

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

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, October 14, 2021

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Good afternoon, everybody. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Madam Speaker: Introduction of bills?

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Turtle Mountain): I didn't get the report yet so if I can be next?

Madam Speaker: It has been sent to the member by email.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs Tenth Report

Madam Speaker: We will move then and we'll ask the honourable member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Smook) to report on his committee.

Mr. Dennis Smook (Chairperson): I wish to present the tenth report of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

Clerk Assistant (Ms. Monique Grenier): Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs—

Madam Speaker: Dispense? Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs presents the following as its Tenth Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on the following occasions in the Legislative Building:

- December 7, 2020 (3rd Session – 42nd Legislature)
- October 13, 2021 (3rd Session – 42nd Legislature)

Matters under Consideration

- Proposal to Modify the Voting Process titled "Vote Anywhere in your Electoral Division on Election Day" dated November 2020.
- Proposal to Modify the Voting Process titled "Vote by Mail – By-election" dated October 2021

Committee Membership

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020, amended on November 19, 2020, December 3, 2020, and further amended on May 18, 2021, Rule 83(2) was waived for the

December 7, 2020 and October 13, 2021 meeting, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

Committee Membership for the December 7, 2020, meeting:

- Mr. ALTOMARE
- Hon. Mr. CULLEN
- Ms. FONTAINE
- Hon. Mr. GOERTZEN
- Ms. MORLEY LECOMTE
- Mr. TEITSMA

Your Committee elected Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE as the Chairperson

Your Committee elected Mr. TEITSMA as the Vice-Chairperson

Committee Membership for the October 13, 2021 meeting:

- Ms. FONTAINE
- Hon. Mr. GOERTZEN
- Hon. Mrs. GUILLEMARD
- MLA MARCELINO
- Mr. MARTIN
- Mr. SMOOK

Your Committee elected Mr. SMOOK as the Chairperson

Your Committee elected Mr. MARTIN as the Vice-Chairperson

Officials speaking on the record at the December 7, 2020 meeting:

- Ms. Shipra Verma, Chief Electoral Officer

Officials speaking on the record at the October 13, 2021 meeting:

- Ms. Shipra Verma, Chief Electoral Officer

Motions:

Your Committee agreed to the following motions at the October 13, 2021 meeting:

- THAT pursuant to subsection 28.1(5) and subject to subsection 28.1(6) of The Elections Act, the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs approve the proposal to modify the voting process

tabled in the House on October 7, 2021, and recommend that the Chief Electoral Officer direct that the voting process be modified for any upcoming by-elections occurring before April 1, 2022.

- THAT pursuant to subsection 28.1(5) and subject to subsection 28.1(6) of *The Elections Act*, the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs approve the aspects pertaining to electronic strike-off contained within the proposal to modify the voting process tabled in the House on December 1, 2020, and recommend that the Chief Electoral Officer implement all aspects governing the adoption of electronic strike-off for the next general election.
- THAT pursuant to section 28.1(4) of *The Elections Act*, the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs has completed consideration of the proposal to modify the voting process tabled in the House on December 1, 2020, and does not approve the aspects of the proposal pertaining to electronic tabulators at this time, but recommends that legislation be brought forward to implement all aspects governing the adoption of electronic tabulators for the next general election.

Mr. Smook: I move, seconded by the honourable member for McPhillips (Mr. Martin), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Committee of Supply Report

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered and adopted certain resolutions.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Seine River (Ms. Morley-Lecomte), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I am pleased to table the Manitoba Regulatory Accountability Report for the Manitoba Regulatory Accountability Secretariat for September, 2021.

Madam Speaker: Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Hubbell Award Recipients

Mr. Scott Johnston (Assiniboia): Today I rise to honour this year's recipients of the Manitoba Hubbell Awards. Hubbell Awards scholarship fund is a permanent endowment that provides annual monetary awards to recognize outstanding sea, army and air cadets to help them realize their educational goals.

Madam Speaker, as the government of Manitoba's military envoy, I am pleased—I was pleased to attend this virtual ceremony on September the 6th and provide an honourarium on behalf of the province of Manitoba to these deserving young men and women who have demonstrated their strong commitment to the Canadian military.

All award recipients are currently enrolled in a Manitoba unit and will continue their education at a technical institute, college or university. I would like to acknowledge a retired brigadier general Eldren Huen [*phonetic*] and the members of the board of the Hubbell Awards Inc. for their invitation to this event.

Most notable Manitobans presenting awards in their names include Mr. George Chapman, the QC and former honorary colonel of 402 City of Winnipeg Squadron and Janice and Barry Rempel, past honorary colonels at 17 Wing and Canada 1 air division.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this year's recipients of Manitoba 'hooble'—Hubbell Awards.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Kyle Kematch

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I rise to pay tribute to an amazing, kind and loving human being I considered my little brother, Kyle Kematch. Kyle was 38 years old and tragically lost his life on September 2nd, 2021. Like many Manitobans, Kyle struggled with addictions. And the pandemic only made accessing services more difficult.

Kyle has four children who he loved and adored. And they loved their dad too.

Originally from Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, Kyle grew up most of his life in the North End of Winnipeg.

Kyle was a kind—Kyle was the kind of person who would help anyone. He was always humble, had a big impact on everyone he knew. And Kyle inspired people with his big heart.

The member from St. Johns also knew and loved Kyle and can attest to how special Kyle was.

In 2010, Kyle's sister, Amber Guiboche, went missing. Kyle never stopped looking for Amber or searching for answers about her disappearance.

Kyle and I co-founded Drag the Red together in 2014. We found comfort in supporting each other through the disappearances of our sister. Kyle was fearless and would search the river for hours each day, helping to bring loved ones home to their families.

Any time someone went in the river, Kyle was always there to help. I remember I had to take the keys away from him for a week just to give him a break. I told him the boat needed to be serviced, but it was really for him. He was so dedicated and determined to give families hope.

He was never alone in that mission, but few were as selflessly committed as Kyle was. Over the years, that commitment to MMIWG justice only grew. And Kyle travelled beyond Manitoba, helping like-minded people advocate and build plans in Ottawa and across the country.

Kyle will forever be missed and never forgotten. Rest in power, Kyle. I love you.

Cameron Bennett

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Some people were simply born to help others. For Cameron Bennett, a retired veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces, the pursuit to help and protect his fellow Canadians has continued long after his military service. Bennett is the founder of Forging Ahead, a non-profit organization that aims to help veterans and first responders with operational stress injuries manage their mental and emotional health through artistic metalworking.

Before this endeavour, Bennett had a military career that spanned an incredible 20 years. He served on one of peace-keeping tours in the former Yugoslavia region and three combat tours in Afghanistan. After Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan dialed down, he was transferred to the air force and trained as an aviation technician.

Bennett was medically released from the Canadian Armed Forces in 2018. Post retirement, Bennett attended an advanced artistic blacksmithing course at Fleming College and also received a diploma in occupational health and safety from the University of New Brunswick. He came up with the idea of Forging Ahead while in school and soon after

became committed to help fellow veterans and first responders with mental health conditions through blacksmithing.

Bennett believes that blacksmithing is the perfect activity for veterans and first responders who may often turn to riskier [*inaudible*] blacksmithing shop in his backyard in St. Adolphe. Bennett's shop is equipped with a propane forge, anvils, hammers and various other tools and safety equipment.

There have already been multiple veterans who have attended the shop and taken part in the program and Bennett plans to continue to expand the operations at Forging Ahead. Currently he is in the process of obtaining charitable status and is also beginning to make other important modifications to his facility so he can become fully open.

Thank you to Cameron Bennett—who is watching, by the way—and Forging Ahead for all the important work that you do, and I wish you all the best moving forward.

Elmwood Community Resource Centre

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Elmwood is a community of positive outcomes for everyone—that's the vision at the heart of the Elmwood Community Resource Centre and the work that they do making Elmwood an even better place to live, work and raise a family.

This year, ECRC is celebrating their 20th anniversary in our neighbourhood. Originally founded in 2001, ECRC came to be when the Elmwood Interagency Network, Chalmers Neighbourhood Project and the West Elmwood Residents Association came together to create an organization dedicated to providing the supports and services families need to thrive.

* (13:40)

I first got to know ECRC as an Elmwood resident who wanted to make a difference and give back. ECRC taught me the importance of local volunteerism and of organizing. I learned through them how we can all work together to effect change in our community.

After initially getting involved with ECRC as a community volunteer, I later served on the board of directors as treasurer and have stayed active with their organization even after becoming MLA.

I have had the pleasure of working with all the executive directors at ECRC, including Ingrid Zacharias, Martin Landy and our current E.D.,

Nina Condo, all of whom have served Elmwood with passion, zeal and an unwavering commitment to make our community even better.

Since their founding, ECRC has dedicated their work to lifting our community up and helping Elmwood thrive. They have helped community members in times of crisis through their drop-in and counselling services; provided supports for our young people through their Reach Out! after-school program; and the Elmwood Youth Employment Experience lent a helping hand to those in need through their basic needs—to support a warm line; welcomed newcomers to Canada with open arms through their neighbourhood immigrant settlement service; and their newly implemented Building Futures program.

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, I wish to congratulate the ECRC on their 20 years of giving back to Elmwood and thank them for supporting so many members of our community through their programs and services. ECRC is truly an invaluable lifeline for thousands across northeast Winnipeg.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Jean Allard

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): I rise today to pay tribute to Jean Allard, former MLA and a constituent in St. Boniface who died last year. Jean was a contrarian and a maverick.

La dernière fois que j'ai vu Jean, c'était à la cathédrale de Saint-Boniface, en compagnie de Dan Vandal, à l'occasion de l'anniversaire de la mort de Louis Riel. Jean était très fier de son héritage métis et de sa présidence de l'Union nationale métisse de Saint-Joseph.

Translation

The last time I saw Jean, it was in the St. Boniface Cathedral, in the company of Dan Vandal, for the anniversary of Louis Riel's death. Jean was very proud of his Métis heritage and of his charring of the Union nationale métisse de Saint-Joseph.

English

When Jean's first wife tragically died of leukemia, he found himself a widower at the age of 24 with a young child to raise.

He worked in Manitoba's north and was dismayed by the oppression of First Nations.

His obituary reads: In 1969, Jean ran and won in Rupertsland as an NDP MLA with Ed Schreyer in the Manitoba Legislature. As this meant he was often on the highway in his constituency, he always carried a fruitcake in his glove compartment, as he felt if he landed in the ditch, he had nourishment.

He quit the NDP and sat as an independent after clashing with the party over its Indigenous policy; ran once more for the federal Liberals, though he didn't win.

In 1966, Jean called for a statue of Louis Riel to be erected at the Legislature, and he loved the statue that was created by Marcien Lemay and Étienne Gaboury, though it was controversial.

It showed Riel naked, unprotected and tormented. While others called for it to be removed, Allard loved it. He even chained himself to it for 12 days when it was slated to be demolished in 1994.

À cette époque, j'ai travaillé avec Jean, où nous nous opposons tous les deux à l'Accord de Charlottetown, et lorsque je me suis présenté comme député provincial à Saint-Boniface en 2018, j'ai visité le McDonald's et j'ai parlé à un groupe de personnes âgées, et je l'ai immédiatement reconnu.

Translation

At that time, I worked with Jean. We were both opposing the Charlottetown Accord, and when I ran for MLA for St. Boniface in 2018, I visited the McDonald's, and I talked to a group of elderly people, and I immediately recognized him.

English

Jean's political and campaign instincts kicked in immediately, and he started introducing to me—to everybody at the McDonald's. He then told me about what he'd been working on since the 1990s: modernized Treaty annuities to modernize—to modern levels to create a guaranteed income for First Nations.

To his last days, he maintained a passion for justice for Indigenous people in Canada.

Jean leaves behind many loved ones: his former wife Beverley, children and grandchildren and friends.

Nos condoléances à tous ceux qui ont connu et aimé Jean. Il nous manquera.

Merci.

Translation

Our condolences to everyone who knew and loved Jean. We will miss him.

Thank you.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a point of order.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): You know, we're all in this together. We've all sacrificed so much to get to this point in the pandemic, not least of which are the lives lost.

And because we've sacrificed so much, when people get frustrated at those who are unvaccinated, I understand. I'm frustrated too. But we can't give in to that frustration. We have to respond to the unvaccinated with at least some compassion, because there are people trying to manipulate them for their own political and financial gain.

Case in point: here in Manitoba we have a PC leadership candidate who will say and do anything to get elected, including on the one hand claiming that they're pro-vaccine, but then turning around and questioning the effectiveness and safety of vaccines, even blowing the dog whistle for people who have been chasing Ivermectin and other alternative treatments.

Now, you can be misquoted once, but several different reporters on several occasions for several outlets, including far-right ones? That's not a misquote; that's a deliberate strategy to appeal to anti-vaxxers to win the PC leadership and consequently the premier's chair.

Madam Speaker: Order. Order, please.

I'm going to ask the member what rule that has been broken in the House. So I would like—in a point of order, the intent of raising a point of order is to show that there has a breach of a rule, and so far, I'm not hearing that at all. So it has to be a rule of the House that is broken when one raises a point of order.

So I'd like to ask the honourable Leader of the Opposition to zero in on what he feels is a breach of a point of order.

Mr. Kinew: Yes, I beg just a little indulgence so that I can make my point here, Madam Speaker.

So, again—

Madam Speaker: That's—

Mr. Kinew: —because it's necessary to build up to the point that I'm trying to make.

So again, if the PC Party of Manitoba wants to send an anti-vaxxer into the general election against an NDP that is united and rebuilt then, by all means—

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

The member seems to be talking about something that is happening outside the Chamber and does not appear to reflect a rule that has been broken in this House. And so the only point of order that we can accept in this House is something that relates to a breach of a rule in this House. We cannot be reflecting on something that is happening outside of this House.

So I'm going to urge the member—either he's got a point of order or he doesn't. There is no opportunity here for a lot of comments, it's either is there a breach of a point of order or not. And I would ask him to get to that right now, with no more discourse.

Mr. Kinew: Well, Madam Speaker, I do believe that I need to speak a bit further—

Madam Speaker: No.

I would point out to the member that that's not exactly how this works. If he can outline the breach out a point of order, a breach of a rule in the House, then he can speak to it a little bit afterwards, but points of order are not meant for a lot of debate and it's not meant for debate at all in the House.

So the member, if he wants to continue, is going to have to indicate what rule of the House was broken in this House.

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, so I want to be clear that the vast majority of Manitobans have done the right thing. They've listened to the science; they've rolled up their sleeves; and they've stuck together. And I want to be very clear that there is only one consensus: vaccines are safe and effective—

Madam Speaker: I'm sorry. Order.

I do not feel—I'm not hearing a breach of a rule in this House so I'm going to indicate to the member that, without hearing that, I don't see that there is an ability for him to continue making comments related to a debate. If he wants to bring some of that up in question

period, he's more than welcome to but I do not see a breach of a rule in the House.

So that would be my finding.

* * *

An Honourable Member: On a matter of privilege.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, then, on a matter of privilege.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): So again, I want to be clear that there is only one consensus: vaccines are safe and effective and all Manitobans need to get vaccinated immediately. Now, if you've waited this long to get the shot, I want to tell you that it's—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —not too late and I urge you to reconsider because you are being exploited by people who will say and do anything to advance their careers. That is a message that I believe and that I want to share with the people of Manitoba.

When I say—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —say and do anything to advance their careers—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —I want to share the following for further proof of what I'm talking about.

The Glover campaign reached out to the NDP a week ago to try and use us for a takedown of Heather Stefanson. The Glover camp then provided us with compromising—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —information—

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Kinew: Oh, sorry. I apologize.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: I apologize. I understand the breach, and I will correct the breach.

Madam Speaker: Oh, okay.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, to correct that breach.

Mr. Kinew: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and that is a rule. So for further proof of what I'm talking about, I retract what I earlier said and offer this for the record instead.

For further proof of what I'm talking about: the Glover campaign reached out to the NDP a week ago to try and use us for a takedown of the campaign being run by the member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson). And the Glover camp then provided us with compromising information about the campaign for the member for Tuxedo, and we have the evidence to prove this.

* (13:50)

So, we call on the Glover campaign to explain to PC Party members why they are trying to use the NDP to win that leadership race. We call on the campaign being run by the member for Tuxedo to respond to the allegations of irregular memberships, and we call on all elected officials to tell all Manitobans unequivocally to get the shot just as soon as we can.

Madam Speaker: Before recognizing any other members to speak, I would remind the House that remarks at this time by honourable members are limited to strictly relevant comments about whether the alleged matter of privilege has been raised at the earliest opportunity and whether a prima facie case has been established.

If there are no further comments on this, on the matter of privilege raised by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew), I would like to inform the House that it has been ruled a number of times by Manitoba Speakers that comments made outside the House cannot form the basis for a prima facie case of privilege.

A Beauchesne's citation 31(1) advises that statements made outside the House by a member may not be used as the basis for a question of privilege. On page 614 of the House of Commons practice and procedure, O'Brien and Bosc state that the Speaker has no authority to rule on statements made outside of the House by one member against another.

Therefore, I must respectfully rule that the honourable member does not have a matter of privilege.

Speaker's Statement

Madam Speaker: And I have a statement for the House.

I would ask members to turn their attention to the table for a few moments as we recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of a treasured member of the

Assembly family who will be leaving us in the new year. Monique Grenier will be retiring in January 2022, and I would like to take a moment to celebrate her impressive career and her many, many accomplishments in this place.

As you can see, our Clerk, Patricia Chaychuk, has given Monique the honour of sitting at the head of the table for this statement.

Unique amongst her colleagues, Monique has served and excelled in two of the most demanding positions the Assembly has to offer: Journals clerk and committee clerk.

Prior to starting with the Assembly, however, Monique began her career at a tender age, working in the offices of Legislative Counsel across the street in the Woodsworth Building. From October 27th, 1987 to April 9th, 1999, Monique worked as an administrative assistant in that office, but her abilities soon exceeded her role there, and through her diligence and intelligence she became known as the queen of regulations, developing an incredibly extensive knowledge of the provincial regulations which guide and govern the laws of this province. She effectively earned a degree in regulations and legislation during her time at Legislative Counsel, something few people can say.

Leaving her job at Leg. Counsel on a Friday, she started her career with the Assembly the following Monday, April 12th, 1999, just taking the weekend off between jobs. She was first hired here as a clerk assistant/Journals clerk, which, as noted, is a very challenging position, especially as she started the job five days into a long and grueling four-month spring session.

As I have related to members on a previous occasion like this, the Journals Branch is the heartbeat of everything that happens in this Chamber. Any and all of the crucial paperwork required to make this place work is drafted, revised, printed and reprinted at the last minute in the Journals Branch office. This ongoing whirlwind of activity, with information flying in and Order Papers, motions, bills, notices, amendments and resolutions flying out, can be almost impossibly chaotic, and it takes a very special kind of person to be able to tame that wind and harness it productively. Monique is such a person, learning this skill very quickly upon her arrival here, elevating the level and quality of work in the Journals Branch in an unprecedented way. She most definitely set the standard for how the Journals Branch should function in the modern era.

After serving almost 10 years in Journals, when a vacancy opened up in the neighbouring Committees Branch in 2008, Monique applied and was hired as a clerk assistant/clerk of committees, starting this second chapter of her Assembly career in January 2009.

The challenges of the Committees Branch are extensive. Unlike Journals, there is a little less paperwork to manage, but a lot more interaction with people and, sometimes, some people can be a little difficult to deal with.

