

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

Official Report
(Hansard)

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Daryl Reid
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, July 18, 2013

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PETITIONS

St. Ambroise Beach Provincial Park

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

The St. Ambroise provincial park was hard hit by the 2011 flood, resulting in the park's ongoing closure and loss of local access to Lake Manitoba, as well as untold harm to the ecosystem and wildlife in the region.

The park's closure is having a negative impact in many areas, including disruptions to local tourism, hunting and fishing operations, diminished economic and employment opportunities and potential loss of the local store and decrease in property values.

Local residents and visitors alike want St. Ambroise provincial park to be reopened as soon as possible.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the appropriate ministers of the provincial government consider repairing St. Ambroise provincial park and its access points to their pre-flood conditions so the park can be reopened for the 2013 season or earlier if possible.

This petition's signed by K. Blight, K. Buchanan, C. Smith and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with our rule 132(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to have been received by the House.

**Reopen Beausejour's Employment
Manitoba Office**

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The RM of Brokenhead and the town of Beausejour are growing centres with a combined population of over 8,000.

(2) Employment Manitoba offices provide crucial career counselling, job search and training opportunities for local residents looking to advance their education.

(3) The recent closure of Employment Manitoba's Beausejour office will have negative consequences for the area's population who want to upgrade their skills and employment opportunities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to reopen Beausejour's Employment Manitoba offices.

This petition is signed by K. Szatkowski, V. Castcott, M. Vermette and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Applied Behaviour Analysis Services

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

The provincial government did not allow its own policy statement—did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

School learning services has its first ever waiting list which started with two children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 20 children by September 2013. Therefore, these children will go through the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

The provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children have been

diagnosed with autism which still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that would allow them access to the same educational opportunities as any other Manitoban.

Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or limited—or eliminated from eligibility for ABA services if their need still exists.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Education consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting list for ABA school-age services and fund ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

This petition's signed by J. Jones, W. Dueck, T. Stewart and so many more concerned Manitobans.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

The preschool waiting list for ABA services has reached its highest level ever with at least 56 children waiting for services. That number is expected to exceed 70 children by September 2013 despite commitments to reduce the waiting list and provide timely access to services.

The provincial government policy of eliminating ABA services in schools by grade 5 has caused many children in Manitoba to age out of the window for this very effective ABA treatment because of a lack of access. Many more children are expected to age out because of a lack of available treatment spaces.

Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or age out of eligibility for ABA services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Family Services and Labour consider making funding available to address the current waiting list for ABA services

And this petition is signed by M. LaPage, M. LaPage, C. Friedman and many more fine Manitobans.

Provincial Sales Tax Increase—Referendum

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

The provincial government promised not to raise taxes in the last election.

Through Bill 20, the provincial government wants to increase the retail sales tax, known as the PST, by one point without the legally required referendum.

An increase to the PST is excessive taxation that will harm Manitoba families.

Bill 20 strips Manitobans of their democratic right to determine when major tax increases are necessary.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to not raise the PST without holding a provincial referendum.

And this is signed by P. Yarmey, J. Yarmey, J. Young and many others, Mr. Speaker.

Applied Behaviour Analysis Services

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

School learning services has its first ever waiting list which started with two children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 20 children by September 2013. Therefore, these

children will go through the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

The provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children will have been diagnosed with autism which still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that will allow them access to the same educational opportunities as any other Manitoban.

Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or eliminated from eligibility for ABA services if their need still exists.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

* (13:40)

To request that the Minister of Education consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting list for ABA school-age services and fund ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

This petition is signed by E. Jazbec, E. Persowich, G. O'Staff-Harris and many other fine Manitobans.

Provincial Sales Tax Increase—Referendum

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The provincial government promised not to raise taxes in the last election.

(2) Through Bill 20, the provincial government wants to increase the retail sales tax, known as the PST, by one point without the legally required referendum.

(3) An increase to the PST is excessive taxation that will harm Manitoba families.

(4) Bill 20 strips Manitobans of their democratic right to determine when major tax increases are necessary.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to not raise the PST without holding a provincial referendum.

This petition is submitted on behalf of E. Hubbard, T. Couch, H. Fraser and many other fine Manitobans.

Applied Behaviour Analysis Services

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behaviour analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

(3) The preschool waiting list for ABA services has reached its highest level ever with at least 56 children waiting for services. That number is expected to exceed 70 children by September 2013 despite commitments to reduce the waiting list and provide timely access to services.

(4) The provincial government policy of eliminating ABA services in schools by grade 5 has caused many children in Manitoba to age out of the window for this every effective ABA treatment because of a lack of access. Many more children are expected to age out because of a lack of available treatment spaces.

(5) Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or age out of eligibility for ABA services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Family Services and Labour consider making funding available to address the current lists—waiting lists for ABA services.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by E. Walker, R. Cosens, D. Hasiuk and many, many other Manitobans.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background for this petition is as follows:

The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

School learning services has its first ever waiting list which started with two children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 20 children by September 2013. Therefore, these children will go through the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

The provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children have been diagnosed with autism which is—still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that will allow them to access—will allow them access to the same educational opportunities as any other Manitoban.

Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or eliminated from eligibility for ABA services if their need still exists.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Education consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting list for ABA school-age services and fund ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

This petition is signed by K. McRae, M. McRae, D. McRae and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

(3) The preschool waiting list for ABA services has reached its highest level ever with at least 56 children waiting for services. That number is expected to exceed 70 children by September 2013 despite commitments to reduce the waiting list and provide timely access to services.

(4) The provincial government policy of eliminating ABA services in schools by grade 5 has caused many children in Manitoba to age out of the window for this very effective ABA treatment because of a lack of access. Many more children are expected to age out because of a lack of available treatment spaces.

