeyman. It's like on their side of the House the sky is falling, Chicken Little, everything's terrible, terrible, terrible.

\* (11:40)

But you realize, in Manitoba things are actually really good. Housing starts are up, people are building, people are really happy in Manitoba. You know, we've got the Jets back. We've got the Bombers' new stadium opening up. We've got all these great things happening, but if you listen to them, you would think that we live in a Third World country, Mr. Speaker.

I mean, they're not happy with Manitoba. All they talk about is moving. They talk about the US. Well, I challenge the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon) who was talking about how gas is cheaper in the US. Yes, he's right; gas is cheaper in the US. Ask him to go get a broken leg fixed in the US, and ask him how much that cost him. So gasoline might be cheaper across the border, but his health care certainly isn't.

We have to look at the whole picture in Manitoba. You can't just cherry-pick from across the world, because I'm sure that in Burmese or in Cambodia, something is cheaper than it is here, but they don't have what we have here, which is a first-class health-care system, not two-tier like they're suggesting. We have world-class, clean Manitoba hydro. Not what they're suggesting, which is to cut it and to start importing power and burning coal to produce power—

**An Honourable Member:** Turn the lights off.

**Mr. Gaudreau:** Turn the lights off, exactly.

They want to leave the province, turn the lights off when they go. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? I'm even willing to pay for their airfare if they're saying they're not going to come back. I'll put that on the record. If they want to leave the province, I'm willing to help them out on that. Because, you know what? I'm proud to be in Manitoba, and I'm proud of what we have here, and I'm proud of Manitoba Hydro.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul):** It's always a pleasure to be in this House and speak to private members' resolutions. I'd like to thank the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) for bringing this forward. It's very timely and very important.

I listened with great interest over the last few months, the NDP member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), the disgraced campaign manager from the 1999 NDP campaign, who talks out of all kinds of sides of his mouth about how we should support Power Smart programs and how we should be green. And I would make the argument that probably the worst thing for the environment ever in this province has been this NDP government. And the worst thing for the Power Smart program, Mr. Speaker, has been the member for Kildonan who insisted on cutting the program by 20 per cent. And thank goodness for the Public Utilities Board that actually disagrees for the—disagrees with the member from Kildonan and is insisting that that cut not take place.

Because, Mr. Speaker, if there's one thing that we should be doing, we should be economizing. We should be using our resources in a fashion, in a way that is responsible and respectful of our environment, and it's something that the NDP has turned their back on and has done so in the entire time that they've been in office. We know that their targets for Kyoto have been a disaster. We know that all the kinds of programs that they talk about have been a disaster, and yet they want to get up and talk about Manitoba Hydro, which this is about.

And it's important that we have a hydro corporation that's strong, that is going to be there for many generations, and we would like to see that one of the pillars of what the NFAT looks at, perhaps should be looking at, is how we can be smarter and far more respectful of the natural resource that we have. That we don't just use power indiscriminately, but treat it as something that is a gift to this province. And, perhaps, we should be reducing some of our usage in our homes. When we leave a room, turn the light off. And I know there are a lot of different programs insofar as putting in better furnaces.

It was very interesting listening to the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau). He claims that the only leadership that the member from Brandon East has shown in the last 10 years is by turning in an old refrigerator, and we thought that was very interesting. But it's important. We know that an old refrigerator can—if it's replaced, will pay for itself in 10 years, and that is a huge saving. The old refrigerators, the seals go on them, the motors tend to use a lot more energy, and it is wise to send them out.

Manitoba Hydro does a great job and we hope that's not something else the NDP cuts, because they

seem to be on a antiHydro rant these days, cutting support for the Power Smart programs. *[interjection]* And, you know, when you poke a caged animal, sometimes it reacts quite violently, and clearly I poked something on the other side by the response.

You know, they don't like to hear about the kinds of things they've done to this great Manitoba Hydro that we've had. There are now forecasts that the debt equity could be anywhere up to 90-10 or even 95-5. They've run this company in such a poor fashion that it is now, in essence, going to be the property—it's going to be—belong to the creditors and not to the people of Manitoba. That's how far they've brought this company.

And we know that the NDP cannot be trusted in what they say. We know that the member who is from St. Norbert, who's very flippantly, and, you know, it's sort of one of these speeches that don't shine the best light on this Legislative Chamber. You know, perhaps he should tell, perhaps he should tell Manitobans why it is that he went door to door in the 2011 campaign and committed to the individuals in St. Norbert, door-door to door, telling each and every one of them that (1) he would not support any tax increases, and (2) that any idea of a PST would be nonsense.