Monique met, overcame and triumphed over all such challenges and exceeded expectations. Whether it was successfully managing a room full of public presenters on contentious legislation or wrangling members of the Public Accounts Committee considering detailed reports from the Auditor General, Monique became an absolute star in the world of committees.

Monique spent over ten years as a committee clerk and, again, set a new standard for competence, ability and energy in that role. However, when a vacancy again appeared in the Journals Branch she decided that she wanted to spend her last years with the Assembly back where she started, as Journals Clerk. She slipped back into that role as if no time had passed, once again managing the chaos with skill and grace.

Perhaps the most visible role of the bilingual Journals clerk is their participation in royal assent ceremonies when, as members well know, the titles of all bills receiving royal assent are read aloud in the House in French and English. Monique always stepped up for this moment and fulfilled her duties with dignity and class. We will sincerely miss her voice ringing out in this Chamber, though we should have at least one more chance to hear her later today.

Monique's departure from the Assembly leaves a hole that cannot be filled. To say that she has been a valued and integral part of the Legislative Assembly procedural team, and that she has made many valuable contributions to Assembly operations, would be a massive understatement.

The quality of her work has been excellent, and her many talents and abilities feel irreplaceable. No one could match her skills in solving procedural problems and finding answers to vexing questions from House leaders, her personal procedural archive is an amazing wonder, and her ability to multi-task

and manage the chaos of the Journals Branch or a hectic committee meeting are unmatched.

It is a bittersweet feeling to see her leave us. We are, of course, very happy that she will now be able to enjoy her leisure time and no longer be troubled by the ever-present requests of House leaders and others, but we will miss her presence always.

On behalf of our Clerk, our Deputy Clerk and all Assembly staff, we bid you adieu, Monique. We wish you every success and every happiness in the future, as we know you have many plans to enjoy time at your cottage with your fiancé Dennis and your lovely daughters.

It is always so hard to say goodbye to a valued colleague and friend. Monique, please know that you will always live on in this place and in our hearts. As a Journals and committees legend, you will be thought of often, and so very fondly. You have made this building a better place, your legacy will live on for decades and we thank you sincerely for all of those years of hard work and dedication.

I would ask all members to rise and join me now in thanking Monique for her impressive legacy of service to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

[Applause]

ORAL QUESTIONS

Budget 2021 Spending Health and Education

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): I just want to say, while Monique is still here, that we congratulate you.

Nous vous félicitons et puis nous vous remercions pour tout ce que vous avez fait pour nous comme députés.

Translation

We congratulate you and thank you for everything you have done for us as MLAs.

English

And I can only say I imagine you are only disappointed that you didn't get to manage those 500 presenters for Bill 64, but alas.

All the best in what's next. So once again, on behalf of our team and joining in with everybody else, thank you so much. Merci beaucoup.

So we know that today, the PC team has come back to the Chamber to try and finish off the project

of Brian Pallister's budget, and we know that this will cut millions from emergency rooms even as wait times increase and cut supports for seniors in long-term-care homes. This is wrong. Manitobans don't want more health-care cuts.

Will the interim PC leader stand with Manitobans, or will he continue to push Brian Pallister's agenda?

* (14:00)

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Deputy Premier): On behalf of government, I'd also like to extend well wishes to Monique. We will miss you here in the Chamber, but we wish you many years of happiness and good times with your family. And we wish you all the best.

Now, it's obvious that the Leader of the Opposition is obsessed with the Manitoba PC Party leadership, and while I can assure him that if he keeps up with stunts like that, he'll have a-plenty of opportunity to talk about his own leadership in due time.

But while he's obsessed with the leadership, we are in the House today to talk about more money for health care, and I certainly hope that he's—can control himself and focus on talking about a \$1.2-billion expenditure for health care that Manitobans need right now to help them get through the pandemic. And I certainly hope that he will think about voting in favour of a budget to put more money in health care.

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

Mr. Kinew: You know, I've asked the question before, I'll ask it again: Does anyone think that Brian Pallister improved health care in Manitoba?

Awfully quiet with the rejoinder.

So no, I will not vote for—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —a budget that cuts \$9 million from emergency rooms. I won't—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —vote for a budget that freezes operating funding for seniors care in Manitoba. And no, I will not vote for a budget that has a quarter of a billion dollars worth of cuts to revenue that should be going to the education system.

Manitobans have spoken quite clearly. They do not want Brian Pallister's attacks on health care and education.

Will the interim PC leader take a stand? Will he scrap Brian Pallister's health cuts today?

Ms. Squires: While I appreciate that it must be very hard for the Leader of the Opposition to come in here day after day and defend the dark legacy of Greg Selinger, I understand that he's against affordability for Manitobans. I'm aware that he doesn't want tax—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Squires:—credits, he doesn't want more money in the pockets of Manitobans.

But, Madam Speaker, why—he should get up in his place and explain to Manitobans why it is that he's against more money for health care: \$1.2 billion more in this budget than the NDP ever spent for health care. That includes \$56 million more for PCHs. That means more money for respite services for people with disabilities.

Why does—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Squires:—the member of opposite—members opposite planning to vote against more money for children with disabilities?

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

Mr. Kinew: Let's review a few things that we've proved conclusively beyond a shadow of a doubt.

First, this minister—as the Department of Families head—has frozen funding for kids with disabilities in the community for years. We're talking about children who need help learning how to walk, children who need help learning how to swallow. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: We've also proved conclusively that this government has failed miserably in their promise to build 1,200 personal-care-home beds and, in fact, we will actually have fewer beds next year than when this government took office.

And what's more, we have proved conclusively that this government has spent less than 5 per cent of the money that they announced to try and help Manitobans waiting for surgeries.

So no, we won't indulge this government in their budget. Instead, we will stand with the people of Manitoba who have rejected Brian Pallister's legacy.

Will the PCs join us?

Ms. Squires: Well, Madam Speaker, I'm very pleased to put some facts on the record after that preamble that contained absolutely no correct information.

There's \$235 million more for families in this budget—more money for spending on families and social services than the NDP ever spent when they were in government, more money for Main Street Project, more money for respite, more money for children who are—to keep children from aging out of care during a pandemic, more money for wait times—to address wait—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Squires:—times in the health-care system and more money for PCH beds.

Now, I understand that member opposite, he wants to shout me down. I understand he has a lot of experience in that. But I implore them to listen to the facts and get on the right side of moving Manitoba forward.

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

Passage of Budget 2021 Request to Withdraw

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): A long list of claims, and yet no disputing the fact that this minister froze funding for some of the most vulnerable children in our communities—children who need help learning how to walk, children who need help learning even how to swallow, Madam Speaker.

It's par for the course with a government that will see fewer personal-care-home beds in Manitoba after the COVID-19 pandemic compared to when they took office; par for the course for a government in Manitoba that would announce to great fanfare that help is coming for all those thousands of Manitobans who are waiting for their surgeries, but then would turn around and behind the scenes direct that that money not be spent, as evidenced by the fact that less than 5 per cent has actually made its way out the door to help Manitobans.

Now, we know that this caucus turned on Brian Pallister as it became clear that the people of Manitoba rejected the former premier, and yet they come back to pass his budget.

Will they just finish the job that they started this summer and announce that they are going to abandon—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Deputy Premier): I don't believe I heard a question in that lengthy, rambling preamble, but I do see the members opposite coming in this House day after day, trying to defend the dark legacy of Greg Selinger. They're trying to justify a time when they had the longest wait times in the country. They had the longest wait times in the province's history. There wasn't even a pandemic, Madam Speaker.

During the day—dark days of the NDP, you could get on an airplane; you could fly to Toronto; you could see a doctor; you could come back to Manitoba in the time that it would take you to see a doctor in an emergency room. That is their legacy, and that is the hard thing that he's coming in this House—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Squires: —day after day and defending: the dark legacy of Greg Selinger.

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

Mr. Kinew: During the dark days of this government, you could be a Manitoban who is near death, who required critical care, who was admitted to an intensive-care unit, and then, because of this government's cuts and understaffing, you could be flown out of the province because this province lost the ability to care for our sickest compatriots.

That is the legacy of this government. That is the legacy of the MLAs who are still sitting in this Chamber. That is the legacy of the PCs, and like the 99.9 per cent of Manitobans who aren't in the PC caucus, I stand against that legacy.

Now, we want this budget to be stopped because of the health-care cuts that it contains. Will the PCs join us?

Ms. Squires: It's clear that the member opposite has a budget from perhaps 2014 or 2015 when his government was cutting health-care dollars. This budget, the one that we're going to vote on today, has \$1.2 billion more for health care. It has \$235 million more for Families, and it has \$307 million more for Education.

This is a budget that the NDP government—or NDP opposition, they still have an opportunity, they can decide to turn away from defending the dark legacy of Greg Selinger. They can turn the page and vote in favour of moving Manitoba forward with more money for education, more money for health care and more money for families.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, it's undeniable that the tragedy of shipping Manitobans out of our ICUs to other provinces was absolutely terrible.

Now, what compounds that tragedy is that it is the result of years of deliberate and intentional cuts that every single member on the opposite side not only endorsed, but stood in their places and clapped and hooted and hollered and cheered for.

If it wasn't the loss of ICU beds that came with emergency room cuts, it was—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —the privatization of government air services. Boy, who would've thought that we would ever need the capacity to transport critically ill patients? We did. That's why we opposed it the whole time.

This government has been wrong all along. Will they finally admit so today and refuse to pass this Brian Pallister budget?

* (14:10)

Ms. Squires: Madam Speaker, I understand that the member opposite, he wants to be negative. He wants to defend the negative legacy of Greg Selinger.

But what is particularly egregious is when the member opposite dismisses the 506 new beds for personal-care homes that our government has recently created. What is particularly egregious is when he tells the people of Carman, when he tells the people of Steinbach, when he tells the people in rural Manitoba that their loved ones—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Squires: —don't matter, that those beds that we've created for those loved ones don't matter.

Well, Madam Speaker, on this side of the House we think all Manitobans matter. We think all Manitobans, regardless of where they live, regardless of their health-care needs, they matter to us; and we're going to continue to stand up for all Manitobans because Manitobans matter to us.

Vaccination of Children Preparation Inquiry

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): Madam Speaker, it's heartbreaking that Manitoba has had

some of the worst COVID-19 outcomes of all of Canada.

Now, the Conservatives are currying favour with anti-mask and anti-'vask' sentiments, including in their own Cabinet. Meanwhile, Manitobans have stepped up.

We're hopeful the vaccination of children aged five to 11 will help in the fight against the spread of COVID-19, but that requires planning and a detailed execution of those plans.

What is the Conservative government doing to ensure these vaccinations are ready to go immediately once approval is given?

Hon. Reg Helwer (Minister of Central Services): Well, we've had a very successful vaccination program in Manitoba. I'm sure everyone will agree here. When we—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Helwer: Thank you.

When I called then-minister Anand over a year ago—or just a year ago in late October—to ask her about vaccines and how we have to store them and—she had no information from us, nothing she could share with us. And then, suddenly, we were able to get vaccines in Manitoba and put that into practice.

We—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Helwer: —had a program all planned out. And, again, it will be just like it worked before. We will vaccinate Manitobans. When they get those vaccines approved for children in Manitoba, we'll be ready, and we hope they are as well.

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

MLA Asagwara: Madam Speaker, it's clear the Conservative government is not doing all that they can do.

I encourage this government: be proactive; ask Manitobans to register their children in anticipation of the approval of the vaccine. Let's do everything that we can to ensure that children ages five to 11 are ready to go as soon as the vaccine is available.

So I'm asking the Minister of Health: Will they do so today? Will they encourage all Manitoba families with young children to pre-register for the vaccine today?

Mr. Helwer: You know, well, it's obvious that they want to create fear in the population again, Madam Speaker.

When we—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Helwer: When we get the vaccine and it's approved by Health Canada—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Helwer: When we know that—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order. I'm asking members to show some respect for somebody that's trying to actually answer a question instead of heckling. I cannot hear. So please allow me the opportunity to hear the answer.

The honourable minister for Central Services.

Mr. Helwer: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you for your guidance.

As I'm sure you know, this vaccine gets submitted to Health Canada and they make the decision on when it can be rolled out. They make the decision on if it's going to be approved. We don't have a role in that. We are told when it will be made available to Manitobans.

When it's available for Manitobans, we will be able to vaccinate those youth. The plan is already in place—

Madam Speaker: Member's time has expired.

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

MLA Asagwara: Madam Speaker, I'm really disappointed that not only did the Minister of Health not get up and answer that question, but instead she heckled me and accuses me of fear mongering because I'm simply asking when Manitoba—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

MLA Asagwara: —families will be able to have—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

MLA Asagwara: —a plan in their hands for their children ages five to 11 to be able to access the COVID-19 vaccine.

Now, all I'm doing is encouraging this government to do everything possible so that families can

rest assured that they're prepared for the approval of the vaccine that we know saves lives. Let's not see another moment wasted.

What is the minister doing now to ensure that all of our young children get vaccinated as soon as the vaccine is available?

Mr. Helwer: So, all I have to say is look at the track record of this government in vaccinating Manitobans.

We worked with the federal government. Once we got those vaccines placed—once they were in place we—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Helwer: —vaccinate Manitobans. We have the supercenters that are all available for vaccinations. We will have a similar process to that, and we will use the school vaccination program as well—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Helwer: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We don't know when the federal government is going to approve those vaccines for use. They have told us it could be January; they've told us it could be later; they've told us it could be earlier. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Helwer: We're ready to go, but we don't have the vaccine approval for those—that age group, Madam Speaker.

Our success in vaccination is there for everyone to see.

Medication for Cystic Fibrosis Patients Pharmacare Coverage for TRIKAFTA

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, it is now a well-known fact that TRIKAFTA, a revolutionary new drug that can slow the progression of cystic fibrosis, allow patients to live longer, healthier lives. However, it's still too expensive for the average Manitoban. It's not currently covered under our drug 'formulary', meaning even private insurance won't cover the cost of it.

So, will the minister—or the Premier (Mr. Goertzen), for that matter—commit to covering TRIKAFTA today?

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): I thank the member from Flin Flin for the question.

Manitoba realizes the COVID-19 pandemic has been especially difficult on the over 200 Manitobans that are living with cystic fibrosis, and we are working with the regulatory bodies to finalize the listing for TRIKAFTA.

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

Mr. Lindsey: And, of course, Cystic Fibrosis Canada—a national non-profit—research suggests that TRIKAFTA can reduce severe lung disease in 60 per cent of people with CF, increase life expectancy and 'redoath'—reduce deaths by 15 per cent by the end of the decade.

They're calling on the Province to cover the costs of the drug today. There are some Manitobans who may be forced to move in order to stay alive because this government won't act, won't say yes for covering the costs today.

So will the minister commit to covering the cost of TRIKAFTA today?

Ms. Gordon: I realize that the member for Flin Flon is reading from a prepared question and is not able to deviate at all from the question and has not considered what I said previously.

So, our government will work through our respective processes to make the decision to list TRIKAFTA on the Pharmacare public drug plan in the very, very near future. Stay tuned; more to come.

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

Mr. Lindsey: I appreciate the fact that the minister's going to study it and come up with an answer sooner or later.

British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Yukon have all said they will cover the cost. There's no more studying it; that's been done.

It's simply a matter of the minister standing in her place and saying, yes, today the cost of TRIKAFTA will be covered: Will she do that?

* (14:20)

Ms. Gordon: I want the more than 200 Manitobans to know that our government listened. We've heard. We're compassionate towards individuals who are living with cystic fibrosis, and we are going to act to ensure that you receive the health care that you deserve here in our province.

Repair of Electronic Devices Right to Repair Legislation

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I would like to ask the minister responsible for consumer affairs a question.

Will the minister ensure that manufacturers will be required to provide parts and repair manuals to purchasers and repair businesses at a reasonable price so they can repair electronic products, including cell-phones and appliances, farm equipment, farm machinery, motorized mobility aids, marine 'pressure' craft and recreational motorized vehicles, including electronic bikes and scooters.

Will he introduce right-to-repair laws?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): Our government makes a priority what consumers need and making sure consumers are supported in so many different ways.

I know the member has brought a piece of legislation potentially that's out there. So we're going to review that and see where things go. I think there's some merit to what the member is saying, but you got to make sure you can do things in appropriate ways.

So we'll review the legislation before making any final decisions.

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

Mr. Maloway: I'm not sure I got an answer there.

But the right-to-repair movement has already taken root in the European Union with legislation and regulations better protecting consumers from poor manufacturing practices that result in repairable products being thrown in the trash heap. It also re-invigorated the small-repair business industry that's been decimated by recent manufacturing practices.

We'd like to know what your time frame is to bring in these measures.

Mr. Fielding: Our government is very proud of the fact that we stand up for consumers as well as citizens of Manitoba in so many different ways. We recently passed legislation to ensure that consumers are protected. I think the member did support those initiatives.

The member has a bill before the House, and so we'll review that. We—open to having discussions with the member in respect to that; and so we'll make a decision based on the merits of legislation.

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

Mr. Maloway: It's actually two bills before the House.

Europe, Madam Speaker—Europe has taken strides to address this problem. In—20 United States states have introduced or are debating right-to-repair legislation.

Our legislation would similarly establish a right to repair by providing manuals and replacement parts for consumers and repair businesses for an array of electronic products and farm machinery.

When will they embrace the right to repair for Manitoba consumers? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: Our government is a listening government; we listen to stakeholder groups from the retail, from the wholesale side, from citizens' groups, to make sure citizens are protected. That's the utmost essence of what we're trying to do here in consumer protection affairs. That's important to us, and so we're going to look at all information that can provide better protection for Manitobans.

We're always open to new good ideas.

Accessibility for Manitobans Act ICS Regulation Concerns

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): The provincial government recently published the regulations proposed—the Accessibility Standards for Information and Communication Standards, the ICS. Within the regulations, there are a number of loopholes outlined by this government which provide many ways to avoid the requirements of the proposed standards.

Manitobans expect the provincial government to honour and uphold the accessibilities act for Manitoba, not to find loopholes to avoid doing so.

Will the minister remove these loopholes and ensure that accessibility standards are upheld for all Manitobans?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for Accessibility): When it comes to accessibility in the province of Manitoba, our government understands that it is necessary for all Manitobans to live life with dignity. That is why we invested in \$20 million in the spring. *[interjection]*

Now, I understand the members opposite, they don't want to hear the question, just like they didn't

want to pass their legislation. They didn't want to proclaim the accessibility standards. Our government is getting that job done.

Our government also put \$20 million in an accessibility trust fund so that all members of the community can access funds so that they can make sure that they make their places of business or their public places available and accessible to all Manitobans.

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

Ms. Adams: Within these publicly available regulations, the provincial government says that their burden related to the proposed standards will be lessened in a number of ways.

Ensuring Manitobans with disabilities have equitable access to information and communication is not a burden, it is a responsibility of this government to uphold. And, instead of doing so, this government is finding and promoting loopholes within ICS regulations.

I ask again: Will the minister remove these loopholes and ensure that accessibility standards are honoured and enforced for all Manitobans?

Ms. Squires: This is coming from the member who voted against including the inclusion support program for kids with disabilities in child-care centres.

She has never stood up in her place to support people with disabilities and her government failed to proclaim any of the service standards under the accessibility act.

Our government is moving forward with accessing services. We're—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Ms. Squires: While the member tries to control herself, I would like to continue to explain and provide an update to the House on how our government has invested \$20 million in an Accessibility Fund so that all members of the public can have access to funds to make their place of business accessible for all Manitobans.

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

Ms. Adams: I'm proud to always stand up for northern and rural children.