And (5) Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or age out of eligibility for ABA services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Family Services and Labour consider making funding available to address the current waiting list for ABA services.

And this petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by J. Buffie, K. Olford, H. Neufeld and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

(3) The preschool waiting list for ABA services has reached its highest level ever with at least 56 children waiting for services. That number is expected to exceed 70 children by September 2013 despite commitments to reduce the waiting list and provide timely access to services.

(4) The provincial government policy of eliminating ABA services in schools by grade 5 has caused many children in Manitoba to age out of the window for this very effective ABA treatment because of a lack of access. Many more children are expected to age out because of a lack of available treatment spaces.

* (13:50)

(4) Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or age out of eligibility for ABA services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Family Services and Labour consider making funding available to address the current waiting list for ABA services.

Signed by D. L'Heureux, N. Dubois, L. Bradbury and many other Manitobans.

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

(3) School learning services has its first ever waiting list which started with two children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 20 children by September 2013. Therefore, these children will go through the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

(4) The provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children have been diagnosed with autism which still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that will allow them access to the same educational opportunities as any other Manitoban.

(5) Waiting lists and denials of a treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or eliminated from eligibility for ABA services if their need still exists.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Education consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting lists for ABA school-age services and fund ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

This is signed by P. Vander Hout, N. Tetu, D. Mills and many, many other Manitobans.

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

(3) The preschool waiting list for ABA services has reached its level—its highest level ever with at least 56 children waiting for services. That number is expected to exceed 70 children by September of 2013 despite commitments to reduce the waiting list and providely—provide timely access to services.

(4) The provincial government policy of eliminating ABA services in schools by grade 5 has caused many children in Manitoba to age out of the window for this very effective ABA treatment because of lack of access. Many more children are expected to age out because of lack of available treatment spaces.

(5) Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or age out of eligibility for ABA services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Family Services and Labour consider making funding available to address the current waiting list for ABA services.

This petition is signed by H. Bage, G. Link, S. Knazan and many more fine Manitobans.

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

(3) School learning services has its first ever waiting list which started with two children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 20 children by September 2013. Therefore, these children will go through the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

(4) The provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children have been diagnosed with autism which still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that will allow them access to the same educational opportunities as any other Manitoban.

(5) Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or eliminated from eligibility for ABA services if their need still exists.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Education consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting lists for ABA school-age services and fund ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

And this petition is signed by D. Reimer, B. Reimer and M. Pelland and many, many others.

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

(3) The preschool waiting list for ABA services has reached its highest level ever with at least 56 children waiting for services. That number is expected to exceed 70 children by September 2013 despite commitments to reduce the waiting list and provide timely access to services.

(4) The provincial government's policy of eliminating ABA services in schools by grade 5 has caused many children in Manitoba to age out of the window for this very effective ABA treatment because of a lack of access. Many more children are expected to age out because of a lack of available treatment spaces.

(5) Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or age out of eligibility for ABA services.

*(14:00)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Family Services and Labour consider making funding available to address the current waiting list for ABA services.

And this petition is signed by B. Banman, A. Belot, G. Belot and many, many more fine Manitobans.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Finance): I am pleased to table the Actuarial Valuation Report as of December 31st, 2012, for the Civil Service Superannuation Fund.

Mr. Speaker: Any further tabling of reports?

Ministerial statements? Seeing none—

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to our public gallery where we have with us today representatives of the WAVE Interlake Artists' Studio Tour, including Sandy Driscoll, Alan Lacovetsky, Kate Ferris, Fred Casey, who are the guests of the honourable Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade (Mr. Bjornson).

And also in the public gallery, we have with us today members of the Northwood Community Centre board Allen Froese, George Vanderlip, Cyndi Rankin and Kali Kaminsky, who are the guests of the honourable member for Burrows (Ms. Wight).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Manitoba Hydro Bipole III East/West Route Costs

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, we'll try the Premier on an integrity quiz one more time here and see if he can do a little better today, Mr. Speaker. These are pretty straightforward questions and I hope that he can give these an honest shot.

Let's start with the—this one: bipole west costs (a) more than bipole east, (b) the same as bipole east or (c) less than bipole east?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the biggest cost and risk to Manitobans is the Leader of the Opposition's agenda not to build hydro.

The last time he was in office in 1997 the two bipoles in the Interlake melted down for a brief period of time and Manitoba Hydro recommended a new transmission line to provide greater reliability for the Manitoba economy. It's a \$62-billion economy. A one-week shot down—shutdown would cost over an a billion and a half dollars.

Not building bipole is the big mistake. Not building hydro is the big mistake just like it was in the '90s. It's a big mistake today as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pallister: Okay, well, one wrong on that, Mr. Speaker.

On page 19 of the report that was prepared to study—the Bipole III transmission routing study—it

was given to this Premier when he was in charge of Hydro in 2007—it says, and I quote: A west-side routing will cost significantly more and will affect the provincial debt and the ability of Manitoba Hydro to pay a future dividend. So I'd submit, we're interested in building a Manitoba Hydro that's profitable for Manitobans.

But it begs question No. 2, Mr. Speaker, which is a simple one for the Premier. Apparently he doesn't know about a billion.

So I'm going to ask him: How many million are in a billion? (a) It doesn't matter, it's not my money anyway; (b) none, a million's actually bigger than a billion; or (c) a thousand. Which is the correct answer on that one?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the grid question from the Leader of the Opposition skips over the fact that he was on the public record within the last several months saying stop building Manitoba Hydro. He was on the record saying we should not build Manitoba Hydro for export purposes.

They said the same thing in the '90s with respect to Limestone. Limestone cost \$1.4 billion. It has returned over \$8 billion in profits to the people of Manitoba.

The result is, Mr. Speaker, our relate—rates are the lowest in North America and we're employing Manitobans and attracting jobs to Manitoba.