Why doesn't he get up and talk about why it was that he actually misled his constituents, that he went door to door, and he was less, he was less than truthful when he went door to door. So, to trust anything from the member from St. Norbert, who has been less than truthful when he went door to door and then walked into this Chamber, and the first thing he did as a new member, the first thing he did, was voted for tax increases, and then the second thing he did was voted for a PST. And that is very unfortunate.

So to take any lessons from him—or we have the member for St. Norbert, in his fairly bitter and jealous speech, talked about tickets to San Antonio, free tickets. Well, the only free tickets in this Chamber were free tickets that members opposite took from Crown corporations. In fact, the Premier, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), said that two Cabinet ministers had to apologize, one of them being the member for Dauphin, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Struthers), who did the honourable thing, and he got up and apologized.

But he also said that the member for Kildonan, the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro, was also supposed to get up and apologize for (1) taking

free tickets to Jets games, and then not being truthful about the fact that he was using them. And we've yet to hear the apology from the minister of Hydro; the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) has yet to take his Premier (Mr. Selinger), to take the member for St. Boniface, to take his boss's direction. Why? Why doesn't the member for Kildonan get up and apologize? *[interjection]* The member for Kildonan says I'm getting personal. No, it wasn't me who said he should apologize. It's the boss. His boss is the one who said the member for Kildonan should apologize.

So the fact that Manitobans should take anything from these members who went door to door in the 2011 campaign, knocked door to door, and said they would not raise taxes, to accept anything from them is certainly not something Manitobans are going to do. And the fact that they want to talk green, and they want to talk about saving the environment, they want to talk about Hydro, and then promptly slash the Power Smart program by 20 per cent, it shows that with this government it's all, listen to my spin, don't look at what I do. And that's what defines this government.

And they've been finally unmasked. We had the member for Kirkfield Park (Ms. Blady) give that unbelievable statement today in which she said that, I do not represent the taxpayers of my constituency. And that's why, that's why she can vote for the PST increase. That's why, even though she went door to door and said, I will not vote for any tax increase, I won't vote for a PST increase. But she'd said, in this Chamber, not once, but twice, she said, I do not represent the taxpayers of my constituency, and that's why she could vote for those taxes.

What we are finding out in this Chamber, over the last year and a half, is what the NDP actually are all about. And it's all about saying one thing and then doing completely the opposite once they get elected, and that's what they've done. And the Power Smart program, and thank goodness that the PUB has stood up to this NDP, has stood up and forced them to be held to account. And we know that the Public Utilities Board, the former chairman, yesterday, gave a scathing speech. And he said, you know what, if they would actually focus more on conservation at Manitoba Hydro and getting people to consume less electricity and reduce their consumption, that we could have a lot of savings.

\* (11:50)

And what does the member for Kildonan say? He scoffs at it. He doesn't believe in it. He doesn't

think that that's the way to go. In fact, the—what he does is he cuts the Power Smart program. That's the legacy of the member for Kildonan, the minister responsible. And I say that is very unfortunate because we have an incredible opportunity with Manitoba Hydro to see to it that we have power, good electricity, good supply for Manitobans, and instead, what the member for Kildonan and the NDP government wants to do is to produce electricity for everybody else. And they never talk about domestic consumption and certainly programs that help, and they should be looking at the programs that help our constituents and our people.

But again, like the member for Kirkfield Park said, I suspect she doesn't represent the ratepayers of Manitoba Hydro in her constituency either, and that's why she can vote for a 20 per cent cut in the Power Smart program. And perhaps the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau) is the same way. Perhaps he also doesn't represent the ratepayers of Manitoba, and that's why he also supports the 20 per cent cut.

This is a very good resolution and I recommend to this House that it be passed and that the government take heed, perhaps, that they should stop talking and start listening to what people are saying across this province and listen to the warnings that are coming out. Thank you for this opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Well, Mr. Speaker, and I want to begin by congratulating the member for his resolution today and—but I have to point out at the outside that the minister—member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), I think, explained matters quite well when he explained that, while the Conservative government of Filmon brought in the Power Smart program originally, that after at the point they left office in 1999, they only had five programs; most of those were simply surveys. And when the rubber hit the road, there was really nothing to show—very little to show for what was essentially a good idea.

But it was this government, Mr. Speaker, that's actually fleshed out the program and brought in, I think, perhaps 25 or more programs and is currently spending, according to the minister, \$60 million a year on this Power Smart program. So, you know, it's a great idea, but the reality is it's the NDP government that's actually getting some results and is actually implementing the program.