We have heard from concerned Manitobans who believe that the number of loopholes are actually a deliberate attempt to undermine the accessibility act

of Manitoba. I am sure it is no coincidence that these loopholes will save the provincial government time and resources.

This is an insult to Manitobans with disabilities. It sends a message that this government has no intention of honouring the true intent of the accessibility act of Manitoba.

Will the minister remove and apologize for these loopholes in the ICS regulations?

Ms. Squires: In reference to being an insult to people with disabilities, the member, when she voted against inclusion support programs for children with disabilities in daycare, I would think that that was an egregious, egregious error, and I certainly would hope that she would apologize to her constituents, to all families in the province of Manitoba who access these services.

When it comes to the accessibility act, our government is moving forward and proclaiming all the standards, something that government never did when they were in office. We're providing funding for agencies and public offices to access dollars so that they can upgrade their facilities to make it accessible for all Manitobans. We're moving forward to make sure that all people in Manitoba have an opportunity to live their lives with dignity.

Rapid Tests for COVID-19 Availability in Workplaces

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): A new public health order is coming into effect on Monday. It sets out, in detail, rules around rapid tests—rapid tests that are not being made available to the public. Testing and tracing is critical to tracking the progress of this pandemic, and if we're not testing, we can't trace, especially in schools and child-care centres where children are not protected by vaccines.

Now, last year, the PCs spend months kicking and screaming for rapid tests, then as soon as they arrived, they stopped using them. We know there are hundreds of thousands of them sitting on shelves.

Is the government going to make rapid tests freely available to workplaces like schools and early-childhood-education centres? If not, why not?

* (14:30)

Hon. Reg Helwer (Minister of Central Services): Well, if the member had paid attention to Estimates yesterday when I answered that question, he would know the answer.

We have had 1.4 million tests supplied to us by the federal government and I believe we've shipped 1.2 million of them out to 616 sites around Manitoba, so they're already there.

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

COVID-19 Public Health Orders Vaccination Exemptions

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): One of the reasons that people sometimes give for refusing a vaccine is that they already have had COVID. Public health officials across Canada and around the world, like the CDC, have been clear: you should still get the vaccine even if you've had COVID. But Manitoba's self-isolation rules are making exceptions for people who have not been vaccinated if they've had COVID in the last six months.

That's at manitoba.ca/covid19/fundamentals.

We know people can catch COVID more than once. The government—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lamont: —has okayed a third booster shot.

Can the minister explain this loophole in health orders for people who've not been vaccinated?

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Health and Seniors Care): Members on this side of the House will continue to look to the experts in terms of vaccinations. We know that the COVID vaccine works, and we are asking all Manitobans, if they have not been vaccinated yet, to roll up their sleeves, get one—get not one—just—but two vaccinations and protect yourself and your families.

We will also look to our public health officials here in Manitoba to advise us on the next steps forward in terms of vaccinations.

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

North End Winnipeg Community Safety Initiatives

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): The North End has taken matters of crime and safety into our own hands and this has been demonstrated in many ways, one being community safe walks.

We have groups—including Neighbourhood Watch, 204; NorthWest Watchers; and Bear Clan, just to name a few—who spend their time giving back to

the community through ways of education, patrol, cleanup and protection.

Madam Speaker, back in the day, the North End had more provincial community safety resources. For example, we had youth justice committees.

When will this government enhance provincial resources for community safety in the North End of the city?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I thank the member for the question.

I can say that this government is enhancing safety for Manitobans. I appreciate her statements about how the local community is rising up to the challenge.

I can indicate to that member that once again this year we are increasing funding to our—to community-based watch organizations, many of which have thousands of members volunteering their time to go out on patrols to keep their communities safe. We welcome these measures.

We are funding these measures, but we are always open to additional ways to ensure that communities are kept safe, and I welcome the member to continue to engage with us on good ideas that she has to bring forward from her community to keep us all safe.

Budget 2021 Summary Tax Cuts and Business Supports

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): I'm incredibly proud of our government's commitment to making life more affordable for all Manitobans.

Can the Minister of Finance please elaborate on the ways in which BITSA and Budget 2021 will continue to build on these past successes as we move to a brighter future?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): Our No. 1 goal is to protect Manitobans and to advance Manitoba.

This year's budget provides financial support to individuals and businesses that have been impacted by the pandemic. This year, budget also includes \$1.2 billion of funding available to support health care, schools, business and supports, as well as contingency to make sure issues are taken care of.

The budget also lowers taxes and makes life a little bit more affordable for individuals by reducing the PST or getting rid of the PST on personal services, impacting businesses by integrated digital media tax

credits and reducing the payroll tax, that's going to grow the economy of Manitoba.

This budget is good news for Manitobans.

**Project to Address Homelessness
Tiny-Home Village Proposal**

Mr. Nello Altomare (Transcona): The Homes for Heroes Foundation is looking to purchase two acres of land in the Transcona area, where it hopes to build 20 tiny homes and a resource centre.

This innovative plan would provide short-term housing and on-site resources with a goal of addressing veteran homelessness in particular, as there are more than 200 veterans living on the streets of Winnipeg.

Will the minister commit to allocating funding for the implementation of similar tiny-home villages to address homelessness in Manitoba?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Families): I appreciate the member bringing up this very important topic.

Our government recognizes that people who are precariously housed or experiencing homelessness need supports, and that is why last year alone our government invested more than \$30 million to help make—people who are precariously housed or experiencing homelessness.

That is why we also established a Rent Bank for people who are on the verge of eviction, that they could access funds to—funds so that they could pay their rent and not experience homelessness through eviction. That is why we put in an eviction freeze for Manitobans during the pandemic.

We know that there's a lot more work that needs to be done to address the situation of homelessness, and that is why our government is committed to working with community partners, to be working with everyone in the community to ensure that we find solutions for these people.

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

Mr. Altomare: Housing-first approaches are crucial to ensuring that all Manitobans have access to safe, comfortable housing and essential resources like mental health care, addictions treatment and financial guidance.

Another example of this style of transitional housing is Astum Api Niikinaahk, a tiny-home village

now under construction near Thunderbird House. Approaches like these are needed at the provincial level. Tiny-home villages have already been proven successful in many other Canadian jurisdictions.

Will the minister commit to implementing tiny-home villages across Manitoba to address our homelessness issue?

Ms. Squires: The member opposite raised a really good point, and that was the inclusion of wraparound supports.

That is something that our government is committed to. That is why we invested 2 and a half million dollars just earlier this year, and we found homes for people who were precariously housed or experienced homelessness. We put them in there in their new homes. We gave them the keys, but we knew that the work wasn't done there. We also provided them with wraparound supports. *[interjection]*

And if the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) would like to ask a question, I encourage her to do that, but meanwhile I will also encourage her to listen to what—to the answer. If she is interested in hearing about homelessness, she might be interested in learning about the 2 and a half million dollars that we recently invested in wraparound supports. She might be interested in knowing about the project that we had created with the Pollard family to create a village for people who were precariously housed.

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

Mr. Altomare: We know from research done by agencies across Manitoba that COVID-19 has led to an increase in Manitobans experiencing homelessness, and the effect appears to be greater for many marginalized people. In Winnipeg alone, it's estimated that there are over 100 encampments.

Unhoused Manitobans deserve dignified lives, deserve access to safe and affordable housing as well as essential care and resources.

As we head into the winter months, what exactly is the minister doing to ensure that no Manitoban has to sleep on the streets this winter?

Ms. Squires: Our government is taking a different approach to dealing with those who are precariously housed or experiencing homelessness by working with partners across the community to ensure that we have shelter for all Manitobans. That is why we invested more than \$30 million this year—more money

than the NDP ever spent on addressing the issue of homelessness.

And I'll tell you something else, Madam Speaker. There's something else that we're doing different. What we're doing on this side of the House that's very different—something that's never been done in the history of this province before—is we are electing the first woman PC leader and we are sending the first woman into the premier's office in the history of Manitoba.

And on this side of the House, we're all proud of that.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Speaker's Statement

Madam Speaker: And I have a statement for the House.

* (14:40)

As the House is expected to adjourn later today for a number of weeks, I would encourage all honourable members to remove the contents of their desks today. I would further encourage members to recycle as much of the material as possible. The blue bins here in the Chamber are designated for recycling of Hansard only. Any other material you would like to recycle may be placed in the larger recycling containers in the message rooms located just outside the Chamber.

Thank you to everybody.

PETITIONS

Abortion Services

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Manitoba women, girls, two-spirit, genderqueer, non-binary and trans persons deserve to be safe and supported when accessing abortion services.

(2) Limited access to effective and safe abortion services contributes to detrimental outcomes and consequences for those seeking an abortion, as an estimated 25 million unsafe abortions occur worldwide each year.

(3) The provincial government's reckless health-care cuts have created inequity within the health-care system whereby access to the abortion pill,

Mifegymiso, and surgical abortions are less accessible for northern and rural individuals than individuals in southern Manitoba, as they face travel barriers to access the handful of non-urban health-care professionals who are trained to provide medical abortions.

(4) For over five years, and over the administration of three failed ministers of Health, the provincial government operated under the pretense that reproductive health was not the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and Seniors Care and shifted the responsibility to a secretariat with no policy, program or financial authority within the health-care system.

(5) For over four years, the provincial government has refused to support bill 200, The Safe Access to Abortion Services Act, which will ensure the safety of Manitoba women, girls, two-spirit, genderqueer, non-binary and trans persons accessing abortion services and the staff who provide such services by establishing buffer zones for anti-choice Manitobans around clinics.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately ensure effective and safe access to abortion services for individuals, regardless of where they reside in Manitoba, and to ensure that buffer zones are immediately legislated.

This has been signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

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

Are there further petitions?

Louise Bridge

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) Over 25,000 vehicles per day cross the Louise Bridge, which has served as a vital link for vehicular traffic between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown for the last 110 years.

(2) The current structure will undoubtedly be declared unsafe in a few years as it has deteriorated extensively, becoming functionally obsolete, subject to more frequent unplanned repairs and cannot be widened to accommodate future traffic capacity.

(3) As far back as 2008, the City of Winnipeg city has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

(4) After including the bridge replacement in the City's five-year capital budget forecast in 2009, the new bridge became a short-term construction priority in the City's transportation master plan of 2011.

(5) City capital and budget plans identified replacement of the Louise Bridge on a site just east of the bridge and expropriated homes there on the south side of Nairn in anticipation of a 2015 start.

(6) In 2014, the new City administration did not make use of available federal infrastructure funds, and instead decided to fund an off-the-list, low-priority Waverley Underpass.

(7) The new Louise Bridge Committee began its campaign to demand a new bridge, and its surveys confirmed residents wanted a new bridge beside the current bridge, with the old bridge open—kept open for local traffic.

(8) The NDP provincial government signed its firm commitment—signalled its firm commitment to partner with the City on replacing the Louise Bridge in its 2015 Throne Speech. Unfortunately, provincial infrastructure initiatives, such as the new Louise Bridge, came to a halt with the election of the Progressive Conservative government in 2016.

(9) More recently, the City tethered the Louise Bridge replacement issue to its new transportation master plan and eastern corridor project. Its recommendations have now identified the location of the new Louise Bridge to be placed just to the west of the current bridge, not to the east as originally proposed. The city expropriation process has begun.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to financially assist the City of Winnipeg on building this three-lane bridge in each direction to maintain this vital link between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown.

(2) To urge the provincial government to recommend that the City of Winnipeg keep the old bridge fully open to traffic while the new bridge is under construction and consider the feasibility of keeping it open for active transportation in the future.

(3) To urge the provincial government to financially assist the City of Winnipeg in keeping the old bridge open for active transportation.

And this petition has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: Are there further petitions?

Health-Care Coverage

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background for this petition is as follows:

Health care is a basic human right and a fundamental part of responsible public health. Many people in Manitoba are not covered by provincial health care: migrant workers with work permits of less than one year, international students and those undocumented residents who have lost their status for various reasons.

Private health insurance is not a substitute for public health insurance. Private insurance plans available to most migrant workers and international students are paid for by the worker or student. They do not provide coverage for all of the potential health needs covered by public health coverage. Individuals are required to pay upfront for health expenses without a guarantee that they will be covered and wait weeks for reimbursement.

Racialized people and communities are disproportionately affected by the pandemic, mainly due to social and economic conditions which leave them vulnerable while performing essential work in a variety of industries in Manitoba.

Without adequate health-care coverage, if they are ill, many of those without provincial health coverage will avoid seeking health care due to fear of being charged for the care, and some will fear possible detention and deportation if their immigration status is reported to the authorities.

According to the United Nations Human Rights Committee, denying essential health care to undocumented irregular migrants is a violation of their rights.

Jurisdictions across Canada and the world have adopted access-without-fear policies to prevent sharing personal health information or immigration status with immigration authorities and to give uninsured residents the confidence to access health care.

The pandemic has clearly identified the need for everyone in Manitoba to have access to public health care to protect the health and safety of all who live in the province.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to immediately provide comprehensive and free public health-care coverage to all residents of Manitoba, regardless of immigration status, including refugee claimants, migrant workers, international students, dependant children of temporary residents and undocumented residents.

To urge the Minister of Health and Seniors Care to undertake a multilingual communication campaign to provide information on expanded coverage to all affected residents.

To urge the Minister of Health and Seniors Care to inform all health-care institutions and providers of expanded coverage for those without public health insurance and the details on how necessary policy and protocol changes will be implemented.

To urge the Minister of Health and Seniors Care to create and enforce strict confidentiality policies and provide staff with training to protect the safety of residents with precarious immigration status and ensure they can access public health care without jeopardizing their ability to remain in Canada.

This has been signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

National Drug Plan

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

* (14:50)

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Canada's public and private drug plans leave many patients with little or no coverage, resulting in one out of 10 patients not taking their prescribed medications because of affordability;

(2) It is estimated that Pharmacare would save Canadians between \$4 billion and \$11 billion per year;

(3) There have been repeated calls to include prescription drugs in Canada's universal health-care system, including:

National Forum on Health (this is 1997, chair Prime Minister Jean Chrétien);

Commissioner of the Future of Health Care in Canada (2002, chair Roy Romanow); and

Several national organizations, including Canadian Nurses Association, Canadian Medical Association, Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to encourage the federal government to amend the Canada Health Act by adding prescription medicines prescribed by a licensed practitioner to the definition of covered services in accordance with an established formulary;

(2) To urge the provincial government to develop jointly with the federal government a universal single-payer evidence-based sustainable public drug plan that contains purchasing power to secure best available pricing, a list of essential medicines addressing priority health needs, and the ability to expand to a comprehensive, permanent plan that would promote the health and well-being of all Canadians.

And this petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: Are there any further petitions?

If not, grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Deputy Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, could you please canvass the House to—for leave to consider, without notice, a concurrence motion regarding the report that was presented today from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs?

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to consider, without notice, a concurrence motion regarding the report that was presented today from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs? Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

CONCURRENCE MOTION

Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs Tenth Report

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Deputy Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), that the 10th Report of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Affairs, received on October 14, 2021, be concurred in.

Motion presented.

Madam Speaker: The honourable acting Government House Leader?

Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is the Tenth Report of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs received on October 14th, 2021, to be concurred in.

Shall the motion pass? *[Agreed]*

* * *

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I ask leave to present a report stage amendment on Bill 72.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to move report stage amendments on Bill 72? What am I—is there leave? *[Agreed]*

REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS

Bill 72—The Disability Support Act and Amendments to The Manitoba Assistance Act

Madam Speaker: I would like to inform the House that the honourable member for River Heights has requested that—a combined debate on—to combine debate on his three proposed amendments to Bill 72.

As this is not a common occurrence, I would like to take a moment to explain this process to the House.

First, our rule 139(11) states, and I quote: The Speaker may select to combine amendments or clauses to be proposed at the report stage. End of quote.

Second, as noted, the use of this rule is uncommon in our House, and we do not have a lot of past practice to rely on regarding the implementation of this concisely worded rule. Our subrule 1(2) instructs us to be guided by the parliamentary traditions of the Canadian House of Commons in areas where our usages and customs do not apply.

Following that direction, on page 788 of House of Commons Procedure and Practice, Bosc and Gagnon note the following regarding the grouping of report stage amendments, and I quote: motions in amendment are grouped for debate according to two criteria: their content and their position in the bill. Motions which could form the subject of a single debate are grouped according to content if, once adopted, they would have the same effect in different parts of the bill or if they relate to the same provision or similar provisions of the bill. Motions in amendment are combined according to the location at which they are to be inserted in the bill when they relate to the same line or lines. These motions in amendment will then be part of a single scheme for voting purposes.

The member's three report stage amendments for Bill 72 meet the criteria of similar and related content, and I will be grouping them for debate today as we proceed through them.

For the information of the House, we will proceed as follows: the member will move the combined motions separately and consecutively; I will put each one back to the House in turn; there will then be one debate covering the combined motions with 10-minute speaking times for all members except leaders of recognized parties, who have 30 minutes; and when that debate concludes, I will put the questions on the motions separately and consecutively.

Therefore, I will turn it over to the honourable member for River Heights.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I move the first amendment. I move, seconded by the MLA for Tyndall Park,

THAT Bill 72 will be amended by striking out Clause 15(2) of Schedule B (The Manitoba Assistance Amendment Act).

Second amendment—

Madam Speaker: Order.

One moment, please.

The honourable member for River Heights has proposed an amendment to Bill 72. It was moved by the honourable member for River Heights, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (Ms. Lamoureux),

THAT Bill 72 be amended by striking out clauses 2 to 23 of schedule A, The Disability Support Act.

The honourable member for River Heights, to proceed with his second amendment. *[interjection]*

Oh—as this is an unusual practice for us, we are just trying to clarify some of the issues.

For clarity, there was some misnumbering of pages, so I would like to then put that back to the House that the proposed amendment to Bill 72, moved by the honourable member for River Heights, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park, *THAT Bill 72 be amended by striking out Clause 15(2) of Schedule B (The Manitoba Assistance Amendment Act).*

I think now we move to the member making the second amendment.

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Tyndall Park,

THAT Bill 72 be amended by striking out Clauses 20 to 23 of Schedule A (The Disability Support Act).

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (Ms. Lamoureux),

THAT Bill 72 be amended by striking out Clauses 20 to 23 of Schedule A (The Disability Support Act).

* (15:00)

The honourable member for River Heights, to move his third amendment.

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Tyndall Park,

THAT Bill 72 be amended by striking out Clause 24(l)(k) of Schedule A (The Disability Support Act).

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for River Heights, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park,

THAT Bill 72 be amended by striking out Clause 24(l)(k) of Schedule A (The Disability Support Act).

I understand now that we will move into debate and I will—a combined debate on all three and I will turn the debate over to the honourable member for River Heights.

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, these are three linked amendments.

The goal of these amendments is to remove the ability of the government to put liens on homes or potentially other properties on people who are disabilities. I think that all of us would want to make sure that people with disabilities have a fair opportunity to own homes and that this should be encouraged that monies provided by the government, including their basic support, could be used toward the purchase of a home if that were possible, and that individuals with disabilities should not be disincentivized for purchasing homes.

Individuals with disabilities could, in certain examples, combine together with others so that they can own a home. And I believe that this—removing these clauses, by which the government put liens on the home of an individual with a—with disability, is not the right approach, that we need to have a new vision of how we support those with disabilities and that we look in a positive way of trying to support those with disabilities in owning their homes whether it is by themselves or jointly with others. I think this would be a very positive step forward to adopt these amendments.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is there any further members wishing to debate?