His approach takes us back to the '90s, a period of no growth, high unemployment and people leaving the province of Manitoba.

Manitoba Hydro Ownership

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, as opposed to the Premier, I actually have experience building things, Mr. Speaker, and creating jobs.

So he seems to believe that—he seems to adhere to the mistaken belief, Mr. Speaker, that simply repetitively putting inaccurate information on the record somehow makes people believe it's true. Well, that's just simply propaganda.

So I'll ask him this question, and it's pretty straightforward and, I think, appropriate: Who actually owns Manitoba Hydro anyway? Is it (a) the NDP caucus, (b) International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers or (c) Manitobans? Which one?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Hydro will remain owned by the people of Manitoba unless the Conservatives become the government, in which case they will privatize it, just like they did with the telephone system. They swore on a stack of Bibles they would not privatize the telephone system. They privatized it. All the profits go outside of Manitoba, and the rates are among the highest in the country. Only one government will protect Manitoba Hydro; that's the government on this side of the House.

And we will also protect the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. In the last election, candidates for the Conservative Party said they would privatize the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. We won't. We won't privatize Hydro as well.

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

Taxation Future Increases

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): The old bogeyman's loose pretty early this time round, Mr. Speaker. The reality is, of course, nothing gives civil servants more scary moments than poor management. And there's nothing worse than poor managers trying to intimidate labour. And that's exactly what that Premier's doing. He should be ashamed of himself.

The reality is—and I'll ask the Premier if he can get this one right. He got—I'll give him a third of a mark for referencing Manitobans in his answer last time.

When the spendDP increases taxes—as they are proposing to do again this year, at a record level and illegally, Mr. Speaker—when they raise those taxes, is it (a) harder for Manitobans; do Manitobans have to work harder, (b) do Manitobans have to work longer, or (c) do they have to work somewhere else or (d) is it all of the above?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, this is the leader that came into the House, came into the public and said, let's make \$550 million of cuts. He wanted to lay off teachers. He wants to lay off corrections workers. He wants to lay off nurses.

Mr. Speaker, we have the second lowest unemployment rate in the country—second lowest unemployment rate in the country. The

overwhelming number of jobs are being created in the private sector.

When we're in government, Manitobans are working. When they're in government, Manitobans are unemployed.

PST Increase Government Intention

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): The government likes working people because they like to see them work harder, Mr. Speaker. The right answer was all of the above on that previous one.

Now, when the Premier promised not to raise the PST, was it okay because his fingers were crossed behind his back, (a), (b) what's one more broken promise from the NDP or (c) does he actually believe—does he actually believe—that he can spend Manitobans' money better than they can spend it?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we saw the economic slowdown across the country. We saw the bill come in for the flood of 2011, another billion dollars required to be spend in—spent in the province of Manitoba. We know that Manitobans' top priority is to keep people safe. We will build flood protection for the people of Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin and Brandon and the Assiniboine valley.

The members opposite want to cut hundreds of jobs. They want to put no resources in place to protect Manitobans from flooding.

The difference is very clear, Mr. Speaker, on the vision for the future of the province. We will keep Manitobans safe. We will keep them employed. We will keep them educated. The members opposite will put them onto the unemployment rolls. They will shut them out of schools, and they will not look after the elderly. That's a very profound difference.

* (14:10)

Manitoba Hydro Government Intention

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): And it isn't even Halloween yet, Mr. Speaker. The reality is the bogeyman strategy's getting older every day, and Manitobans are on to this Premier. He's just trying to frighten them. He's trying to frighten civil servants with brochures paid for by Manitoba tax dollars, trying to frighten seniors with advertisements paid for by their tax dollars. He

relies on fear because fear is a product of his fear, and that fear doesn't need to be contagious. Manitoba civil servants deserve better treatment and Manitoba seniors deserve better treatment, and even the IBEW knows that.

So give him a chance to get one right here, give him the answer: all of the above.

IBEW, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers—solidarity—ran these ads and said (a) the government is increasing hydro rates, (b) the government is illegally raising the PST, (c) the government is running Hydro into the ground and driving it to privatization or (d) all of the above.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition held a press conference and he said we need to make across-the-board cuts in all the services of Manitoba. He said we needed to have a chill in the public service in Manitoba. He see—the said the public services need tough love in Manitoba. That wasn't just what he did in the '90s; that's what he promised for the future of Manitoba.

At a time of economic uncertainty, at a time when we need to keep growing the economy, at a time when we need to keep educating Manitobans to take the jobs that are available in a growing economy and at a time when we need to build Manitoba Hydro, the leader wants to stop Manitoba Hydro, lay people off and put public services at risk. That is not fear mongering. That's recording what the Leader of the Opposition put on the public record as his solution to today's problems. That's not acceptable, Mr. Speaker.

Manitoba Hydro Privatization

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, NDP insiders are running an ad currently that says, and I quote: During the last provincial election, the NDP promised not to raise the PST. It also promised Manitobans and the IBEW not to privatize Manitoba Hydro. It broke its promise and raised the PST. What makes the promise of not privatizing Manitoba Hydro any more credible? Let's be clear. The NDP lied about the PST. The NDP lied about the plan to privatize Manitoba Hydro.

Will the minister responsible tell the truth, which his Premier can't do, and tell us what his plans are to privatize Manitoba Hydro?

Mr. Speaker: I want to caution the honourable member for St. Paul in his choice of words here

during the questions. When we're talking about members telling the truth in the Chamber, I'm pretty sure he knows that that language has been considered for a long time to be unparliamentary, so I'm going to caution him at this point to pick and choose his words very carefully. I'm just mentioning that as a request, and, in fact, to all members of the Assembly, please.