You know, Mr. Speaker, in this whole Hydro debate—and, you know, we've heard, you know, over the years the same sort of gloom and doom that we're



hearing right now from the Conservatives and their allies out in the public. We had the same gloom and doom through every, you know, every period of hydro construction. You know, you can simply go back to the Free Press in the past and look at the debate on Limestone, when they were calling Limestone lemonstone. And, I believe, on the Limestone plant the cost was just over a billion dollars and the return, \$1.4 billion to build Limestone, and that plant has made the province of Manitoba—the taxpayers, as the member of the opposition liked to point out—has earned those same taxpayers \$7.5 billion. Now, by any rule, I would say that's a pretty good investment.

As the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) likes to talk about the captains of industry here and the titans of commerce, I'd ask him to think for a moment and look at that. The—you know, the NDP invested \$1.4 billion; the opposition called it lemonstone. They said it was going to lead to the destruction of Manitoba, the bankruptcy. We were going to be driving Manitoba over the cliff into bankruptcy, and they shut it down. And when the NDP came back to power and built Limestone, in the past we've made \$7.5 billion. That is a fantastic return for the original investment.

So, I would say that the Conservatives should be a little patient here because over and over again, you know, it's just like seeing the same old bad movie over and over again. We—you know, those of us who've been around for a while have seen this.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are certainly having a lot of sleepless nights these days because, you know, since they lost power in 1999. I mean, just look at their track record. You know, if you were the titans of industry here, the captains of commerce, it's a graph. You know, their electoral history since 1999 is a graph down. I'm trying to figure out all these previous leaders; I can't remember all of them. But, you know, we've got 1999; then 2003, it gets worse; 2007, it gets really bad; 2011, it's worse yet. So no wonder they're in hiding most of the time. They don't even want to come out of hiding.

So, you know, I mean they can see this. You know, it's the old story of the groundhog coming out every February to see his shadow. They are starting to figure this out. Twenty billion dollars in projects? You know, that steamroller is coming at them once again, right? And they're starting to see the writing on the wall. There's a huge amount of economic

activity. How do they position themselves to be against a \$20 billion project that's going to employ Manitobans? It's going to get the province even hotter economically than it is right now, all a kind of great news that they hate. So, you know, I can see the doctor visitations and the psychiatric visits from the opposition just simply rising, the blood pressure going up as they see their impending doom.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's look at some of the history of the Conservatives because, you know, to predict what they're going to do in the future we simply have to look at what they've done in the past.

First of all, they haven't built a plant for a number of years. As a matter of fact, to the member—to the member next to me, who sounds like a dull roar some days—most days, matter of fact I've been to the power plants unlike most of the members opposite, and I can tell you that standing on top of Limestone or Kettle Rapids or Long Spruce, it sounds like a typical day in the Manitoba Legislature, sitting next to the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon) and his other sidekick. They're direct competitors.

But seriously, Mr. Speaker, Grand Rapids was the last project they built, 479 megawatts, and I might point out that we have a potential of 10,000 megawatts. We built 5,217. The NDP built most of it by the huge—the biggest and largest share, and, once again, the last time they built a plant was 1966, okay.

So why are they just so unlucky? You know, if you look back, you see they've been in power for quite a number of years. They were actually equal to us at one point there, since 1969, and yet why is it that we are managing to build the plants and they don't?

Well, now, what happened in 1977? The Conservatives came to power with Sterling Lyon, and within a couple of years they had come up with this brilliant idea that they wanted to build an aluminum smelter, right? Now, the minister tells me we've got aluminum smelters that want to set up here, but it's not a great deal. Aluminum smelters are not a great deal for the public because they don't create that many jobs and there's a huge amount of pollution associated with it.

But that didn't stop them. They went out, they hunted down aluminum plant—smelter, and what did they do? Rather than looking out for the interests of Manitoba, as soon as it was announced, two or three—

I think it was two of their, I think Cabinet ministers or MLAs at the time, were discovered to be taking options on land, right where the smelter was going to be built. And, you know, it's all in the Free Press. You can pull out the stories in the Free Press or Tribune.

And, to make matters even worse, you know they had to explain to the press what—how this all came about, how did they have that psychic ability to be able to buy land and take options on land right where the plant was going to be built.

So here was the explanation: One of the people involved in this happened to live out—represented one of the western ridings on the Saskatchewan border, and he had to explain—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Order, please. When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member for Elmwood will have one minute remaining.

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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, June 6, 2013**

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