Is it the pleasure of the House, then, to adopt—*[interjection]* Oh—

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt amendment 1?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied, or—oh, the motion is not carried.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt amendment 2?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: The amendment 2 has been not carried.

Is there leave to adopt—oh, sorry.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt amendment 3?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied on the motion—the motion has been denied on amendment 3.

And just to remind everybody, we are on orders of the day.

As a reminder to the House, according to the Sessional Order, for this afternoon we will first be dealing with second reading of bill 72, the budget implementation and tax statutes amendment act.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 74—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021

Madam Speaker: So I will now call second reading of Bill 74, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021.

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Friesen), that Bill 74, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021, be now read a second time and be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Her—His Honour the Administrator has been advised of the bill, and I'll table the message.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), seconded by the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Friesen), that Bill 74, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021, be now read a second time and be referred to a Committee of the Whole.

His Honour the Administrator has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

Mr. Fielding: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to provide some comments to Bill 74, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021, will be implemented numerous tax measures and administrative changes that are needed to implement Budget 2021, a budget that provides significant funding to address the COVID-19 pandemic as well as more funds for health care, education as well as the Families Department.

Budget 2021 also provides dedicated funds for vaccinations, hospitals and improving long-term care for the pandemic.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

This implementation tax bill measure lowers taxes for all Manitobans and businesses, which make the economy stronger and more resilient, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which makes our economy more strong and resilient is really important to all Manitobans. At this time, when any businesses and individuals have been made sacrifices as a result of the global pandemic, it

is important that—to provide some tax relief along with many supports. We have budget for both business as well as individual supports.

I want to thank all Manitobans for everything they've done to keep people safe during the pandemic and their patience as we work together through the public health measures that have been had to put in place to ensure our doctors and nurses and health-care system could care for those Manitobans experiencing illness or economic issues as it relates to some of the down—the lock—some of the health measures that have been placed that have had impact on businesses.

I also want to thank all those nurses and health-care professionals and the workers that assist with our government's vaccination campaign which has been a great success and helped ensure that Manitobans reach some of the highest levels of vaccinations, not just in Manitoba, not just in Canada, not North America, but in the world. This is a great tribute to the work of the task force and all those professionals and workers that have been seeing the success of this campaign in lower infection rates and better outcomes for Manitobans that do catch—to prevent COVID-19 transmission.

We have some of the highest levels of double vaccinated people in the country and we'll continue to work to ensure that the—those who want to get vaccinated will have an opportunity to do as such.

I just want to highlight some of the measures in this bill that will help the economy recover from COVID-19 and grow our Manitoba economy. We're seeing a significant growth in GDP this year and project another significant growth in GDP next year, as we're seeing unemployment rates fall to the lowest in Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker, now at 5.6 per cent, the most recent results released in the past week. This includes some of the lowest unemployment rates not just overall but for youth as well as for women in the country.

In a few weeks, I'll be proud to serve the government of the first woman premier of this province, which we think is a very big deal. And I want to work to continue with this great progress to build Manitoba under a new PC premier while delivering better results, lower taxes for all Manitobans.

Some of the improvements of our economy and lower taxes in this bill include creating Invest Manitoba to establish a new private-sector-led development agency to facilitate and encourage economic development right here in Manitoba. The activities of

Invest Manitoba will include co-ordinating services and supports for economic development projects, leading business expansion investments attracting projects, participating in trade and promotional as it relates to Manitoba, providing competitive intelligence and regulatory information to stakeholders and developing provincial economic development branding.

* (15:10)

Stopping the clock for two years on the frequent film bonus, which is incorporated in BITSA, is also important. Under the film and video production tax credit, to 'commo-date' corporations that have been impacted and shut down during the pandemic.

Removing the expiration date on interactive digital media tax credit and expanding the eligibility for add-on projects such as additional download content and performance updates in recognition of the various ways the modern interactive digital media products are produced, distributed and supported on an ongoing basis, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The bill makes a number of changes that will help Manitobans recover and move the province towards economic growth and leave the pandemic behind us. These measures include increasing the maximum eligible investment per investor under the small-business venture tax credit from \$450,000 to \$500,000; increasing the maximum annual tax credit claimable from sixty-seven, five, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to \$120,000. This will better align the credits with the investor tax credit among—amounts in other provinces and really help Manitoba businesses gain access to venture capital dollars, which is so important.

We are renewing the cultural industry prints tax credit and the community enterprise tax credit and making the Book Publishing Tax Credit permanent, as well as exempting retail sales tax, or PST, on all remaining types of personal services that are still subject to the PST. That's an important promise we committed to Manitobans.

We're also going to make online accommodation platforms like Airbnb and online marketplaces like Best Buy and online streaming services providers such as Netflix subject to the requirement to collect and remit sales tax like other storefront competitors in Manitoba—and requires to impose. So that's something to make sure that Manitoba businesses are working a competitive—are not working at a not competitive

environment. Manitoba is following other jurisdictions in this measure and Canada with a sales tax that has made changes recently.

We're also reducing the NDP's job-killing payroll tax in Manitoba. We're doing this by increasing the exemption threshold, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for health and post-secondary education levy—that's going from 1.5, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to 1.75—and increasing the thresholds at the upper levels from \$3 million to \$3.5 million.

This helps so many businesses by reducing the tax, will help roughly 1,100 businesses in terms of their bottom line to make sure that they're hiring jobs, as well as exempting 240 small businesses from taxes altogether—which, again, will help Manitobans that are in the labour force and not penalize them for hiring people.

By reducing this payroll tax, we're helping small businesses and freeing up more cash in these businesses to help them hire more workers and recover from the pandemic. We're seeing some labour issues arising out of the pandemic, and this will mean more money available to—for wages and salaries for all workers in Manitoba.

We're also going to reduce the additional tax—or formerly known as the fire prevention levy—on property insurance payable by insurance companies from 1.25 per cent to 1 per cent.

Establishing a new tax credit for up to \$150 to recognize the contributions of child-care workers and K-through-12 teachers, recognizing teachers' efforts to improve the in-class education experience and empower teachers with greater autonomy in the classrooms, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

A number of other tax measures in Bill 74 will enhance government service delivery and accountability to all Manitobans, notably changes including making a number of modernizations to The Financial Administration Act to clarify the summary public accounts, including all government reporting entities; making clear that the financial oversight by Treasury Board summary government and not just departments. This includes Crown corporations that impact on summary budget of the government of Manitoba.

Separates the function of internal auditing from controllership to make Treasury Board responsible for appointing an audit committee that reviews internal audits for transparency.

Better accommodates situations where financial administrative processes and responsibilities are shared between departments, such as when two departments are sharing processes of information, whether it be payment or other mechanisms.

Transfers the function of the Manitoba funeral board to the director of the consumer of protection affairs, and laps unproclaimed amendment to the funeral legislation for 2011 as the department undertakes the new consultations for a broad review of the regulations and related legislation.

It also makes changes to the education administrative act, to replace Manitoba Learning Resource Centre, since most school divisions now acquire education textbooks more cheaply through online services.

Making minor changes to the fishing and wildfire enhance—sorry, wildfire enhancement act—to clarify the government's financial obligations with respect to the underlying funds that are—be aligned with the government fiscal year, not the calendar year.

A handful of other minor technical tax-related amendments are also made to correct errors and improve the administration efficiency.

Overall, the changes in this year's budget make life more affordable for Manitobans, averaging over \$275 per household in Manitoba, including the education property tax rebate which is enacted in May while making Manitoba an attractive place to invest, for businesses to grow and expand, creating jobs here in Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that concludes my comments on the budget implementation bill. I'd be glad to take any questions that the bill haves from members of the House.

Thank you.

Questions

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A question period up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member of the following sequence: first, by a question from the official opposition critic or designate; subsequent questions may be asked by the—each independent member; remaining questions asked by the opposition members; and no questions or answers shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry): Now, this bill reduces the taxes that large insurance companies pay to government on their book of property insurance

through an amendment to the insurance companies tax. I'm wondering if the minister can tell us how much that's going to cost the treasurer?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): It's a quarter per cent reduction that anyone that has insurance won't have to pay.

Mr. Wasyliw: The reduction of insurance corporation tax for property insurance from—as the minister just mentioned—1.25 to 1 per cent is a benefit for large insurance companies. I wonder if the minister can explain what the policy rationale is for the change.

Mr. Fielding: I'm not sure where the confusion lies, but it's not that the insurance companies are getting the break; it's actually the consumers that are purchasing the insurance gets the break.

Mr. Wasyliw: I'm wondering why this was not put in the budget, nor was there any public announcement in relation to a cut for taxes for large insurance companies. I'm wondering if the minister can explain why it's just magically appearing today.

Mr. Fielding: I'm not sure what the member has an issue with. This is passed on to the consumers. This is actually a break for consumers. I know the member likes to jack up taxes, and that's his mantra. But here on this side of the House we make—we like to make life a little bit more affordable for Manitobans. That's what we've done on numerous different tax initiatives here in the province of Manitoba. If the member doesn't believe that people that purchase insurance need some sort of break, then, I guess, that's his position. It will be challenging for him at the doors next election to defend that position, though.

Mr. Wasyliw: Well, I think the minister is mistaken about his own ministry. This is an insurance tax that's paid by brokers, not by consumers, and the revenue goes into the Fire Prevention Fund. So why is he defunding the Fire Prevention Fund, and if maybe he can explain the rationale about why we don't need a Fire Prevention Fund in Manitoba?

Mr. Fielding: What we're doing is making sure that the funds that are available in terms of the fire prevention are there. If you look at it over a number of years the amount of revenue that was brought in was more than what was needed in terms of the service that's being provided. As such, we thought that consumers deserve a break, and that's exactly what this does. This is a very small tax measure—\$1.8 million on a \$17-billion budget. But, like I say, we think that no matter how small a tax break that is for consumers, it makes sense to do that.

Mr. Wasyliv: So now that the minister is raiding the Fire Prevention Fund of \$1.8 million, how much is left remaining in the fund, and how can Manitobans be assured that it'll be there for them in their time of need?

Mr. Fielding: The amount of revenue that comes in matches the service that's being provided.

* (15:20)

Mr. Wasyliv: Now, the bill requires the comptroller to report to the Treasury Board, and it shifts the internal audit system from the comptroller to Treasury Board. I'm wondering if the minister can explain what the problem is that he's trying to solve here.

Mr. Fielding: Obviously, the audited capacity, when you have the comptroller that would be in charge of audit capacity, they would be auditing their own work, essentially. So it makes sense to move an item like this forward. So it's—obviously, the auditing function's an important piece of government but it shouldn't be, obviously, controlled by the comptroller.

Mr. Wasyliv: Section 5 of The Financial Administration Act appears to provide more power to the Treasury Board, specifically as it pertains to management and financial management for government reporting entities. Wonder if the minister can explain the rationale for expanding the Treasury Board's authority.

Mr. Fielding: Number 1: the former government, of course, had two sets of books. They had core books, and they didn't take into consideration summary budgeting. So what happens at Manitoba Hydro or another reporting entity has an impact on our summary budget, has an impact on deficits.

We know the NDP don't care about deficits. It's a pretty solid track record they have in respect of that. We do care about deficits, and so we think that it makes sense to align everyone within summary budget to have the same rules in place. That's pretty standard practice and this has implications on taxpayers.

I know the member doesn't care about taxpayers because he likes to raid their pockets first before trying to find some efficiencies, but that's not the approach our government's taking. Our government wants to lower taxes, make life more affordable for Manitobans as opposed to jacking up taxes like the NDP do.

Mr. Wasyliv: Will any decision by the board of a government-reporting entity have to be approved first by the Treasury Board?

Mr. Fielding: Well, obviously, boards will make decisions, in terms of their respect of the operations of their organizations and agencies. But I can tell you, whether it's other reporting entities, that has an impact on our summary budget. As long as there's—we call other reporting entities—they have an impact on summary budgets.

That has an impact on our financials, which obviously has an impact on credit ratings. That's a part of it. So if you don't control other reporting entities and everything that's a part of summary budgeting, that's how expenditures get out of control, and that's how you get credit-rating downgrades.

Mr. Wasyliv: The BITSA bill last year implemented a hydro rate increase and, obviously, that was removed this year.

But the minister should be clear: Will he commit that rate setting at the Cabinet table and through legislation is now off the table for the future?

Mr. Fielding: Well, obviously, the Minister of Crowns, who's in the Chamber here, gave a directive to Manitoba Hydro to apply for an interim rate. We would also like to see longer term multi-year rates because right now the process, the consultation process, the engagement process, for the PUB is about four times as high as places like BC. So we think having multi-year rates makes a lot of difference.

So the member—or rather, the minister made a comment on that and, obviously, that's—his decision is the government's decision.

Mr. Wasyliv: Now, Brian Pallister said that it didn't bother him at all that teachers have been forced to pay so much out of pocket for necessary school supplies for their students. I'm wondering if the minister can share his view on the matter.

Mr. Fielding: This is a very good initiative. It's something that the federal government first introduced, obviously, on the GST portions of things. Provinces like Prince Edward Island has taken this as well. Our government's very proud of the fact that we've made a commitment of \$1.6 billion over the next number of years for investments in operating as well as capital investments in the school system.

We're in the process, different stages, of building 20 new schools. In fact, I know the Minister of Education (Mr. Cullen) as well as Minister of

Economic Development announced we're—earlier on in the week, actually, we're shovels in the ground, getting it done and building two new schools in Waverley West. So that's an important investment. That's what our government's committed to: long-term, sustainable development dollars for education.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now, this BITSA bill contains The Invest Manitoba Act, and I'm wondering why the minister chose to put it in an 'omnibus' bill instead of just introducing the act on its own in the House.

Mr. Fielding: This is a recommendation from the Premier's (Mr. Goertzen) advisory committee. There is people, like the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Council, other notable Manitobans that brought ideas forth during the pandemic of how to move Manitoba forward, and so we think there's, you know, obviously an opportunity to do this as a stand-alone bill or do it within the BITSA bill.

We think time is of the essence; we think that it's important to be more competitive, to track more venture capital dollars here, to attract people to Manitoba, businesses coming, creating jobs and creating growth, economic growth in Manitoba. And that's really what this legislation and what this new organization, economic development organization will exactly do.

Mr. Wasyliw: I'm wondering if the minister can tell us why this new board will not have any labour or community representation on it.

Mr. Fielding: Well, the composition—the board is made up of members from the business community. There's obviously government affiliation or dollars—members that will oversee in terms of the dollars and cents.

At the end of the day, what happens is, it's a private-sector driven organization that is there to attract business, that will bring business in, will attract, hopefully, venture capital to grow and prosper. We want to make sure—and this is what we heard crystal clear from places like the Chamber of Commerce and the Business Council—that it should be private sector led.

Mr. Wasyliw: How much funding—government funding—will this new board receive yearly?

Mr. Fielding: Well, this legislation sets up the organization, so we'll be dealing with that during the budget process in terms of what funding should be in place for this. But I think one thing what we would say is we want to make sure this is a success, so we're not

willing to not invest in an organization like this that's going to attract business. If it's going to grow the Manitoba economy, it's going to create jobs for Manitobans, then we're willing to invest in that area.

But the exact dollars and cents isn't part, of course, of this bill; this kind of just, you know, lets—sets out the parameters of what it will look like and the functions that it does. The budgeting portions of things will happen later on in the year in the budget cycle in terms of what dollars and cents should be put in.

Mr. Wasyliw: If this is a private sector organization, which excludes community members and members from the labour movement, how can the government justify giving any public dollars to it at all, and why is it not self-financing?

Mr. Fielding: Well, we think that it will be self-financing. When you have an organization that is—been supported by the business community as an opportunity to attract businesses to Manitoba. If you can attract 'numer' of businesses with jobs, that's a part of it, that's going to bring economic development here in the province of Manitoba, which is going to pay for itself.

Mr. Wasyliw: Why couldn't this work be done by the Premier's economic opportunities advisory board, why is there a requirement for yet another, you know, PC donor board basically to be established in Manitoba.

Mr. Fielding: Well, I'm not sure I read the legislation properly, but there isn't any board appointments in here, so I'm not sure what the member is talking about a Tory-appointed board. This just sets out the legislation.

If the member doesn't want to support economic development agencies and, you know, ability to track businesses and venture capital and promote Manitoba in a way, I guess, that really, that's probably the reason why there were such stagnant growth under the NDP years, and they relied on jacking of taxes for individuals, you know, moms and dads that were working hard to put money on the table and spend money maybe on things like hockey, or other things like this. And yet the NDP decided to jack up taxes they always do. Same thing with things like the payroll tax.

We've taken a different approach to attract businesses, and we think this will be it.

Mr. Wasyliw: Just to remind this minister that in his position, he took Manitoba from the second fastest

growing economy down to the seventh. Now the Manitoba bureaucracy, the economic development department, already does this work. So why is the minister creating yet another layer of bureaucracy and duplicating yet more work that's already being paid for by taxpayers?

Mr. Fielding: Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's clear that the member wants to ignore the business community and their ideas. That's really the way he'll govern, you know, was the way the NDP governed for 17 years. In the dark years of the NDP where they ignored the business people, business ideas of how to grow the Manitoba economy.

We're not going to make those mistakes. We think it's important to grow Manitoba in so many different ways. The member should come across and join us in terms of supporting this organization as it's going to grow the Manitoba economy

* (15:30)

Mr. Wasyliv: In relation to your Netflix tax, I'm wondering if the minister can tell us: Canadian-based Internet providers, say, Canadian Tire or The Bay, do they open up corporate accounts in Manitoba, and do they pay provincial corporate tax for sales that occur on the Internet, or do they get a free ride from this government?

Mr. Fielding: Well, No. 1, if you review Hansard—Hansard's important because you can hear what people say when they flip-flop on the issue. Because the member was in committee before we introduced this tax supporting this tax and asking why we weren't doing more of it. So now, somehow, he's criticizing this tax.

Well, we're one of the last provinces to introduce a service like this, and I'll tell you what happens right now. There's a lot of local businesses, for instance, that are competing and have had to compete against things like Amazon, third-party players in a—Amazon as opposed to going to the local area. They're paying tax when you go to the local store, and yet if there's a third-party payer through things like Amazon, they don't have to pay that provincial sales tax on it.

So this is a way to level the playing field. I know the member doesn't like to help local businesses, but we think it's a way to help local businesses. It's supported—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable minister's time is up, and time for question period has expired.

Debate

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Debate is opened. Any speakers?

Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry): Now, this is a government that has never had an economic plan for Manitoba. The only economic goal in the years that they've been in office has been to shift the tax burden from those who are actually doing well in the Manitoba economy onto those who actually are struggling. They have been taking away taxation from the people that actually have the ability to pay and putting it onto Manitobans who don't.

And this latest version of BITSA bill continues this practice, and they can no longer blame the bogeyman Brian Pallister, because he's long gone; he's in Costa Rica enjoying the weather, I'm sure. These are their choices. They're going to vote on this bill today. And every vote for this horrible piece of legislation is going to affirm that this had nothing to do with Brian Pallister and his toxic politics. This had everything to do with the PCs' values and their misguided vision, if you want to call it that, for Manitoba.

So let's talk about the fancy haircut tax cut. So, in this bill, Manitobans are going to be able to get a PST reduction if you pay more than \$50 for your haircut or personal spa days.

Well, very few Manitobans can afford that. In fact, there's going to be a tiny minority of Manitobans who are actually going to benefit from this. And what's the benefit? They're going to get a few dollars off an expensive haircut or a day at the spa. It'll amount to a coupon.