And also, while I'm on my feet, I notice that the volume is starting to rise a little bit. Seems to be common on Thursdays. So I want to caution all honourable members to make sure that we keep ourselves under control. And for those members that wish to have a private conversation, may I offer the loge to my right or to the left or perhaps other meeting rooms in the building.

Now, the honourable Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines has the floor.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Hydro Act): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the word liar is not often used in this House and probably shouldn't be. You know, the only time the word ever entered the vocabulary of this Chamber was when the Chief Justice Monnin laid down a report and said he'd never seen so many liars in his life as in the Conservative Party of Manitoba, a party that the Leader of the Opposition was a Cabinet member in, was a prominent member in, defended and was part of the cabal that blocked the Hydro building—blocked Hydro Conawapa building, and when they got a report in '97 that said they should build another bipole to deal with reliability in Manitoba, refused to do that.

And we have been charged with the task, and we will, of building that bipole to provide reliability to all Manitobans—

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

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, and this is question 5, and I'll give the member one more opportunity to answer the question, which he hasn't done. He's avoiding answering the question.

Insiders in the NDP are running an ad which says diminished services and increased electrical rates all contribute to making Manitoba Hydro ripe for privatization. Is this the NDP promise that you supported? Is this what you voted for? Mr. Speaker, what they're saying is the NDP lied about the PST. They say the NDP lied about their plan to privatize Manitoba Hydro.

The question is: Will the minister now come clean and tell all Manitobans what his hidden agenda is? That is, to privatize Manitoba Hydro. This is now question No. 5. Why doesn't he answer it?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, we in Manitoba are blessed with the lowest hydroelectricity rates in the country. We in Manitoba have the opportunity of providing 2,500 megawatts of clean power to a world and a continent that requires clean power. Alberta needs 12,000 megawatts of power. Saskatchewan needs several thousand megawatts of power. Ontario needs several thousand megawatts of power. Minnesota needs several thousand megawatts of power. We have the opportunity to produce it in Manitoba and provide 44,000 years of work to northern and other Manitobans to provide prosperity to Manitobans.

Finally, we will not sell Hydro. That's what that last election was about. That's why we won more seats than them.

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, several years ago CUPE communications director Liam Martin sent out a press release saying CUPE, CEP, IBEW, along with the support of International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers and the Telecommunications Employees Association of Manitoba have launched a billboard campaign across Winnipeg urging voters to challenge the main political parties to state their position on the privatization of Manitoba Hydro.

Now Liam Martin has found out the NDP lied about the PST. The NDP lied about their plan to privatize Manitoba Hydro, and what we are hearing here is a hidden agenda. Even NDP insiders now have found out that it is the plan of the NDP to sell off Manitoba Hydro. We built Manitoba Hydro as a—

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

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I didn't catch the question, but if the member wants to talk about privatization of Crown corporations, let's look at the record.

In the 1990s when the Leader of the Opposition was part of the secret Tory Cabinet that decided before the '95 election to privatize Hydro—and I've talked to people that knew that—they said they wouldn't privatize the telephone system and they did. Their profits go out of the province. The rates are the—one of the highest in the country.

Let's look at the contrast. In Manitoba in the last election we promised, as opposed to members opposite, not to privatize Hydro. The profits stay here. The clean energy stays here. We develop jobs here, and we have the lowest rates here. Why in God's world would we privatize a corporation that provides those benefits, Mr. Speaker?

And, you know, if they want to argue about privatization, let's—

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

Flooding (2011) Housing for Evacuees

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Yesterday the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs stated, and I quote, two years is totally unacceptable for over 2,000 people that are still out of their homes.

We on this side of the House have been asking time and time again for action by this government. For the record, we have asked over 170 flood questions alone.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs why he's not listening to the questions, knowing from us that the people have been asking them to get back in their homes once again.

Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs): Well, I thank the member for the question, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, the federal government, the First Nations in question and ourselves have been in regular contact. A lot of work has gone into ensuring that the people will go back to a comfortable and safe housing situation. It's taken a little longer than all of us had hoped.

An Honourable Member: Two years.

Mr. Robinson: Yes, two years is a long time, I absolutely agree. And—but let me explain, Mr. Speaker, when—and I will go with the individual communities and what progress we are making with them.

Pinaymootang, we are making good progress with them. Dauphin River, we're making good progress with them as well. Lake St. Martin have just gone through their land selection, and Little Saskatchewan, at the same time, has picked the land that they own, one of the eight parcels of land that they own within the RM of Grahamdale.

This is not simply placing people and putting them on a piece of land and—

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

* (14:20)

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. Two years, 2,000 people homeless, over 170 questions later, it is this minister who is responsible for assuring families are returning to their homes in a timely manner.

Now with families being forced out once again to move out of Misty Lake Lodge unless this dispute gets settled, Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister again: Do you think two years is unacceptable like we on this side—is hollow words, no action, no leadership, no respect from this NDP government that flooded them out in the first place?

Mr. Robinson: Well, I'll do one better than that, Mr. Speaker. I'll offer the member a briefing from our departmental officials.

We have several departments that are working together to deal with the federal government and the First Nations, and I commend the leadership of the First Nations communities. They have been very patient, but they want to get it done right. There's a lot of issues that are outstanding, including the land transfer which requires the federal government to designate it as reserve status.

And if the member would listen, you would learn more.

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, we'll listen to the families that's been evicted by this government for the intentional flood that flooded them out in 2011.

Obviously, the minister cannot get it right. Two years, 2,000 people still homeless and over 170 questions later is totally unacceptable. Because of the mismanagement of the flood of 2011 that caused these families out of their homes in the first place, they should not have—they should have been a priority for this government, to get them back settled into their own homes.

I ask the First Minister, the member from St. Boniface: Does he agree with us that two years is unacceptable? Where is the First Minister's leadership? There just isn't any. In the meantime, families have nowhere to turn. What are they going to do next?

Mr. Robinson: You know, Mr. Speaker, I've been trying my best to try and explain the circumstance. I've even offered a briefing now to the member.

Two years is a long time. This is the first time that questions have been asked directly related to the four communities, the four First Nations communities. So that does give me hope, after all, that the members opposite do care about Aboriginal people in the province of Manitoba.

The federal government has to be commended. The four First Nations have done a tremendous amount of work in ensuring that their people are put in a safe environment, including the education considerations that the children require.

And we are working towards that end, and it may be taking a little bit of time, but we're trying to get it right, unlike members who would place them probably in a bush.

Sexual Abuse Case Concern Government Knowledge

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain): And, you know, in the gallery yesterday we saw some very angry and very unsatisfied Manitobans who feel this government is taking way too long to get them back into their homes.

The Minister of Family Services has informed the House on several occasions that she has learned of a—of serious incidents of sexual abuse on Sunday evening. We have asked questions several times about who knew what when, and the minister has dodged questions and attempted to cover up the results of yet another CFS scandal. It is clear that many children—that many within the child and family welfare system knew.

Why is the minister attempting to skirt her responsibility to protect children? Why weren't the red flags raised to her within the system?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Family Services and Labour): Sexual abuse of children is a devastating tragedy in our community, and it's something that I have certainly had the experience of working with the victims of child sexual abuse, adult victims, at a time when people weren't even talking about it, at a time when those folks stepped forward courageously to talk about the issue in rural communities where there was nobody who wanted to talk about that. So I understand the gravity of the situation.

That's why when there were allegations brought to my attention that an agency—allegations that an agency hadn't taken its responsibility seriously to deal with complaints of sexual abuse, I asked for an investigation, which is ongoing with the southern authority and the agency. We want to know what happened here. We want to know if there's truth to those allegations so we can make sure that we take the action that will ensure that children—

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

Mrs. Rowat: These allegations were before the courts for well over a year. If she really cared about how this family was dealing with the serious sexual abuse situation, she should have known about it, her staff should have known about it, they should have dealt with it.

If the minister continues to toe the line that she and no one in her department have knowledge of this case, I think it's clear that there are massive problems within her department that the minister is not capable of addressing. We know that local CFS agencies in this case were reluctant, even at senior levels, to address the serious allegations.

The minister has been carrying on about ongoing investigation. I'd like to know what processes and protocols were not followed in this case and who in her department knew about these failures in this latest CFS scandal. Simple question.

Ms. Howard: I understand the concern of the member opposite, and what we're going to do is we're going to do an investigation that finds out the answers to those questions.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, what she is talking about are allegations. We're not talking about the allegations of sexual abuse; we're talking about the allegations that an agency knew that there were complaints of sexual abuse and didn't do anything. Those allegations came to light and came to my attention on Sunday. I have asked for an investigation with the southern authority to determine if there is truth to those allegations and then, if there is truth, to determine what needs to be done with the agency involved to make sure that they know their obligations—the obligations are clear in the law—and that they are acting.

That is the action that we have taken. We are awaiting the response of that investigation so that we can make sure that the strategies—

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

Mrs. Rowat: Mr. Speaker, this situation was reported as a scandal and that is what it is. It's another NDP scandal laden with cover-ups.

This minister is legislated to protect the children. She is failing to carry out that responsibility. Her staff are alleged to have told the child, the young person, to shut up, not say anything and put him back in his family.

The CF system as it exists was set up by this government. The system isn't working. Cover-ups are what is happening as a result of this, and the minister will not admit that her actions in this case amount to nothing more than a cover-up of the failings of the system she created.

This poor family has seen enough abuse. This minister is enabling that. Stop it and get to the bottom of this, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Howard: There have been some low moments in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, in this session, but to have the member opposite accuse me of childhood sexual abuse is the lowest—is the lowest—moment that I have seen in this Legislature, and I expect better from her. I expect better from her, and now that she would sit there and laugh at that issue is even lower than that.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order, please. Order, please.

As all the members know that my responsibility is to maintain control of the House to make sure the debate functions in a respectable fashion, I want to caution the honourable Minister of Family Services and Labour (Ms. Howard), when she's making her comments, please direct them through the Chair. We do not want to personalize the debate here, and I get a sense that we're starting down that road and I want to discourage that from happening.

So now, the honourable member for Morden-Winkler.

ER Services Killarney and Boissevain

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Mr. Speaker, as of February there were 17 emergency rooms in Manitoba hospitals either closed or experiencing reductions in service, and since that time we've shown that there are many, many more:

Altona, Vita, Lac du Bonnet, Virden, Teulon and the list goes on.

Two weeks ago, the RHA notice indicated that ER services had now cut services in Killarney and Boissevain and that ER services would rotate between those two communities. I asked the minister last week to say what was she doing to ensure that there was acute on-care coverage, and she said not much besides her usual rhetoric.

So I ask the minister today: When will ER services be restored in Killarney and Boissevain, and what's she doing until then to make sure that there's safe care for those communities?

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health): I will repeat for the member what I told him the last time he asked this question, as it would appear he wasn't able to hear me.

The physician clinics in both Boissevain and Killarney will remain open, continue to provide regular weekday appointments. It includes physician on-call rotation that will prevent further ER suspensions. The RHA is working very closely with the communities to ensure that the physician resources that are available are being used to their best possible capacity. Recruitment is going on in the interim, Mr. Speaker.

We know that the area that he's speaking of deserves to have those emergency rooms open and that is indeed the goal.

* (14:30)

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, on-call rotation isn't good enough.

That RHA memo to stakeholders in the southern region reports at least 14 family physician vacancies right now. That means the minister has allowed this situation to deteriorate to the point where ERs are being closed and communities are suffering from lack of access. The minister wants to send a message to Manitoban residents that it's all good, but the families and the seniors and the businesses and the industries of this area are looking for real assurances that they can get appropriate care when they need it.