And when I talk to, you know, wealthy Manitobans in my area and others who hear about this, they tell me that, you know what, you can keep your coupon; I would rather have a functioning education system; I'd rather have nurses staffing my ICUs. I would rather have affordable child care in Manitoba than losing \$2.7 million—and this is basically a gift to the wealthy in Manitoba—and what it'll mean is that people who can't afford \$50 haircuts have to make up the loss of revenue of \$2.7 million with their taxes, with the money they pay for everyday essentials.

So this isn't making things more affordable for Manitoba. It's making things more affordable for very wealthy Manitobans, and it's costing everybody else because of it. So if we can't staff ICUs, if we have professors leaving our province and our universities are under siege, if we are laying off teachers, if we are getting rid of librarians in schools, if we cannot pay a

living wage to, you know, early childhood educators and disability support workers, we can't afford this.

This is a gift. This is Conservative, cynical, micro-targeting. This is an affront to responsible fiscal management, which this government certainly knows nothing about.

Manitobans would rather pay a few extra dollars for a haircut than have their children crammed into a classroom with 30 other kids because that's the result. That's what's happening.

To pay for this tax gift for the wealthy, our education system is getting squeezed. Our health-care system is getting squeezed. And what adds insult to injury here is that we don't even have the money for this. This is all borrowed money. This government went out and ran up the largest deficit in Manitoba's history—how's that for fiscal management—so they could turn around and give tax cuts to the wealthiest in Manitoba.

So a privileged few get a coupon and the rest of us get larger class sizes, get fewer services and don't have a nurse to take care of us when we have to go to the hospital. And then, of course, the BITSA bill also carries on the 'ignominious' tradition of defunding education.

We saw, with Bill 64, that the government was obviously attempting to hollow out money that we give to public services and education, and this is after five years—five years in a row—with enrollment going up in Manitoba, with cost of living going up and general inflation in the education system running about 2.5 per cent, that this government froze funding for five years in a row. And every year they did that, that amounted to a 2.5 per cent cut, year over year over year.

And by freezing that funding, it forced school boards to do the dirty work of this government. They, in turn, had to cut their services. They had to get rid of teachers. They had to increase class sizes, which have ballooned under this government, and the most vulnerable Manitobans, those that need those extra services, those extra resources to have a fair shot at success at life, they're taken away, right? They're the casualties of this minister and the Conservative government's war on Manitobans and affordability.

So, vulnerable children are the ones that get hit the hardest so that this government can turn around and give the Brian Pallisters of the world a \$7,000 tax rebate—that we know of. That's one of the myriad of his villas and mansions that he has in the province and

out of province. Corporate landlords get a huge cheque. Oil companies, rail companies, they take the lion's share of that \$250 million gift to the wealthiest in Manitoba, while all our schools suffer, where children aren't given a fair shot.

And, of course, independently elected school boards that's filled with parents and grandparents, they care about education, they believe in it, they want Manitoba to have a strong education. So what do they do? They said no. They said no to this government and they turned around and they backfilled the cuts to education with property tax cuts.

Well, the government wouldn't have any of that. So, naturally, they took the power away of democratically elected school boards to protect the school system and they did that in the previous BITSA bill and they go even further in this one.

So, that ended badly, we know. And so what they have done, they—sure, they've withdrawn Bill 64, but they haven't put back the \$250 million that they took out of the education system, nor do they have plans to. And they aren't going to give back control of the school boards. They are going to hold a directive to democratically elected school boards that they have to get their budget cleared by this government and this government can unilaterally tell a democratically elected board that they have to cut this or they can't spend on that, right?

Imagine if Ottawa came here and told this Finance Minister that his fiscal irresponsibility is not acceptable—and according to the federal Parliamentary Budget Officer, they have, in fact, have said that. They said that this government has cut taxes so badly that our fiscal situation in Manitoba is not sustainable. We cannot afford to pay for the public services we have with the low taxes right now.

*(15:40)

And of course, there's two solutions: you can actually restore taxation and make it fair and make those who are benefitting from the economy and those who actually have the ability to pay to pay, or you can do it as this minister plans to do it: you can cut services.

So, would this minister appreciate, you know, the Prime Minister coming to him and saying, you know what, you've got to give us your budget ahead of time so we can sign off on it, and if we don't like it we're going to rewrite it for you?

Because that—obviously, that's offensive. Obviously, the government would rightly be up in arms, but they turn around and, as paternalistic and as offensive as that is, they do that to school boards across Manitoba without any shame, without any embarrassment and it's deeply troubling, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So, if these were real Conservatives, they would stand up for local government. They would stand up for, you know, local say and independence. But, no. They're centralizers and they believe in an elitist top-down approach and the, you know, the Finance Minister knows best.

So, they have repeatedly said, many times, since Brian Pallister was stabbed in the back and forced out by this group, that they believe Manitoba is spending too much money on education. Our struggling Education Minister has made those public comments repeatedly. Almost every time when he was asked about withdrawing Bill 64 he said, you know what, yes, we're going to withdraw it, but we're spending too much money on public education.

That's a shocking, shocking statement. It's truthful, in the sense that that's how this government thinks, that they don't value education. They think that we have a Cadillac service of education in Manitoba.

And I don't think they've ever been in one of our schools. I don't think they've ever spoken to a parent. I don't think they've—I certainly know they haven't spoken to any teachers or any administrators, because if they had, they would know that our system—since they've been elected—has been chronically underfunded and it is on life support. And right now, our schools are in badly need of resources and this government, of course, sees that need and doubles down and says, more cuts, please.

And, again, it's not enough just to dismantle a public education system, they have to humiliate teachers in the process. And this BITSA comes to the rescue. This is about humiliating teachers. We are going to so underfund your schools that you have no choice but to go out and buy your own school supplies for your 30-plus-kids classroom, right. And all we're going to do for you, we're going to give you another coupon to pay for that—maximum \$150 a year.

Well, I don't know—my partner's a teacher, my parents were teachers—a teacher out there that would spend less than \$150 a year in classroom supplies. And instead of properly recognizing the importance of our education system and our teachers and properly

funding it so teachers don't have to fill in the gaps for the underfunding, this government turns around and goes, oh, well, we gave you a tax credit. What, you know, what are you complaining about?

That's insulting. That's absolutely insulting. This minister should know better and be ashamed but, again, I think he doesn't embarrass easily.

So, as gross and as mean-spirited as all this is—and, quite frankly, you can't blame Brian Pallister anymore. He didn't make you do it. This afternoon, your fingerprints are going to be all over this, and this is very much going to be on the PC caucus. So a vote for this is a vote for continued misguided and mean-spirited cuts to education. It's completely unnecessary.

And, of course, this act finally swings the axe and cuts the Learning Resource Centre. This was a centre that helped many teachers to be good teachers. It provided them with resources, especially small schools and rural school divisions.

And, you know, the minister likes talking about they are a listening government. Well, if he had listened—and I was at the protest for this—teachers wanted this to stay. Education leaders wanted this to stay. And so their version of listening is going, okay, you want things to stay, well, we're going to cut it. And today, unfortunately, it ends here.

And then, of course, the second big, you know, economic plan of this government is to rig our tax system—make it less fair. And every single change that this government has done, it's been about making our tax system less fair to Manitobans. And we can see this with the reduction of tax paid by insurance companies at 1.25 per cent reduced to 1 per cent.

The minister gaslit this Chamber. He did not provide a policy justification for it. And I think it's telling this was never announced in the budget. Wasn't in there. There has been no public announcement that they were going to do this. Why? Because this is a corporate handout. This is corporate welfare. There is no policy justification for it. We hear that Brian Pallister, as a retirement gig, is going back to the insurance industry, and, surprise, surprise, it shows up here that for insurance brokers, they're going to get a tax reduction. How convenient for our former premier that he gets his own tax cut.

So I think our Finance Minister is certainly very loyal to the man, and that's certainly admirable, but this is bad public policy, because this tax, which was paid by insurance brokers, went into a Fire Prevention Fund. That Fire Prevention Fund was then used to

protect Manitobans. And this minister admits today that they are raiding the fund of \$1.8 million this year alone, and you can imagine every subsequent year, and if the economy grows, it will get even bigger, year over year, where he's robbing Manitobans of the protection of that fund to give corporate welfare year over year to, you know, basically donors of the PC Party, which has no benefit to Manitobans at all.

And when he talks about making life more affordable, you have to ask for whom? He's making life more affordable for the Brian Pallisters of this world. He is not making it more affordable for you.

So, now, what's also interesting about the Netflix tax. The Finance Minister—my dear friend—he is right when he says that we agree on that. We've heard from small business, and unlike the PC Party, we actually support small businesses, and we'll actually put policies in that will help them, not hurt them and not be predatory towards them.

But they've been complaining for years, and when I first raised this in the House, our current Premier (Mr. Goertzen) scoffed at me, like, how dare we. But basically, they want a level playing field. Manitoba small businesses pay PST; they pay corporate tax. And these massive Internet giants do not. And there's a phenomenon; they even give it a name called showrooming, where Manitobans will go and spend time in a small Manitoba business; they will get all the consumer information that they can from that small-business person and then simply go home and then order whatever they found online. And that small-business owner who has the bricks and mortars and has to pay the insurance and staff doesn't get the benefit of that sale.

So they've been calling for years to level the playing field. And, of course, the minister is quite right that he is late to the game and that almost every other province has done this. And so they reluctantly have done this. But what's interesting about this is that like everything with this government, there's always a wink and a nod to big international multinationals who's really, like, their true constituency, the people they really come here and fight for every day, the Amazons and the Netflix and the Airbnbs. Those are their people. And I have to give them credit for fighting so hard for them.

Problem is is that Manitobans get left behind here, because one of the biggest corporate gifts that this Finance Minister has given to Amazon is they're not requiring them to open up corporate accounts in Manitoba. They're not required to pay corporate tax

on their business in Manitoba. And they are saving millions and millions of dollars on corporate tax profits that's flowing out of Manitoba, that is going nowhere near Manitoba small businesses who have to pay. And instead of, you know, absolutely doing a proper job of leveling the playing field, they put their thumb on the scale and they ensured that small businesses, even after this half measure, are going to be worse off because of this bill.

* (15:50)

And, of course, we see with this legislation that they're centralizing control once more in the province with changes to, sort of, financial regulation. And again, Brian Pallister may be gone, but his elitist, top-down approach is very much alive and well and seems to be the *raison d'être* of the PC caucus and this government.

And every single change that have been put in place through BITSA will make it easier for the Cabinet to interfere with independent, arms-length government entities.

Now, why do we have these entities to begin with? Because we believe in Manitoba—at least, we did before this government—that many voices governing the province are better than a handful of—a few. And it provides countervailing power in our province, where they have the ability to say to the government of the day, you know what, you're wrong. This—we're experts in our own little field here, and we know how to run things that way.

You know, conservatives used to believe that. You know, before, you know, the Stephen Harper, you know, Brian Pallister days, there used to be a branch of conservatives that believed in local autonomy and self-government. That's all gone. Now, we're replaced with control-freak micromanagers that believe that their opinion is the only one that's valid in Manitoba.

So, you know, the example that I find is troubling is that every time this government has interfered with outside agencies—say, Hydro—causing a Hydro strike, well, it cost Manitobans \$16 million. They did that with the school bus drivers' strike, youth supports workers. Each and every time, nothing good happens from it, and it causes service disruptions, it causes expenses for Manitoba taxpayers, and nothing, from a policy perspective, beneficial to Manitobans happens.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

So now this government wants to double down on that and make it easier for them to bully and push around what were once independent operating entities. And, of course, what's the most chilling is that they're prepared to do it to democratically elected school boards. And they're prepared to override the will of democratically elected officials to impose their very much un-democratic views in relation to education.

And of course, we have this invest Manitoba. This is the return of pork barrel politics, here.

Again, you know, there was a time when Conservatives used to complain about inefficiency and duplication in government, and now, they're leader of the band. They get ahead in front of the parade. And—but of course, that was when they were in opposition. Now that they're in government, they're creating these, sort of, pork barrel organizations. They're going to staff it with failed political candidates and PC Party donors, and they're duplicating the work that's already being done by Manitoba civil servants.

Well, I say, well, wait a minute. We're actually devastating Manitoba civil servants. We've cut 18 per cent of it, and we're not done yet. And we're going to make sure that we can't organize our way out of a pandemic and we don't have the expertise or skills to protect Manitobans in their time of need. But we have great boards for our friends, you know, PC donor clubs, so that we can appoint them and give them government money to sit around a board and tell us what's best for their businesses and not necessarily what's best for Manitobans.

So, that's hereto. So, basically, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Conservative caucus certainly can read polls. They know that their days are numbered. Manitobans have had pretty much as much of them as they can stomach, and many of these members that we see here today will not survive the next election. And they may desperately try to rebrand, but as we're seeing with BITSA, it's all cosmetic.

There's absolutely no substance at all to their 'reband'. They may repeal Bill 64, and they may pat themselves on their back, but they are allowing the education system to be defunded. They are making Manitoba finances unsustainable with tax cut after tax cut that goes to the exclusive benefit of the wealthiest Manitobans, and they're going to leave the bill and the loan to Manitobans who are struggling and are finding life less affordable. They are making our tax system less fair. They are skewing it. They are basically

rigging our economy for those who already are successful.

And, of course, to pay for that, they will cut our public services more and yet again. And we, sadly, have seen during COVID—it's really revealed to, I think, Manitobans how diminished our province has become.

What the effect is, is when you get rid of one in five civil servants and how we are unable to respond to a crisis and we have to go to other provinces on bended knee and ask for help because we have so impoverished and so dismantled our basic services.

It took—until very recently—six months to get a birth certificate in Manitoba, something that this minister agrees should take two weeks. He's prepared to pat himself on the back because now it only takes three months. He sees that as progress. I view that as an indictment.

Now, the real cost to Manitoba with the government preoccupied with only governing in the name of their wealthy campaign donors and ignoring the rest of ourselves is that we've lost lives. We've lost lives in Manitoba that could've been saved. Businesses have been shut that didn't have to close. There have been jobs removed from our economy that didn't need to happen and it's a result of these choices that can't be blamed on Brian Pallister. It's very much in the DNA of this modern Conservative Party.

So, thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Are there any other members wishing to speak in debate?

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker?

Madam Speaker: Yes, we can hear you.

Mr. Lamont: If I may?

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Boniface.

Mr. Lamont: I'll try to keep my words brief.

We do have a number of concerns about the BITSA bill and about the way the finances of this province have been handled in general. There are many unanswered questions.

For example, that we don't actually know where the money necessarily be replaced, the money that is being cut from—lost from educational revenue. To simply say that it'll be replaced by revenue from income or other taxes just means that people who

work for a living are going to be shouldering a greater burden than otherwise.

This is, I mean, yet another budget that sort of tries to placate people with crumbs when what we see in both education and health that—we're seeing a breakdown where we're not actually able to provide self-reliant—be self-reliant and to provide health services to our own people or even educate our own people.

When it comes to doing research or when it comes to doing—providing diagnostic testing, surgeries, or teaching people—teaching people to be nurses or teaching people to be computer science grads—we have to invest and I don't see that level of investment here. Simply arguing that there's more here than there used to be under the NDP five years ago, when we've had the single greatest crisis in 100 years, is not particularly comforting.

So this is very much a place-keeping budget, I will say that. And really, we're borrowing—we're going to be borrowing to pay for tax cuts, borrowing to cut cheques to people. But, I mean, some of them are people who are well off and some of them frankly are just corporations, even pipeline corporations. So I don't know that letting corporations off the hook for helping to pay for our education is the best idea, especially when the debt that we're running up to pay those people is going to have to be paid by everybody else.

And that's it. I just wanted to put a few words on the record.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 74, the budget implementation tax statutes amendment act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion. Agreed? [*Agreed*]

* (16:00)

The hour being 4 p.m., according to provisions of the Sessional Order, the question is to be put on the following items without further debate, with the exception of the concurrence motion in the Committee of Supply which is to be debated for 90 minutes.

The items to be completed are all remaining stages of the main and Capital Supply procedure, the loan act and the appropriation act, completion of all remaining stages of Bill 74, the budget implementation and tax statutes amendment act, concurrence and third reading of Bill 72, The Disability Support Act and Amendments to the Manitoba Assistance Act. Once these items are completed, royal assent is to be granted.

We shall now proceed with main and Capital Supply, the loan act and the appropriation act.

And I would recognize the honourable Minister of Finance.

Messages

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I have a message from Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, which I would like to table.

Madam Speaker: Please stand for the reading of the message.

To the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Lieutenant Governor transmits to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba an estimate of the sum required for the authority to borrow for the services of the Province and recommends that estimate to the Legislative Assembly.

And this is signed by Janice Filmon, Lieutenant Governor.

Please be seated.

The House will now resolve into Committee of Supply.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Capital Supply

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

We have before us the consideration of the resolution respecting the loan act. The resolution respecting the loan act reads as follows:

RESOLVED that there be granted to her—the authority to borrow for Supply purposes for—the sum of \$400 million for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2022.

Resolution agreed to.

Committee rise and call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION**Committee Report**

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered and adopted the resolution respecting to the loan act.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Rossmere (Mr. Micklefield), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: The House will now resolve into Committee of Supply.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Continued)

Concurrence Motion

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

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move that the Committee of Supply concur in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022, which have been adopted at this session whether by a section of the Committee of Supply or by the full committee.

Motion presented.

Mr. Chairperson: The motion is in order.

Pursuant to 8(c) that—pursuant to item 8(c), the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7th, 2021, and the concurrence motion under consideration—*[interjection]*—oh, October 6th. Okay, sorry. It was actually October 6th, 2021, the occurrence—concurrence motion under the consideration shall be debated for 90 minutes, and once the time has expired, the Chairperson shall interrupt debate and put the question.

Before the debate begins, I will now note that yesterday, October 13th, 2021, pursuant to rule 78(4), the Official Opposition House Leader (Ms. Fontaine) tabled the following list of ministers: the Premier (Mr. Goertzen); the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler), the Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development (Mr. Eichler); the Minister of Education (Mr. Cullen); Minister of Justice (Mr. Friesen); Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Cox); Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding); the Minister of Families (Ms. Squires); Minister of

Crown Services (Mr. Wharton); the Minister of Central Services (Mr. Helwer); Minister of Conservation and Climate (Mrs. Guillemard); the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration (Mr. Ewasko); the Minister of Municipal Relations (Mr. Johnson); the Minister of Health and Seniors Care (Ms. Gordon); Minister of Mental Health and Wellness and Recovery; Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations (Mr. Lagimodiere); and Minister of Economic Development and Jobs (Mr. Reyes).

These ministers will be questioned concurrently.

The floor is open for questions.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I have a question to the minister of consumer affairs and want to draw his attention to the annual report in which he—there's reference at the second last point that they obtained an amount of I think it is \$311,000 in cash settlements and consumer contract adjustments.

I wonder if he could enlighten the House as to what that \$311,000 is made up of.

Mr. Chairperson: Could the member from Elmwood just repeat what you said, the last part?

Mr. Maloway: It's the annual—consumer affairs annual report, and it's page 53 of that report, and it's the second last point. It's a reference to an amount of \$311,000 in cash settlements.

I just wondered what that was made up of.

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): Well, that's—obviously, that's the cash settlement, that's a part of this. Monies goes towards education purposes and other items such as that.

So is that the question the member has?

Mr. Maloway: I'd like to also draw the minister's attention to No. 7 of the same page: Developing and administering consumer protection legislation for Manitobans.

And I don't expect that the department has been overly busy in the last couple of years under—on that area. But the minister did make reference last year, I believe it was, to work being done on a scrap metal bill.