What assurances will the minister give these communities today? Why hasn't she increased the use of locums in the interim to keep these ERs open and operating for the safety of these communities?

Ms. Oswald: And I can assist the member and correct the record for the House by letting the

member know that, indeed, there are six new Winnipeg-based doctors who have provided locum service in rural and northern Manitoba. In the last year alone, 62 doctors have started working in rural areas.

I hear the members opposite asking me where. I can inform the members that 19 of those 62 are working in western Manitoba including Brandon, Dauphin, Deloraine, Grandview, Hamiota, Melita, Minnedosa, Rivers, Shilo, Swan River, Treherne, Virden and Winnipegosis; seven in southern Manitoba including Portage, Steinbach, St. Pierre and Gladstone; 11 in the Interlake and eastern Manitoba including Arborg, Hodgson, Beausejour, Eriksdale, Lac du Bonnet, Pine Falls, Selkirk and Teulon.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Time has expired.

Mr. Friesen: And yet, Mr. Speaker, communities all across Manitoba report physician shortages.

Her own RHAs say that the very sustainability of health care is called into question in these communities. Clearly, she's not doing enough. These communities need assurances from this minister that she is attaching priority to this situation, that she understands the implications and the risks of underservicing a significant population like this.

Will the minister table today her plan of action with immediate interim emergency measures for Killarney and Boissevain to provide ER services to residents before something tragic occurs that she could have prevented?

Ms. Oswald: I didn't have an opportunity to finish. Out of the 62 doctors in rural Manitoba that started working just last year, 19 of those are in northern Manitoba including Thompson, The Pas, Norway House, Cross Lake, Opaskwayak, Pukatawagan and several other doctors who visit northern communities.

Mr. Speaker, I will be clear with the member about what we will not do in an economic downturn. We will not go and snatch the low-hanging fruit by cutting the spaces in medical school, by freezing all health capital spending so that the doctors have nowhere to work and by firing a thousand nurses just to save a bit of cash.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. The clock is still ticking, folks, on question period. We're wasting very precious time.

Motherhood and Depression Treatment Initiatives

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, high levels of depression in a population can not only signal that individuals are having difficulties, it can signal an imbalance in our society. And when the incidence of depression is high in a population, it can be a signal of a significant imbalance which needs immediate attention to improve conditions.

Now, the incidence of depression among mothers in Manitoba has increased from 13 per cent to 17 per cent, as has been shown in the Province's recent report on the children and youth in Manitoba.

I ask the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) what specific measures she's taking to address the increasing rate of depression among mothers in Manitoba.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): I thank the Leader of the Liberal Party for the question.

He will note that we opened Canada's first Mental Health Crisis Response Centre this spring in Winnipeg. It brings together a team of people, physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, psychologists. They're there, completely dedicated to serving anybody that has any mental health crisis.

We do do screening for newborns. We do provide a Healthy Child program and a Healthy Baby program. The member knows that we have an extensive network of public health nurses in Manitoba that do home visits with newborn mothers and try to assist them.

And we have child and family resource centres that we've funded in Manitoba. And I was pleased to be at the opening of the one recently in St. Vital with the Salvation Army, which provides a tremendous amount of support to a very highly dense neighbourhood of apartment blocks and young families, including a lot of young mothers that are raising children over there.

So this network of support that we're building all around Manitoba is to-intended to help young families get off to a healthy start and in particular to help young mothers get off to a healthy start.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the rate of depression among mothers in Manitoba has been going up, as the province's report shows.

I think that part of the problem here is that you have to focus not just on treating depression with the new mental health unit but you have to make sure that we're preventing it effectively, we're addressing the conditions which are leading the—to the depression in the first place. There many issues that this government has failed to address which have led to increased food bank use and other problems.

I would ask the government: What is it doing to reverse the damage that's been done which has increased the depression over the last almost 14 years?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, 14 years ago there was virtually no resources for a healthy baby first program in Manitoba. There were no daycares being expanded in Manitoba. There was no support for working families to have their children properly looked after when they are at work. And in our labour code, there was no provision against psychological harassment for people in the workplace.

So we've taken very strong legislative measures to have safe workplaces where people can be treated with dignity and respect. We've amended our Human Rights Code so that people are treated with dignity and respect.

We've provided this network of public health agencies all across Manitoba. We've taken money out of the administration of the regional health authorities and we've put it back at the front-line level to support public health nurses, mental health professionals and social workers to be available to work with families.

And, you know, there's healthy—there's young—there's groups where young moms can come to the local school or the family resource centre and collaborate together and work together and share together the experience of being a young parent and have the support they need to do that job successfully.

And in this budget—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. First Minister's time has expired.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the government can have all the programs it wants, but the problem is when the depression, the incidence of depression in mothers—which is a serious condition—is getting higher, is getting worse, then it becomes very important to look at what's the reasons for that, to

understand those reasons and put a plan in place that will address the underlying causes of the depression getting worse.

I suggest to the Premier (Mr. Selinger) that he needs to have an independent look at what's happening, why the incidence of depression is going up, and to have a real plan in place to address those causes.

When will the Premier put that plan in place?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we do have people in the community working with young moms, young families, identifying issues that they may have, ensuring that they have the supports they need, on an individual basis if that's required, on a group basis if that's required within the community itself. We've invested very significant resources in our Healthy Child program.

You can go to neighbourhood schools now, and before nothing would exist for a preschool family to come to that school, to have access to a library or toys or a social group to work together. Our public health nurses go out there and they organize young families into groups, they provide them social support, they provide them help with basic skills and nutrition, family skills.

We have a parenting program in Manitoba called the Positive Parenting Program. It's based on international research on the best skills we can provide people to be parents and the best practices in that regard. And we will continue to make those investments.

And I do have to remind the member from River Heights, when we put those resources in the budget this year he voted against it.

Westman Seniors Housing Co-op New Units (Brandon)

Mr. Drew Caldwell (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, our government has a historic record of building housing in the province of Manitoba. With community partners, entrepreneurs we have built housing throughout the province.

*(14:40)

In my own community of Brandon, we've worked with groups as diverse as Youth For Christ, the Canadian Mental Health Association, entrepreneurs in building a historic legacy of affordable housing in Manitoba and in my own community.

Recently I was with the minister in Brandon with—making an announcement. I'd like the minister to advise the House on a very important seniors housing project in Brandon.

Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister of Housing and Community Development): It's my privilege to stand up and talk about our commitment to affordable and social housing across this province. Earlier this morning I put on the record the number of communities that we've built in, so I'll let the rest of the House know what's been happening across Camperville, Dauphin, Grunthal, Sprague. We've also built in Swan River, Ste. Anne and Steinbach and Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie. Those are examples of our commitment to affordable housing.

And, yes, we were in Brandon to celebrate the opening of the Westman co-op—seniors co-operative housing initiative where 34 more apartments were built. This, I must add, the member for Brandon East was the founding member of this co-operative and is very proud of this accomplishment. Our investment of \$5.8 million has put 34 new apartments on the market for seniors in Brandon. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Rural Emergency Services Opening Hours

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, the Lac du Bonnet constituency is a beautiful part of this great province of ours. And so, as we've hit the summer months, our population triples if not quadruples during these summer months.

Given that Pine Falls, Beausejour and Pinawa's ERs have been closed, how often should the residents and tourists expect that the emergency rooms in the previously known NEHA area tend to be closed for the upcoming months, Mr. Speaker? Is the Minister of Health taking out ads in the local papers to inform tourists and residents of these closures?

If a resident or tourist experiences a medical emergency, I ask this minister: What are they supposed to do? Pine Falls Hospital is slated to only be open 17 days—the ER is only 17 days for this month of July. What—I'd like to hear her comment to that.

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health): I can let the member know that Pinawa and Beausejour have physician 'siff'—shifts filled for the remainder of

July and August. The Pine Falls ER is working to have a full physician complement. The ER building will not be closed as the member said; it will be under nurse-managed care for some days.

If people have an emergency, indeed, they should call 911 as appropriate. If they need primary care, they should ensure that they see their family doctor. If they do not have their family doctor, they can go to the Pine Falls ER, which will be under nurse-managed care for 11 days.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

WAVE Interlake Artists' Studio Tour

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade): Mr. Speaker, celebrating and participating in art is an important way to come together as a community and to explore our collective imaginations. With vast prairie land, a wide-open sky and one of the world's fresh-largest freshwater lakes, our communities in the Interlake are blessed with lots of artists, many of whom find inspiration in the nature that surrounds them.

That is why for 12 years the WAVE Interlake Artists' Studio Tour has been a success. Twice annually, artists throughout the community open their doors to the public. The self-guided tour provides the opportunity for art enthusiasts to meet with local artists and purchase their creations.

This year's WAVE tour was held on June 8th and 9th and will take place again on August 31st and September 1st. The diverse artistic work found in the Interlake ranges from ceramics to jewellery to painting to photography, to fabric art and more. The theme this year, Get Drenched in Art, is fitting considering that there are over 40 venues available to Manitobans to tour, and you really do get to meet with many exciting and creative people in the community while getting drenched in art.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this month we lost a vibrant and loving person in our community, someone who was incredibly important in the WAVE Interlake Artists' Studio Tour—Heather Lair. Heather has left an incredible legacy in our community as well as throughout Manitoba and Canada. Heather was an incredible mother, wife, teacher and one of Canada's most treasured quilters and fibre artists. She stitched together our community by finding the common thread amongst us all. Heather Lair was an incredible

asset to our community and she will be truly missed by all of us.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, I'd like to wish Heather's—Heather Lair's family, Rick, Silas and Emily, strength in this difficult time. I'd also like to commend and thank all those who make the WAVE artist Interlake studios tour possible every year. Our community's artists are dedicated advocates for the arts and for making our community a vibrant place where creativity can flourish. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Don Lischka

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): A resident of my constituency was recently honoured by the Stonewall chamber of commerce for his dedication not only to the Stonewall—to Stonewall through the chamber of commerce but of varying volunteer positions throughout the community as well. Don Lischka, former president and long-time member of the Stonewall chamber of commerce, was awarded the 2013 Honorary Member.

In Don's 20 years in Stonewall, he has served in roles including president of the Stonewall Curling Club, member of the Stonewall Centennial parent advisory committee and the FACT Committee. In his eight years as curling club president, he held fundraising efforts which resulted in the current facility.

Don joined the chamber of commerce during his first year in Stonewall and eventually worked his way up to president. He exemplified hard work, professionalism, sensitivity and mutual respect. Don believed that, if something needed to be done, you give it to a very busy person. He not only got the job done, but he found time to balance that with family.

Earlier this year Don retired as the manager of the Stonewall RBC Bank. And, after calling Stonewall home for the past 20 years, Don and his wife, Wendy, retired to a quieter lifestyle in Buffalo Point.

Don Lischka is certainly a prime example of what it takes to win this award. Not only is he honoured for this year's chamber of commerce honorary member but also his contributions both in work and personal life for building a strong and growing community.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Don Lischka for receiving this award and commend him

on his commitment. He has worked—the work he has gone—done has gone unnoticed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

60th Anniversary of Northwood Community Centre

Ms. Melanie Wight (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th anniversary of the Northwood Community Centre. Located on Burrows Avenue, Northwood is a vital community place in Winnipeg's northeast. The home of the Norsemen offers soccer, baseball and hockey programs for area youth, as well as drop-in programs, dances and space for social functions and receptions.