* (16:10)

And he should be aware that this whole issue is quite popular out there, evidently, with people stealing catalytic converters—not only catalytic converters but

other things, too. But I know even in my own constituency only, you know, every few days there's a call about a catalytic converter stolen, and not only in my constituency, but from other places, too, in Winnipeg and in the rural areas.

So this is certainly a problem and the minister will know that I did introduce a bill in this matter. And what we would like to do is to see that the scrap metal dealers keep a record of their purchases, that they not be allowed to be paying cash, that they have to pay by cheque, and that these records be kept for the police for a total of five years.

So I'd like to know or get an update from the minister as to what's going on in his department regarding his promise last year to bring in a bill to cover this whole issue.

Mr. Fielding: Well, I think we committed to review that.

And the member is very passionate about these types of issues and, quite frankly, I think they come from a good place. So our government continues to review to make sure that consumers are protected. There's a number of items which we moved on over the last year or so with legislation, and we are reviewing other pieces of where we can protect Manitobans, consumers. Catalytic converters is the ones that the member has talked about quite a bit, and I think that there is issues out there, so we're committed to continuing to review that to see if legislation should be a part of that.

Mr. Maloway: In regarding the door-to-door sales rules and legislation that he brought in a year or so ago, can you give me an update as to what sort of results you're achieving in because of those measures that were taken? Because there were a number of claims that were made. We were never given a clear resolution as to whether everyone got their money back. I suspect they did not because there would be close dates on those surety bonds that were being drawn on.

So could you give me an update from the last time you reported on this?

Mr. Fielding: Our departments are working 'diliging' on this.

I don't have an answer for the member right now, but I do endeavour to get an answer. Hopefully, I can do that before the 90-minute period is back to answer specifically in that question. But I can tell you that our government very much does take it seriously and

that's why legislation was offered, and we do think that protecting consumers is extremely important.

But I don't have an answer for that, but I do endeavour to get an answer potentially by the end of this session.

Mr. Maloway: I'd like to thank the minister for his response.

And the minister will know that, in his capacity as the Finance Minister, he will have some knowledge of the situation regarding the Louise Bridge, which is going to be—after 111 years, is going to be replaced with a three-lane bridge in each direction just to the west of the current site.

And I'd like the minister to tell us when this construction is going to start, because the expropriation notices went out on October 5th, just five days ago. City is obviously intent upon doing something there, and I know the City is not going to proceed without some help—financial help—or some advice of the province.

So if he could just update me as to what he knows at this moment about this project.

Mr. Fielding: The City does kind of a priority list of priorities, and as I understand it, this is No. 26 on the City's capital priority list.

They have not raised this issue directly or specifically with us. And as for any funding, there is obviously funding available through the ICIP dollars that are in place. And so council went through an extensive process to identify what their priorities are.

Obviously, North End treatment centre was one. Items like the Waverley West recreational centre, and also the Civic Centre recreational project were some of the priority list. But right now, as I understand it from the City, and right—that is their project, obviously, it's No. 26 in their priority list.

So that's what I can refer to the member.

Mr. Maloway: I'm not sure that that is much help. I would make an assumption here that a project of this size wouldn't have gone unnoticed by the minister and that—really my question was: what was the anticipated start date for the bridge? Presumably, they're not looking at a start date of 10 years from now.

Mr. Fielding: Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a City of Winnipeg project. I don't have the answer, in terms of their construction schedule, their priorities. It looks, from the priority list, it is No. 6, the priority list. I think the member—[interjection]—26, rather, 26 on

their priority list. So there's obviously a lot of projects that are there.

What the Province can do, in respect to this, is provide some funding. There's opportunities through things like the ICIP dollars that were in place. The reality is we work on a priority list that the City gives to us and, in respect to this project, it looks like it's been prioritized a little bit further down than other—as relates to some of the projects I have mentioned here, in terms of what their priorities are.

Mr. Maloway: I'd like to just do a follow-up on the scrap metal bill. Could the minister tell me just where that's at right now—specifically, is he looking at introducing a bill in the next session? Should it start in a month from now or sometime after the election?

Mr. Fielding: Well, like a lot of other issues, we review them and we look for legislative priority. In terms of legislations, I'm not really aware of any commitment we've made, in terms of scrap metal. It's an issue that has been raised and I think the member does raise some good consumer-related issues, whether it be the 'catalytic' converter piece and other things like that.

So, yes, as a government, you need to make priorities and we've made some priorities in Consumer and Corporate Affairs, obviously, in terms of prohibiting types of sales and that sort of stuff on a door-to-door basis is one of the priorities that we made. That was delayed a little bit in the last session, but we did introduce that.

If there's other ideas that consumers can be protected, then that's something that we'll obviously consider.

Mr. Maloway: I'm reminded that I actually have one more question to ask the minister, and that would be about the right-to-repair movement that is, you know, quite active in the last couple of years.

And the minister seems to be interested in introducing right to 'prepair' legislation here in Manitoba and I'd like to ask him just that—what would be the time frame for that?

Mr. Fielding: I know the Minister of Justice (Mr. Friesen), just to answer additional question on scrap metal piece—so that is being reviewed through the Department of Justice. So that's been identified and kind of working its way, in terms of prioritization. So I can't give you a timeline, but we do take these matters seriously forward.

If the member's talking about the legislation that he introduced and the question that he asked in question period, I said it's interesting. I didn't commit to it, but I—interested in hearing more about the issue, whether we support the legislation or not. And so it was just tabled, I believe, over the last two, three days.

So more than willing to have it—engage with the member on that legislation, what that looks like and if there's—if it should be priority for the government or whether the government would support the private member's bill.

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): I'd like to ask the Minister of Health a question regarding relationships with front-line service providers.

So, you know, before this pandemic, certainly during this pandemic, health-care providers—nurses, doctors, health-care aides, health-care workers across the board have made clear that they've been experiencing challenges in the health-care system and have gone unsupported by this PC government.

We've seen a number of ministers of Health now come and go from this PC caucus and not a single one of these ministers has made any effort to address the damage they've done to the relationships with health-care workers here in Manitoba.

More recently, we've seen several accounts of health-care workers leaving the careers that they cherish, leaving the health-care system that they love, altogether changing careers because they are not only dissatisfied and burnt out, but they have given up on any hope that this government will do right by them; that this government will not continue to put them in a position where they're jeopardizing the care that patients receive; that the government won't continue to put them in positions where the very licences that nurses and practitioners work incredibly hard to obtain and maintain wouldn't be on the line.

* (16:20)

And so we have yet to hear any plan whatsoever from this current Minister of Health—a clear, detailed plan in terms of how she intends to repair the relationships with those workers: nurses who have left by the dozens from emergency rooms at St. Boniface; workers who have left the Grace Hospital acute care—critical care; doctors—specialists in neurology who are leaving our province altogether and repeatedly speaking to media.

So can the Minister of Health stand in the House today—right now—and speak not to me, but to those

workers? Can she speak to the nurses, the health-care aides, the doctors, the specialists, the folks who have put the health of themselves and their families on the line during this pandemic? Folks who right now, today, are thinking about leaving our health-care system because they feel so disrespected by this government.

Can the minister speak to those people and share with them her plan to repair the damage that her and her team has done to this point and what she's committed to doing, by way of a plan and a strategy, to retain their expertise in our health-care system and repair all of the damage that they've done so far as a PC caucus?

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery): I first would like to congratulate all the Manitoba nurses and the health employers on finalizing a new contract for Manitoba nurses. All Manitobans are grateful for your efforts. Thank you.

Mr. Chair, I want to say that the COVID pandemic has been a very challenging time for our health-care system and our health-care professionals at all levels of the organization, and we certainly appreciate all the efforts that are being made, not just by individuals working in facilities—health-care facilities, acute-care hospitals—but also at the community level, because it's a continuum of care between both levels of the health system.

And we want to know—we want all those individuals—EMS personnel, paramedics here in Winnipeg, in rural and northern communities—to know that your efforts are appreciated, you are valued, and we are listening to the issues and the concerns that you have brought forward, and we are acting as a government.

In terms of the actions that we've taken to date to support, for example, our nurses, our government recently announced plans to add close to 400 new nursing education seats. And I'm so pleased, as well, that we have established a program for international educated nurses with the ministry of Economic Development and Jobs. And that new program is showing great success, with 1,200 applicants putting forward applications to join the group of nurses that are currently in the system. We've added a nurse navigator to help those individuals through the process.

And, Mr. Chair, I'm so pleased that this month I will have the opportunity—unfortunately, virtually—I

was really looking forward to doing the—at the pinning ceremony for the new nurses that are graduating from the faculty of nursing, but I'll have to do congratulations by video to welcome 115 more nurses to our health-care system.

That is also in addition to the nurses that are also coming into the system from our critical-care nursing program. So, every month, Mr. Chair, we are graduating more and more nurses through that system, and we welcome everyone who is—who will be joining the health system, and we look forward to hearing from you over the months and years of your tenure with the health-care system. We are also very much looking forward to having more paramedics join our system.

Having a lot of really good conversations as I travel across the North and rural communities on the mental health, wellness, addictions and recovery action plan. I'm not just spending time with those service-delivery organizations, but I was thrilled, while I was in Thompson, to have the opportunity to talk with some of our paramedics.

One paramedic stated that he had moved from Winnipeg to the North and was sharing with me his experience—a young, young man—and it was just wonderful to hear how appreciative he is to have the opportunity to work in the North in a profession that he loves.

So, Mr. Chair, I want Manitobans to know that we are listening. We respect, appreciate and value all our health-care workers. We have been putting out surveys through Shared Health. The chief nursing officer, Lanette Siragusa, has shared with me that surveys have been sent out to health-care professionals asking for their feedback. So we're reaching out.

Managers are talking to health-care professionals at all times, particularly during this very difficult time, to find out how can we support you in terms of vaccination, in terms of testing. We are using many different methods to gain feedback. It's paper surveys, in-person discussions.

So the member from Union Station needs to know that and to join us, in terms of sharing with the health-care professionals that they are familiar with and note that we are listening to health-care professionals. We value, again, appreciate and welcome all their efforts during this difficult time.

So, Mr. Chair, we will continue to plan for the fourth wave, and that will include talking to doctors, talking to surgeons, talking to specialists and all the health-care providers. We're—it's—there's no monopoly

on good ideas. And so we need to reach out and listen and hear from all our health-care—

Mr. Chairperson: Just want to let you know that, minister, the time is up.

The honourable member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara). No?

The honourable member for St. James.

Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James): On September 15th, the PC government issued an order-in-council directing Hydro to take all steps necessary to proceed with an interim rate application by September 30th. But then on September 21st, a new order-in-council was issued, which no longer placed a timeline on the request for Hydro to submit an interim rate application to the PUB.

So I'd like the minister to explain the reason why that change was made and why a new order-in-council was produced.

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Crown Services): I thank the member from St. James for the question. And, again, as the member knows and the House knows, that we have issued a directive to Manitoba Hydro to work with the PUB on doing an interim general rate application.

Certainly, that was the right thing to do, and we understand that, of course, Manitobans would also appreciate the fact that there'll be interveners involved and the Public Utilities Board, of course, Mr. Chair. And we know that that's a process that we support. And I know that Manitoba Hydro is looking forward to also providing their interim discussions as well, with respect to rate, going forward.

So, certainly, very public, very—obviously, the issue or the whole process will be done in public, Madam Speaker—or, Mr. Deputy Chair, and certainly, we feel that this process is necessary. And we're looking forward to the outcome of the interim general rate application and, hopefully, also moving forward with long-term general rate application as well because we also know that annual rate applications—by the way, we're one of the only jurisdictions in Canada that do one-year rate applications—we know that we—under multi-year applications, it would save Manitoba ratepayers—Manitoba Hydro as well—millions of dollars.

So we're certainly moving forward with the public consultation through the PUB, and that's the right thing to do, and we're looking forward to the outcome.

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable member for St. James, another question.

Mr. Sala: I'd like to just point out that the minister certainly didn't answer the question. I am glad to hear that he's embracing and his government is embracing, again, the role of the Public Utilities Board—or appears to be embracing.

* (16:30)

But the question wasn't to have him review, you know, that the fact that they had, in fact, asked Hydro to proceed with the interim rate application. It was to ask specifically—and I'll ask it again with total clarity: why did his government issue one order-in-council on September 15th directing Hydro to take all steps necessary to proceed with an interim rate application by September 30th, and then a week later, they submitted a new order-in-council which no longer placed a timeline on that request.

So the minister can see why, for the average Manitoban, it would appear as though they're soft-walking away from that commitment, or attempting to. So we are asking the minister to provide clarity on that specific question.

Can the minister clarify why they produced a brand new order-in-council that changed the language to make it appear as though there was no longer a timeline that was being put on the request to Hydro?

Mr. Wharton: Again, we're certainly aware of the amount of work that the Public Utilities Board, interveners of course, and Manitoba Hydro will be facing to move forward with an interim general rate application.

We know the process will take some time, but we also know that it needs to happen before—again, before the next fiscal so that Manitobans will know what their hydro rate will be based on a Public Utilities Board decision and based on input from the public and interveners throughout the process. And certainly, we know that those—that process does take some time.

So, in respect to the member's question, we believe that through consultation with Manitoba Hydro, we certainly agree that time—more time may be required so we want to make sure that Manitoba Hydro has the opportunity, along with the interveners and the public, to have their say, and certainly expanding that time frame by a few weeks, certainly, we feel anyways, that that's the prudent thing to do to ensure that Manitoba ratepayers are protected through this very public, very important process.

Mr. Chairperson: The next question would be coming from the honourable member from The Maples.

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): Could the minister tell the committee when he was first informed and when he approved the decision to move the money from MPI reserve to the driver's and vehicle licensing?

Mr. Wharton: Certainly a pleasure to take a question from my friend from The Maples. We haven't had the opportunity to chat for a while. I certainly have the utmost respect from the member from The Maples and certainly glad to engage with him this afternoon in concurrence.

Certainly, we know that on June 10th at standing committee where the public was invited and again, also the opposition, to take part in a very public, transparent process. In the standing committee, we know that discussions on a number of fronts were tabled at that time, Mr. Chair, and certainly, the member would know as well because I know that he attended that open and transparent process during standing committee.

We also know that there was a discussion in particular around the revenue lines and the basic insurance. And we also know that transfers of the extension line to fund other areas including—were talked about including in standing committee. We also know that we talked about it and it was in the audited financial statements and also in the general rate application.

So it doesn't get much more transparent than that, Mr. Chair. Certainly, we know it's a leap—a far leap from what Manitobans were accustomed to under the former NDP government.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I appreciate the opportunity.

For the minister, he'll remember that we ended our conversation talking about the redevelopment of the St. Benedict's—the land, the concerns from the folks who are in Saint—in West St. Paul. And I—the—he did answer my question. What I would like to follow up with, though, is I had asked him very clearly whether he would just take the time to meet with those folks.

I think there's some real concerns about, you know, their voices being heard and some potentially, you know, some troubling allegations that are being made. And I think some of this could be resolved if he was to sit down with those folks and hear their

concerns in person. So I'm just asking, will he commit to do that here today?

Mr. Chairperson: Honourable Minister of Municipal Relations.

The honourable member from Municipal Relations?

Hon. Derek Johnson (Minister of Municipal Relations): It's on now. Yes.

Mr. Wiebe: Well, thank you very much. I appreciate the answer from the Minister of Municipal Relations, and I feel like we've got some good vibes going here.

So I'm going to continue my line of questioning for the Minister of Infrastructure. And, likewise, the Minister of Infrastructure knows, I had—we had spoken at length about the concerns of folks with regards to access to the north Perimeter, and I know members opposite have all seen and probably heard from many of those folks who have real concerns about access to their communities, to their businesses, and they're concerned about the future growth of their communities because of the minister's move on the north Perimeter without making the necessary investments that are required to ensure that those businesses and those homes and communities have proper access.

So, again, I mean, this, you know, this just seems to me like an opportunity, as the Minister for Municipal Relations just did, to say, you know, if the Minister of Infrastructure wants a one-word answer, we'd be happy with that. Just say yes to sitting down with the folks who have these concerns, talk about possible investments. I think there's some really good ones that, you know, folks have brought to my attention that certainly fit, I think, with the overall plan to enhance Route 101 and I think there are some opportunities there to make the north Perimeter safer and to make it more—adhere better to our trade corridor goals.

So we're all on the same page here, but sitting down with those folks and finding out how we can invest might be the best option. So will the minister commit to sitting down with those folks and just, I guess, informing them how he can be helpful and productive in making sure that their homes, their communities and their businesses are protected while also moving forward on enhancing an important trade corridor?

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Over a five-year period, there were 40 collisions on the north Perimeter, which resulted in nine of them having personal injuries. To be very clear, safety is

our government's No. 1 priority. That's why we commissioned, first of all, the south Perimeter safety review and then the south Perimeter functional study. Then we commissioned the North Perimeter Safety Review, and we are currently in the process of beginning the North Perimeter functional study.

These all cost a lot of money. We have spent tens of millions of dollars on the Perimeter Highway, but I'd like to point out that never before in the history of the province of Manitoba has a roadway ever been consulted on as much as the Perimeter. We recognize that the Perimeter Highway's going to become very important as we move towards Winnipeg one million. It is going to be a way to safely move traffic around so they don't have to drive through the city of Winnipeg, making it much safer.

We also recognize that the safer we make the Perimeter Highway with the bridges and the safety features we're doing, the less safe uncontrolled intersections become, and that's where we get the statistics that there were 40 collisions in five years, which nine resulted in personal injury.

* (16:40)

So I would suggest to the member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe) that we would probably be best to rely on—I would proudly say—internationally renowned traffic engineers within the department of Manitoba Infrastructure and traffic engineers in Manitoba as well as highway engineers out of Manitoba Infrastructure who have come to us and said that there are various intersections that had to be addressed very quickly. We are doing that.

I would point out to members of this committee and the Manitoba Legislature that the officials of Manitoba Infrastructure, the deputy minister and her staff as well as the minister, has made himself available. I've been in a lot of meetings. I've had a lot of private conversations. I've had a lot of phone conversations. I've been out on site speaking to individuals.

I know for the member for Concordia, he would have to get out of his little ivory tower here in this building and get out of his posh home wherever it is that he lives and maybe go and drive on the Perimeter Highway and speak to people, because that's certainly what the Department of Manitoba Infrastructure has done.

Again, never before in the history of Manitoba has there ever been any consultation to the extent that has been done on the Perimeter Highway. It is a

90-kilometre roadway that we want to move to free-way status. We understand that the last 20-some intersections are going to be the toughest 20. If they were the easy ones, they'd have been done 20 years ago.

And before some of the members on this committee were in the Chamber, I remember working with one Minister Steve Ashton, former minister of Manitoba Infrastructure. And we worked on all kinds of access points: Springfield, East St. Paul, West St. Paul. A lot of the easier ones were removed, and now we're down to the tough 20 intersections.

And I understand that people feel they're inconvenienced. We get that. We want to make sure that we make it as good as we can, as convenient as we can, but we also have to address the fact that within five years, we had 40 collisions on the north Perimeter, of which nine resulted in personal injury. So we also have an obligation to those nine different collisions where there were personal injuries that we ensure those don't happen again.

To somehow suggest that a—what we call the crossover or centre median openings, which we hope by this fall will all have been removed, they are frightfully dangerous, and they should have been removed years ago. We did the right thing. We did proper studies. We did consultations.

EngageMB has become an incredibly effective tool. Doesn't matter if you're on night shift or if you have to drive the kids to soccer, it still means that you can come home and you can go on EngageMB. And often, we extend it beyond the two to three weeks. We've gone as far as four weeks on some of these. We're consulting. We will continue to do so.

But, again, safety is always our government's No. 1 priority, and that's what we're going to do as we move the Perimeter Highway around the city of Winnipeg to freeway status to recognize that the city of Winnipeg is moving towards one million people. And Manitoba Infrastructure hopes to have the Perimeter freeway ready at that time for when Winnipeg hits a million people, and we hope that the freeway will then—that the Perimeter will then be a freeway-status highway.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): So I'd like to ask the Justice Minister: given the recent reports made of potential illegal purchasing of PC memberships—and, again, we don't know exactly how many those are, upwards of two, three, four thousand memberships that were illegally purchased and sold—I asked the

minister this previously, and so he's had a couple of days to think about this as the Attorney General (Mr. Friesen).

Will the minister commit to an independent oversight process for the PC Party leadership that is in addition to the Elections Manitoba? And I think that's—I'd like to hear what the minister has to say in respect of the illegal purchasing of PC memberships and whether or not he will, in fact, call an independent oversight process.

Mr. Friesen: The member is way off in left field. There's the supplementary information for legislative review that she could refer to.

The member—the critic knows the acts that are under the Department of Justice. The member also knows that Elections Manitoba is exactly that independent authority that has the mandate and role and responsibility for elections and leadership contests in Manitoba. It is exactly Elections Manitoba that is charged to undertake these functions.

So, I would suggest to the member that she should read the annual report for Elections Manitoba. She should discover more about the mandate of Elections Manitoba. The idea that the Attorney General (Mr. Friesen) would call for an investigation is absurd. There is an Elections Manitoba act, and it is the Commissioner of Elections who has the authority to oversee, the authority to investigate, the authority to prosecute offences, offences such as those that were necessary when the NDP were in power and there were breaches of The Elections Act.

And this opportunity is good because it recall—it causes me to recall a former minister of Health who was called on the carpet because she used the resources of her Health minister's office to undertake to hold an announcement in South Winnipeg at the birthing centre during an elections campaign. And it was exactly the independent authority called Elections Manitoba that received the complaint and then investigated the complaint and delivered a verdict and found that the minister had inappropriately used the resources of her minister's office in order to advance her own purposes during an elections campaign.

So this causes us to have faith and confidence in the commissioner of Elections Manitoba who undertakes these duties. I recall, when I was the former Finance minister, I had the opportunity to visit the offices of Elections Manitoba as one of those independent agencies. I went down there to learn more about their role and their mandate, and that's a really hard-

working crew over there with both a core employee base and then, of course, that ability to flex up to whatever size of operations they do require during elections, including this current undertaking that's underway.

So, again, we have that authority in Manitoba. It is the independent office called Elections Manitoba.

Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry): My question is for the Finance Minister.

I'm wondering if the Finance Minister can tell us why he's refusing to collect corporate tax on large multinational e-commerce companies like Amazon when small businesses who are obviously subject to the tax here in Manitoba are struggling to compete with them and don't currently have a level playing field under this minister?

Mr. Fielding: Well, thank you for the question.

We know the member opposite is an expert on taxes, knowing his track record when he was with the Winnipeg one school division of jacking up taxes all the time. So no surprise that he wants to speak to this.

What our government has tried to do with small business—in fact, we have—we invested close to about \$470 million to support businesses. A variety of measures that were in place to support these businesses during the pandemic. There's a variety of grant programs that we were involved in, one being the Bridge Grant program, where close to 15,000 businesses got some sort of support as it relates to that.

In fact, close to 38,000, or 33 per cent of all businesses, got some sort of support amongst that 470,000. But just to kind of review some of the supports that we put in place: things like the wage subsidy program. There's over 9,781 businesses that got that support. We think that's really important. The Canada emergency commercial rent: there was kind of a partnership with our—with the federal government. The federal government eventually took it over, but there was over 1,600 businesses that got support by Ottawa and the provincial government in respect to that.

* (16:50)

The gap—and that was a program where you got about \$6,000 of support. There was 9,856 different businesses that got the support program. And things like the Bridge Grant program—as I mentioned almost 15,000—to be exact, 14,908 businesses got that support; four payments upwards of \$22,000. The pandemic sick relief program, over 2,400 businesses got support; about 5,000 people altogether. So that

adds up to about the 38,000 people that are in equation.

The member talks about taxes as it relates to businesses. What we have done through the education property tax is we've got—we gave over 650,000 property owners in the province of Manitoba a 25 per cent reduction in their education property tax. We'll be doubling that next year towards 50 per cent. What we also did with the commercial business owners is they got a 10 per cent discount on their education property tax. So we think that makes a lot of sense to give some support to those businesses, specifically when they needed it.

We also did other items such as the payroll tax, the health and education payroll tax, we call it the payroll tax, where the moves that we have made just this year alone will benefit about 1,100 businesses and also about—I think it's about 240 from businesses won't be paying the job-killing business tax. So we've tried to make an effort to reduce taxes for small- and medium-sized businesses as much as we can.

The member had talked about the online streaming services and other things such as that. There is a working group in Ottawa that discusses the multinational tax, if that's what he's referring to. But we did make some moves in this budget to introduce, obviously, a tax system on some of these bigger players, I guess, you know, the online, you know, the Netflix, these types of businesses you'll have to start paying PST. Also things like local Airbnbs. They're competing versus the local hotels. They don't have to pay taxes so there wasn't really a level playing field. So that's why we made some tax changes.

We're very proud of the fact that a lot of our tax changes more, kind of, reflected, you know, supports for people in terms of the PST, education and property tax; increase in the basic personal exemption, too, is really important. And what that really helps is the low-income individuals, there was—I think there was upwards of 13,000 individuals that aren't actually having to pay tax at all anymore because of the increase in the basic personal exemption.

We did a whole bunch of other measures that all Manitobans will benefit from. So we're very proud of the tax environment we made. We're trying to make it more competitive and put a little bit more money in the pockets of Manitoba compared to the NDP that continued to jack up taxes year after year, after year, after year, after year, after year, after year, after year. And that's an issue not just for residents and citizens, but also for businesses. So we're trying to make a more

competitive tax environment and we think that some of the moves we made will do exactly that.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): So I could stand up here and ask questions of every minister about things that we've seen cut, particularly throughout northern Manitoba, but throughout Manitoba as a whole really and that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) talks about tax cuts and cheaper haircuts and things like that. But what he does as the Minister of Finance is sits down and decides no money for you, no money for you, no money for you—which the whole province then at the end of the day suffers from.

And we see that every day, even though the minister maybe doesn't see it where he lives; certainly, we in the North see it with hospitals that aren't hospitals anymore with northern patient transportation that really doesn't come close to meeting the needs for northern Manitoba to have any kind of equitable access to health care. But the minister's fine with that and the Minister of Health is fine with that and her predecessors were fine with that, that really, equality for Manitobans is not high up on this minister or this government's priority list.

So, like I say, everything deals with finances at the end of the day for this minister and this government. It's got nothing to do with people. We see things like labour issues where they continue to lay off civil servants and contract issues out to the lowest bidder.

I mean, if you took a drive through northern Manitoba you'd see—well, not even northern Manitoba, throughout Manitoba as a whole, you'd start to see a lot of really weird-looking lines on the highway because they've been painted by people that don't have the experience and knowledge to do those jobs always properly.

You'd see snow plows that have been either left sitting idle or sold off and things like that contracted out to different contractors because that's this government's mantra is to always supply the cheapest service possible, even if it's not as good a service—*[interjection]*

Well, the minister wants me to conclude, but I'm sure he'll take his full time to not answer any question that's asked anyway, so.

But I will ask the question. It's recently been found by the court that the minister—because he's responsible for labour—has interfered in negotiations yet again. So will the minister please tell hard-working Manitobans—particularly those in the civil

servant, universities and the rest of it—that he is prepared to quit interfering with collective bargaining, that he is prepared to honour the constitution, that he's prepared to let the parties actually sit down and negotiate in a free, collective manner like they are supposed to without the government continually interfering and imposing contracts on people or trying to impose contracts on people, trying to impose wage freezes and all the rest of it.

So will the minister take his five minutes to say he's sorry for the last six years of interference in collective bargaining processes and will he just get out of the way?

Mr. Fielding: Well, there's a lot to unpack there. I think there were some discussions on health-care funding; there were some discussions on taxation; some discussions on labour relations, so I'll maybe unpack those in those three orders.

In terms of health-care funding, of course, we're spending a lot more than the NDP ever did, of course. I think it's upwards of \$1.1 billion more in the health-care system than the previous government ever did.

We also know that we've dedicated lots of supports to really protect Manitobans in so many different ways during the pandemic. There is over \$666 million that were funded to things like the regional health authorities. There were \$220 million; things like specialized equipment during the pandemic, about \$11.9 million; additional funds for things like protective equipment, \$367 million; test and vaccines—you name it—and, in fact, in this budget, that was just in Public Accounts—in this budget, we've put away about \$1.2 million in expenditures, and that was, you know, to make sure that Manitobans are protected.

In terms of the taxation level, you know what? The member probably doesn't spend too much time, again, in his constituency anymore, but I would remind him that there is property owners that do live in Thompson, in Dauphin, in Swan River, in The Pas, and, you know, Churchill. And so when you reduce the education property taxes that benefits all Manitobans. In fact, there is 680,000 Manitobans that got a benefit; they got a cheque back from the government, and this is very much needed during the pandemic.

So, suffice it to say we're trying to make life more affordable for Manitobans. In fact, we've put together a 2020 tax rollback, you know, looked at a whole bunch of different tax measures. Most of them were

implemented by the NDP, which is unfortunate, but we're doing a lot of cleanup from them.

So that identifies that.

In terms of labour relations piece—look, you know, we're trying to strike a balance, obviously, between labour and business. We're not getting involved in any of those disputes. We certainly won't be making the mistake that the Leader of the Opposition does when he, you know, goes on picket lines and picks one side from the other. When you're government, you actually—responsibility to kind of take a balancing act between the two, whether it be Hydro workers, when the Leader of the Opposition broke the health rules and then walked in the picket lines. You know, I guess there's one set of rules for the Leader of the Opposition and one set of rules for the rest of Manitobans, which is really unfortunate.

I remember seeing this isn't just the public sector unions; I saw him walking the picket lines at Stella's when I was driving to work one day. So, you know, he doesn't just pick public sector unions; he picks, you know, the private sector unions as well, bidding, you know, business versus labour.

So, you've got to take a balancing act between that, and for too long the NDP, of course, didn't take a balancing act approach to it. We have taken a responsible approach to our finances and also supporting Manitobans.

* (17:00)

We have, you know, just recently gained some success with this. We—there's obviously agreement that has come in place with the nurses and the government. I believe it's a seven-year contract.

So we truly think that negotiations should happen at places like the bargaining table and taking, you know, approach where there's a balance between business and labour is the approach we would like to take. And that's the approach we have taken so far, as a government—what we're going to continue to do is—over the last two years of our term.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): My question is for Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage. It's about archives and storage capacity.

The government record centre in St. Boniface Industrial Park is nearing capacity. It has no specialized housing to accommodate the majority of archival records currently stored in the four walls at 200 Vaughan.

The GRC lease expires in January 2023. While we need to expand storage for future records, we also need to protect holdings already in the archive's custody.

My question is, is the minister planning to renew the lease with Landstar Development Corporation? If not, then has a new location been identified and has the work on expansion begun already?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): I thank the member opposite for that question.

You know, of course, archives are very important to us as a province, and I just wanted to provide some information with regard to that question.

With the archives, that is, that you have discussed, we are in discussions with Mark Olson, and I have personally had discussions with him with regard to the amount of space that is still available over on that site over in St. Boniface. It is important that we have that discussion early because Mr. Olson has indicated that space is limited, and because of the tobacco litigation that we're currently in, that has really utilized a lot of the space that we had available.

I did go out there and tour the site and it's phenomenal to see boxes from floor to ceiling in probably, I would say, an area that covers perhaps five acres. I mean, that's just a rough estimate but I'm not accurate with that number. But it is quite remarkable to see those boxes and how they have them all documented, you know.

So, very quickly they're able to determine what is situated or located in a certain aisle and—able to locate that information.

So yes, we are in discussions with that owner, to look at options; whether or not we will have to, in fact, increase capacity, add on to that facility. That is an option right now. You know, we're also, though, right now in the process of working together and we've also, you know—it's been approved by Treasury Board to change the archive system.

You know, when we inherited archives from the former government, I mean, to tell you the truth, that was an area that was ignored and so we recognize that we need to upgrade that system to ensure that we have the ability to access that information more rapidly, not only for government but for all Manitobans.

So with regard to that specific technology that we're looking at, so far it's \$400,000 that we're investing. There is more investments that is required

before we can actually have this new system up to speed. But we are prepared to do that because we recognize the importance of our archives and the importance of our heritage here in Manitoba.

Just this morning, as a matter of fact, I had the honour, really, of bringing greetings to the Manitoba Heritage Summit, the second annual heritage summit that was hosted here in Manitoba with our Archaeological Society and the museums and archives and, you know, really get to understand more about what they do.

And, you know, our government recognizes the importance of our heritage. We have invested over \$57 million in endowment funds to ensure that, you know, that our heritage, our rich traditions of the past are never forgotten for future generations. So to us that is important. You know, \$2 million for a military memorial endowment fund.

Just last Friday, as a matter of fact, I was able to visit a Legion in Selkirk, Manitoba, together with the Dufferin gang—family, and we were providing \$10,000, as a result of that military memorial fund, to this Legion specifically to allow them to establish a memorial that will be there to recognize all of those—excuse me—all of those 36 brave young men and women who went to war together, all from this one street on Dufferin Avenue in Selkirk, Manitoba. That was so heartwarming.

And at that very time, you know, one of the families that was there, the Gunter family, the wife of one of those soldiers was there, and she celebrated her 100th birthday in February of this year. So to have her there together with all of her—with her children, cousins and, you know, it was just heartwarming.

So, you know, by making these investments in heritage, it really makes a difference for families, for communities, for our province and for all of Canada. So, you know, I am not ashamed of what our Province has done. I mean, investing over \$57 million in endowment funds to support our heritage and those important communities to be able to tell their story—

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister's time is up.

MLA Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): This is a question for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Cox) regarding Mifegymiso.

How many health-care providers have been trained to provide Mifegymiso in each regional health authority?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I'd like to thank the member opposite for that question.

So Mifegymiso is something that's readily available across our province of Manitoba, and I'd like to recognize our former minister responsible for the Status of Women for introducing that and ensuring that that product is available to women across our province, because all women deserve safe access to Mifegymiso. It is one of the investments that our Province has made.

And I know that the member opposite wasn't in government at that time, so she doesn't have that knowledge, but, you know, the former government, the NDP government, did not, in fact—were not, in fact—they were in government, but they did not, in fact, approve the use of Mifegymiso.

Our government, I'm also proud to say that we were responsible for the establishment of the new Women's Hospital at the Health Sciences Centre, and I had the opportunity to tour that for the opening. That was a—that's a \$267-million investment. That's the largest investment under the health-care capital investment that we've ever had in health care in provincial history.

So I was very proud to be able to tour that with the Minister of Health and see the significant improvements that that facility has made for women. As a matter of fact, my new granddaughter was born there not too long ago, and, you know, just—even during—it was a COVID birth, but they said that the staff were absolutely remarkable. While we couldn't see the baby immediately, or, you know, within that time period that most grandparents are able to, they said that the care was just outstanding.

And so I would like to say thank you to all of the health-care providers who work not only at the Women's Hospital but right across our province, all of those front-line workers from the nurses, the physicians, the clinicians, all of the assistants who help in the health-care field, our paramedics, those front-line workers, those firefighters. Each and every one of them goes to work every day and does their very best to help our province and help those individuals who really need that help.

* (17:10)

And I would be remiss, as well, if I didn't mention all of those amazing women who work in our women's shelters and women's resource centres. You know,

each and every day they help our most vulnerable individuals. They help our most vulnerable families.

And especially during COVID, I know that it's been especially trying because women have not often been—*[interjection]* I will stop speaking if the member wants—has something to say? *[interjection]*

Mr. Chairperson: Order. Order. Order. *[interjection]*

Yes, you can—yes, the honourable member for Sport, Culture and Heritage.

Mrs. Cox: Yes, would you reset my time, then, back, so I—

Mr. Chairperson: No, not going back.

Mrs. Cox: Okay. Because I have a lot to say, and, you know, this is my opportunity, so.

So anyways, back to the women's shelters. You know, I'm very proud of the work that the women's shelters do. They go to work each and every day with their heart on their sleeves to ensure that every woman is provided the care and support that they need, and especially during COVID. We know it was difficult for them, so we ensured that those individuals had all of the supports; they were my priority from day one of the COVID pandemic.

We ensured that they had the supports that they needed, whether it be the PPE, whether it be the hand sanitizer, whether it be even rapid testing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We introduced rapid testing into those shelters, and I understand that one of our largest shelters, we were able to stop a potential outbreak of 60 cases because we got the rapid testing for these women very quickly—three women—and we were able to have them isolate within the shelter, basically protecting all of the other individuals and stopping that transmission, potentially, of 60 people. So that in itself, you know, speaks to, you know, the importance of our shelters and the importance of providing—

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister's time is up.

Ms. Danielle Adams (Thompson): When will this—my question is for the Minister of Families.

When will this government unfreeze the operating grants to child-care centres? Having the operating grants frozen to 2016 levels has resulted in centres being forced to fundraise to pay wages, rent and utilities. They need supports now. They cannot

wait for the federal government. When will this government step up and unfreeze the operating grants to child-care centres?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Families): I'm so happy to take a question on child care because our government believes in enhanced investments for child care and that every family in Manitoba deserves access to affordable child care. That is one of the reasons why we've invested significantly in child care since we've been in office and have been—in fact, \$25 million more than the NDP ever invested in child care. And that is why we've been enhancing the number of spaces available.

When we formed government, the NDP average was about 500 spaces a year that they were creating for child care, and we know that that pace was not keeping up with the demand. In fact, that's why they had to build a wait-list and have, you know, 18, 19 thousand people on their wait-list.

When we formed government, we knew that we needed to accelerate that pace, so currently our average is about 1,000 new spaces a year, but even so, that's not keeping up with the demand because we need to get all Manitobans working to restore the economy after this pandemic.

We also believe that fundamentally every family in Manitoba should have access to safe, affordable, accessible child care, and so that is why we negotiated with our partners, including the federal government, and are going to be moving aggressively on creating 23,000 new spaces in child care in the next five years.

Now, that's going to average—thank you—that's definitely something that Manitobans have been asking for for a very long time, something our government was incredibly pleased to move on and deliver on, and that will average about 5,000 new spaces of child care in the province of Manitoba.

So I know the NDP, they—their average was about 500 spaces a year; our average is going to be about 5,000 spaces a year. So we think our approach is better. We also think that the approach that we're taking, where parent fees are going to be—in fact, they are the second lowest in the country right now and they're going to be, on average, \$10 a day. We think that that is the right approach to go, because like I said, Manitobans deserve access to affordable child care. And so an average of \$10-a-day daycare—that's something that we're going to be able to deliver on, and ensuring that all kids can get access to the early-learning education.

I do just want to take a moment to thank everybody who works in the child-care sector. Throughout the pandemic, we know that it has been very, very 'uncertain,' and there have been, certainly, many challenges. But incredible child-care centres and incredible employees have done a great job keeping their centres open to all Manitobans.

And, in fact, just last week, along with the Minister of Justice (Mr. Friesen), we travelled up to Thompson, and I was very pleased to take some time to go visit two child-care centres, one that is located right in the University College of the North.

This is where they're training ECEs, and they've got a robust training program. I was really delighted to hear about that program. And they also have a very comprehensive child-care centre and dedicated staff and a really wonderful program that has expanded because of investments that our government has made.

And then another brand-new investment that we've made, in conjunction with the Manitoba Metis Federation to build a brand-new child-care centre, and I certainly hope the member for Thompson (Ms. Adams) will take an opportunity to go and visit this child-care centre that is located in her riding that was built with our government's investments, along with the Manitoba Metis Federation.

And we were able to work quickly to get it its licence so it can open doors, and I really want to thank the executive director who's in charge there, because she is—has been working on opening up a new centre as well as keeping kids safe in a time of pandemic and implementing protocols. And I think she's just done an absolute marvellous job, and really want to congratulate her for the good work.

And so, child care is something that this government believes in, and this is—that is something that this government is making investments in.

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas-Kameesak): Kinanâskomitin for this opportunity to ask this very important question.

As the Families critic for CFS—and especially as an Indigenous woman, a foster mother, someone who's totally known the trauma of apprehension—I'm worried about the provincial role when it comes to Bill C-92 when transfer of powers, if you will, are transferred to First Nations organizations such as OCN CFS. I know for a fact that we're supposed to have this in law—in place for October 2021 this month.

However, we've had a change of leadership, so I hope we don't lose our path towards that.

So if you can explain to me, because I'm quite worried about this transition: how—what is the Province's role in this transition and how long is it going to take to get everyone on board? For example, OCN, we're on board, but kind of a little stalled, but I've seen the plans. I've heard the plans. Something new, like consulting the youth in care—that was very new for OCN, and I'd like to see that continue. So can you help me understand that, please?

Ms. Squires: I'd like to thank my friend and the member from The Pas-Kameesak for that question, and her and I have talked quite at length and—about some of the challenges that have been existing in the child foster system for decades.

And the one—the words that I think often of whenever I am working on challenges that we're currently facing in the child-welfare system is the words of the Honourable Murray Sinclair when he was reflecting back to his own childhood.

And he had said—and reflecting on the legacy of residential schools—and what he had said at the time, in a 2018 Globe and Mail article, was that the beast that lives in residential schools has taken up a new home, and that home is the foster system. And then Senator Sinclair went on to say how, had the system that is in place today been in place when he was a child, he would have been apprehended undoubtedly.

And those are stark, stark realities of the system that has existed for decades in this province of Manitoba and, in fact, in this country in the establishment of a child-welfare system.

* (17:20)

And so I do commend the federal government for their legislation, Bill C-92, the act respecting First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth. And I do appreciate their intent to ensure that child apprehensions cease and—when there's no protection concerns. And I do appreciate their belief that Indigenous children should remain with Indigenous communities and Indigenous families and always to have that connection back to their Indigenous community.

And one of the initiatives that our government had taken—that had announced earlier this year was a Supported Guardianship Program with the general authority.

And the Supported Guardianship Program would ensure that where the family and the community was

in favour of a caregiver who had been looking after a child for longer than six months—particularly a family member or a community member of that child that was looking after that child—could apply for a supported guardianship over that child. And to—that would ensure that that child stays in his or her community, that that child stays in—amongst—has connections with family. And so that is something that is brand new, being piloted with the general authority, and I would certainly hope that the Northern Authority and the southern authority would look to this pilot and see success and replicate it.

And in terms of the C-92 rollout, I'm very eager to get back to the table. I know that my colleague in Ottawa, the minister presiding over this legislation of Indigenous affairs was unavailable to advance the initiatives that were brought forward on this legislation. I do believe that it has been a very slow process, but there's a lot of work to do.

The Province is committed to being at the table. The Province does believe in fundamentally a few things that need to go into consideration. The first is the integrated data management system. If there—if a child has moved around the province—and, of course, mobility is a factor for all of our families in all of our communities—there needs to be an information-sharing system between one authority and the other as would be established under the new legislation. We also believe in shared resources so that one authority could talk to the other if a child moves from one authority into another. And we also believe that there needs to be a co-ordinated intake.

And I use this quick example in the little bit time that we—that I have left. For example, if a paramedic or a teacher or another care provider identifies a protection issue, right now they have a co-ordinated intake call center to call in and to ensure that that protection issue is looked after. We believe strongly in a co-ordinated intake approach because if under C-92 we don't have that and every authority has its own intake, we can see how this would create layers and layers and layers of challenges.

And as the member had rightfully pointed out, the end goal here is to make sure that no child falls through the cracks, that protection issues are first and foremost, and regardless of where that child lives, that child should have an opportunity to receive protection, receive establishment and cultural connections and maintain connections with their family. That is what the Province is committed to—

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister's time is up.

Mr. Wasyliv: My question is for the Minister of Central Services.

I'm wondering if he could advise about the Indigenous procurement policy and why it expressly excludes construction contracts and why it's limited in its scope and doesn't apply to municipalities, boards, agency, Crowns and regional health authorities?

Hon. Reg Helwer (Minister of Central Services): I was pleased to meet with the Indigenous Chamber of commas–Commerce this morning and listen to some of their concerns and set forth some plans on how we could improve participation in Manitoba's economy with First Nations businesses. And there is a process that's been moving ahead with that. They had some suggestions that we have undertaken, and meetings with procurement are going ahead on—with them so that we can make sure that the opportunities are there for everybody in Manitoba.

They didn't bring up the construction side, and that is certainly something that we can discuss with them and how it can best be moved ahead. We do know that there are some challenges for First Nations businesses that are resident on-reserve, and many of the construction contracts and RFPs require bonding, and that does create a dilemma for them, and sometimes it also—they also specify equipment that they may not have. So that's one of the areas that we're looking into seeing how we can ensure that the RFPs are written so that they are more, I guess, open, if you want to look at it that way, that we take that into consideration.

The bonding side is something that we're going to have to work, probably with Finance and with the banks, to see how we can make that path a little bit better because obviously there's security required, and that's not always something that is available if the business is resident on a reserve, and if they move off reserve to operate a business, well, then they lose some of the benefits that they can have from operating a business on-reserve. So that's not fair either.

So there's lots of things that we're looking at there to ensure that they can be part of the process moving ahead. I mean, we have son—we have done some procurement with First Nations businesses. They were a big part of our early procurement for gowns that we needed for the health-care sector that we were able to

acquire through help from many First Nations businesses, and that was, you know, pretty neat to watch that happen, and it all came together.

I think at that point they were manufactured outside of Canada and brought in here by plane. I remember seeing the boxes in our then-current warehouse, that they were all available for the health-care sector. And that was a time where, you know, it was very challenging to bring PPE into Canada, to find availability, and, you know, these businesses certainly stepped forward and helped us with that regard, so I'm certainly indebted to them for being part of that process.

There's lots of other areas that we can investigate to make sure that those opportunities are there for First Nations businesses and individuals to be part of the procurement process, and, indeed, that's something that they spoke about that they have, I believe, an opportunity coming up next year where, you know, if we're allowed to meet in large groups, that they they will have—it's essentially an open forum for many other businesses, and we plan to be there to talk to them about how they can interact with government in a better way and find opportunities for the procurement or responding to RFPs, what we can do to help them understand that and certainly do a great deal of listening at that point because that's how we're going to change and create more opportunities for many, many people in the Manitoba environment. Certainly, they're a big part of our population, and we want to make sure that they participate in—healthily in the economy as well. So there's benefits on all sides for Manitoba.

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): I'm very glad to have an opportunity to ask another question of the Minister of Conservation.

In 2020-2021, her department issued nine warnings for violations of livestock manure and mortality managements regulations, and concerned rural residents have told me that only a fraction of sites are actually inspected annually. So I'd like to know if there were nine livestock manure violations in this past fiscal year, how many sites were actually inspected during that time period and what percentage of sites are inspected on an annual basis?

Hon. Sarah Guillemard (Minister of Conservation and Climate): Really, happy to have a question from the member again—I think this is a follow-up from what we were discussing yesterday at Estimates.

* (17:30)

And, as I had indicated yesterday, that we had had our staff redeployed to COVID efforts during the 2020-21 year and these sites are actually not often inspected, but they are tested regularly and the results are reported. So there is a regular inspection that does happen, but it's not for every single one of these manure wells.

And again, I'll detail that the wells themselves are sort of holes punched into the ground and they're meant to measure if there's any leakage of manure through the ground—through ground water—and that responsibility is up to each facility owner to test that and then submit reports on the results of those tests. And if it's warranted, there could be follow-up investigations if some of those levels have exceeded. But to date, there haven't been major concerns outside of weather conditions that are outside of the department's control.

So, when we discussed this there was a little bit of discrepancy in the numbers there and that was due to us not having the administrative FTEs available to input the data because they were working on the COVID efforts. So I'm happy to report that we do have a very good system for review of all of our facilities and it's a very effective reporting system that we have in place and that will continue well into the future.

Mr. Brar: My question is for Minister of Agriculture.

Manitoban producers were badly impacted by drought this year. I would like to ask the minister whether there has been any analysis done on financial impact of this drought on farmers, Manitoba economy and export markets.

Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development): Of course, being sworn in on July the 16th of this year, the Premier asked me to look into how we might be able to assist the drought-stricken farmers in Manitoba. Immediately after being sworn in, I reached out to the federal minister to reach out and say you've got to come to Manitoba, see what's happening, we know western Canada's in a crisis, and how could you help us.

She'd come the following Wednesday, and then within two weeks, we developed the ag recovery program that met the needs of our producers here in Manitoba in partnership with Saskatchewan and Alberta and the northern part of Ontario.

We approved on August the 10th, \$62 million to develop a feed assistance—feed transportation assistance program and a livestock transportation program.

That was matched by 60 per cent dollars which made \$155 million available for our farm families.

I have to say the uptake on that program has been tremendous. Once we did get it approved, within three weeks we were flowing money. Our service standard now that we're looking at is 14 days for payment for eligible applications. To date, we've flowed \$417,048, I'm pleased to say.

And in discussions with our producers, this program was developed by the Keystone Ag Producers, the Manitoba Beef Producers, municipalities across Manitoba, the AMM and of course some other commodity groups that have input into it, Manitoba forages and a number of others.

But when we talk about developing programs, really critically important that we understand that we've got to get it right, and we did that, I think, in good partnership. We've had to tweak a couple of things. One of them was that the Elk Producers had also reached out to be included in that, which we now have an application in for them to be included. The Beef Producers were also part of that, they were also very hard-hit—

Mr. Chairperson: Order.

The hour being 5:35—[interjection] Order.

The hour being 5:35, the 90 minutes allowed for the debate has lapsed. Therefore, I will put the question on the concurrence motion. Shall the motion pass? [Agreed]

This concludes the business before us.

Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

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

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Borderland (Mr. Guenter), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Concurrence Motion

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Families (Ms. Squires), that the House concur in the report of the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence in all Supply resolutions related to the Estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022.

Motion agreed to.

Supply Motions

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Families, that there be granted the authority to borrow for Supply purposes the sum of \$400 million for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2022.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Fielding: I move, seconded by the Minister of Families, that there be granted to Her Majesty for public service of the Province, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2022, out of the Consolidated Fund the sum of \$14,981,699,000, as set out in part A, Operating Expenditures, and \$793,370,000, as set out in part B, Capital Investment, and \$412,030,000, as set out in part C, Loans and Guarantees, and \$2,031,076,000, as set out in part D, Capital Investments by Other Reporting Entities of the Estimates.

Motion agreed to.

* (17:40)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 77—The Appropriation Act, 2021

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Relations (Mr. Johnson), that Bill 77, The Appropriation Act, 2021, be read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

Motion agreed to.

SECOND READINGS

(Continued)

Bill 77—The Appropriation Act, 2021

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Relations (Mr. Johnson), that Bill 77, The Appropriation Act, 2021, be now read a second time and be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Motion presented.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say A—aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Madam Speaker: All those against the motion, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

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

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

Order, please.

The question before the House is second reading of Bill 77, The Appropriation Act, 2021.

Division

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

Yeas

Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Gordon, Guenter, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliv, Wiebe.

* (17:50)

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 30, Nays 21.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly passed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS*(Continued)***Bill 78—The Loan Act, 2021**

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Families (Ms. Squires), that Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021, be now read a first time and be ordered for a second reading immediately.

Motion agreed to.

SECOND READINGS*(Continued)***Bill 78—The Loan Act, 2021**

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Families, that Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021, now be read a second time and be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Motion presented.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

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

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

The question before the House is second reading of Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021.

Division

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

Yeas

Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Gordon, Guenter, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliw, Wiebe.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 30, Nays 21.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly passed.

* * *

* (18:00)

Madam Speaker: The House will now resolve into Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Bill 77, The Appropriation Act, 2021; and Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021; and Bill 74, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021, for concurrence and third reading.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Mr. Chairperson (Doyle Piwniuk): The Committee of the Whole will come to order to consider Bill 77, The Appropriation Act, 2021; Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021; Bill 74, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021.

During this consideration of these bills, the enacting clause and the titles are postponed until other clauses have been considered in their appropriate, proper order.

Bill 77—The Appropriation Act, 2021

Mr. Chairperson: The first bill for our consideration is Bill 77, The Appropriation Act, 2021.

Will the—we will now begin with clause-by-clause considering of the bill.

Clause 1—pass; clause 2—pass; clause 3—pass; clause 4—pass; clause 5—pass; clause 6—pass; clause 7—pass; clause 8—pass; schedule—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

* (18:10)

Bill 78—The Loan Act, 2021

Mr. Chairperson: Now we'll—consideration of Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021. The next bill of our consideration is Bill 78.

We'll now begin with clause-by-clause consideration for the bill.

Clause 1—pass; clause 2—pass; clause 3—pass; clause 4—pass; clause 5—pass; clause 6—pass; schedule—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

Bill 74—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021

Mr. Chairperson: The next bill for our consideration is Bill 74, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021.

It's agreed that the Chair will call clauses in blocks that conform with—to the pages. Agreed? [*Agreed*]

Clauses 1 and 2—pass; clauses 3 through 5—pass; clauses 6 through 8—pass; clauses 9 and 10—pass; clauses 11 and 12—pass; clauses 13 and 14—pass; clause 15—pass; clauses 16 and 17—pass; clauses 18 and 19—pass; clauses 20 and 21—pass; clauses 22 and 23—pass; clauses 24 and 25—pass; clauses 26 through 28—pass; clause 29—pass; clauses 30 through 33—pass; clauses 34 and 35—pass; clauses 36 through 38—pass; clause 39—pass; clause 40—pass; clause 41—pass; clauses 42 through 44—pass; clauses 45 through 47—pass; clauses 48 through 51—pass; clause 52—pass; clauses 53 through 56—pass; clauses 57 through 62—pass; clause 63—pass; clauses 64 through 66—pass; clauses 67 through 69—pass; clause 70—pass; clause 71—pass; clause 72—pass; clause 73—pass; clauses 74 through 78—pass;

Before we continue with clause-by-clause consideration of this bill, I wanted to make members aware that clause 79 enacts that the investment Manitoba act contains—within the schedule. As per long-standing Manitoba practice, we postpone consideration of the enacting clauses until the rest of the bill has been considered. Therefore, we are going to temporarily skip clause 79 and return to it later.

Clauses 80 and 81—pass; clause 82—pass.

We are now considering the investment Manitoba act contained within the schedule—we will now

consider The Invest Manitoba Act contained within the schedule.

Clauses 1 and 2—pass; clause 3—pass; clause 4—pass; clauses 5 through 7—pass; clauses 8 and 9—pass; clauses 10 and 11—pass; clauses 12 and 13—pass; clauses 14 through 18—pass; clauses 19 through 21—pass; clauses 22 through 24—pass; clauses 25 through 27—pass; clauses 28 and 29—pass; enacting clause contained within clause 79—pass; title contained in the schedule—pass; enacting clause of Bill 74—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

That concludes business before the committee today.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered the following bills: Bill 77, The Appropriation Act, 2021; Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021; Bill 74, the budget 'impementation' and tax statute amendment act, 2021; and the reports are—the same without amendments.

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

Motion agreed to.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 78—The Loan Act, 2021

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Families (Ms. Squires), that Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

* (18:20)

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): A recorded vote, please.

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

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 78, The Loan Act, 2021.

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

Yeas

Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Gordon, Guenter, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliw, Wiebe.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 31, Nays 21.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly passed.

Bill 77—The Appropriation Act, 2021

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Families (Ms. Squires) that Bill 77, the appropriation act, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Fielding: I move, seconded by the Minister of Families that the bill—[interjection]

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

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

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

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

For the clarity of the House, we are considering right now the vote on Bill 77, the appropriation act.

So the question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 77, The Appropriation Act, 2021.

Division

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

Yeas

Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Gordon, Guenter, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliw, Wiebe.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 31, Nays 21.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly passed.

**Bill 74—The Budget Implementation
and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021**

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Families (Ms. Squires), that the Bill 74, the budget implementation and tax statutes amendment act, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

* (18:40)

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance, seconded by the honourable Minister of Families, that Bill 74, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

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

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

* (19:40)

Order. Order. *[interjection]* Order.

The one hour provided for the ringing of the division bells has expired.

I am therefore directing that the division bells be turned off and the House proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of the budget implementation and tax statutes amendment act.

Division

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

Yeas

Cox, Cullen, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Gordon, Guenter, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Adams, Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino, Moses, Naylor, Sala, Sandhu, Smith (Point Douglas), Wasyliv, Wiebe.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 32, Nays 21.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly passed.

**Bill 72—The Disability Support Act and
Amendments to The Manitoba Assistance Act**

Madam Speaker: We will now consider concurrence and third reading of Bill 72, The Disability Support Act and Amendments to The Manitoba Assistance Act.

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Families): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Friesen), that the Bill 72, The Disability Support Act and Amendments to The Manitoba Assistance Act, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: I wonder if at this time we could have another round of applause for our pages. They are very new, and they did a great job.

This concludes the business before the House. We shall now prepare for the royal assent ceremony.

* (19:50)

ROYAL ASSENT

Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Cam Steel): His Honour the Administrator.

His Honour Richard Chartier, Administrator of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the throne, Madam Speaker addressed His Honour the Administrator in the following words:

Madam Speaker: Your Honour:

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba asks your honour to accept the following bills:

Clerk Assistant (Ms. Monique Grenier):

Bill 77 – The Appropriation Act, 2021; Loi de 2021 portant affectation de crédits

Bill 78 – The Loan Act, 2021; Loi d'emprunt de 2021

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): In Her Majesty's name, the Administrator thanks the Legislative Assembly and assents to these bills.

Madam Speaker: Your Honour:

At this sitting, the Legislative Assembly has passed certain bills that I ask Your Honour to give assent to:

Clerk Assistant (Ms. Monique Grenier):

Bill 72 – The Disability Support Act and Amendments to The Manitoba Assistance Act; Loi sur le soutien pour personne handicapée et modifiant la Loi sur les allocations d'aide du Manitoba

Bill 74 – The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2021; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2021 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité

Bill 232 – The Emancipation Day Act; Loi sur le Jour de l'émancipation

Clerk: In Her Majesty's name, His Honour assents to these bills.

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

God Save the Queen was played.

O Canada was played.

Madam Speaker: Just before we rise, I would once again remind members, if they have not already done so, to please remove the contents of your desks before you leave the Chamber.

And the hour being past 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until the call of the Speaker.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, October 14, 2021

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The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings

are also available on the Internet at the following address:

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