If there is every anything you want to know about Northwood, all you'd have to do is acquaint yourself with George Vanderlip. He is the community centre's past president and current grant writer. George has so many interesting stories to tell about Northwood it's worth paying him a visit just to chat.

At the anniversary social, George spent hours showing me pictures and telling me his best stories of bygone years. One of the most touching stories was about a woman's ringette team, which the players joined at age 9; they stayed together competing until their 30s.

Quite notably, seven hockey players from this community club have gone on to play in the NHL.

This year the Northwood board of directors comprises 12 dedicated volunteers: Allen Froese, George Vanderlip, Cyndi Rankin, Dave Fenn, Connie Kaminsky, Shelly Gregoire, Curtis Kazuk, Meghan Fenn, Kali Kaminsky, Dennis Batt, Bev Fenn and Greg Burda. I am so pleased to note that youth are represented on the board.

These committed people worked hard to put together Northwood's 60th anniversary celebration, and I'm excited to see where they take the centre in the future.

Northwood is a special place because of the community connections and excellent it fosters. Seeing all of the people who returned to Northwood for this special anniversary gathering really demonstrated that Northwood is synonymous with community.

Mr. Speaker, just as I was honoured to attend the anniversary festivities and meet with the members of the community, I am equally pleased to put these words on the record.

Thank you and congratulations to the volunteers, board and sponsors for keeping Northwood alive. Here's to another fruitful 60 years. Thank you.

Access Credit Union Field

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, the famous movie line, if you build it they will come, is taking on a new meaning in Altona.

Three local men had a dream to build a baseball diamond that matches the spirit and the drive of the community and that could bring together, or bring competitive high-level tournaments and games to the community. Gord Sawatzky, Ken Wiebe, Ben Dueck decided to build their own field of dreams to be called Access field.

The first phase of the project is going to cost about \$250,000, of which the entirety is coming from the community donations. The goal is to have this completed to play ball in the summer of 2014.

* (14:50)

Phase 2 includes a scoreboard and the construction of a grandstand with seats that have already been purchased from the old Canad Inns Stadium site.

The third phase will include a field house, lights and a canteen; bringing the total cost of this project to \$750,000.

The volunteer board was made up of Gord Sawatzky, Ken Wiebe, Ben Dueck, Ron Epp, Terry Stoesz, Menno Friesen and Conley Kehler, and the entire community have rallied around this project, and the entire \$750,000 will come from donations from in and around the communities.

Altona minor baseball is reliant on volunteers and, as volunteers help to maintain the grounds and keep the game alive in Altona, the results have been tremendous.

As the Altona Bisons have frequently gone on to capture championships both at the league and provincial levels, which is a real testament to the strength of the community and their passion for the game of baseball. The community will now have a facility that matches the passion for the game and the championship mentality of the Altona Bisons.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating the Field of Dreams Committee on all their hard work to bring Access Field to life. I look forward to watching the Altona Bisons in action on—at their new diamond.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Summer in Assiniboine Park

Ms. Deanne Crothers (St. James): Assiniboine Park, or at least part of it, is one of St. James's most beautiful assets. This summer, people across my constituency will be heading to the park, perhaps stopping at Sargent Sundae, and taking a stroll over the footbridge to spend some time in this beloved public space.

One of the most amazing things about a great public space is the way it brings communities together. People from across St. James, indeed, from across Winnipeg, come to enjoy the park's amenities, attend free concerts and movies and spend some time with friends and family. Many events are coming up, including Ballet in the Park next weekend, and the park is also where people come to help and support others at the numerous fundraisers held there every year in support of causes that range from diabetes research to animal rescue centres.

Truly a Winnipeg institution, our park showcases some great local art. The striking Agassiz Ice sculpture by local artist and University of Manitoba School of Art professor Gordon Reeve can be seen by anyone passing by on Portage Avenue. The Leo Mol Garden holds over 300 of Leo Mol's bronzes, and the Pavilion also showcases works by renowned Manitoba artists.

The best parks are places that anyone can enjoy. Sports enthusiasts can play cricket, soccer or go for a jog, and nature lovers can walk through the park's many beautiful gardens. Families can explore the zoo or the Nature Playground, and my family, in particular, love to visit the imaginative, one-of-a-kind playground that opened two years ago as part of the park's ongoing redevelopment. The water feature is a special favourite of both of my children.

Indeed, Assiniboine Park would not be the outstanding space it is today without the vision and leadership of some very dedicated people. The Assiniboine Park Conservancy has led the redevelopment of the park, nurturing and enhancing it so that it can continue to be a place of pride for the surrounding community.

Assiniboine Park is a unique asset for St. James and for other surrounding communities. It is a place where celebrations are held, where friends can connect and where anyone can take a little time to enjoy the outdoors. I invite all members to join me in

celebrating one of Winnipeg's greatest public spaces, and in thanking those who are working to ensure that it continues to flourish for generations. Thank you.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: Official Opposition House Leader, on House business.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business, Mr. Speaker.

In accordance with rule 31(9) I'd like to announce that the private members' resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on protecting Manitoba's future, brought forward by the honourable member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson).

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that in accordance with rule 31(9) that the private members' resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on protecting Manitoba's future, brought forward by the honourable member for Tuxedo.

Now, grievances. Seeing none—

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Would you canvass the House to see if there is leave to not see the clock today at 5 to allow for interim appropriations to be brought forward following the consideration of outstanding deferred Estimates votes.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to not see the clock today at 5 to allow for interim appropriations to be brought forward following the consideration of all outstanding deferred Estimates votes?

An Honourable Member: No.

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: No? I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

Ms. Howard: Would you canvass the House to see if there's leave that tomorrow morning the House meet from 10 to 12:30. There would be no routine proceedings, as this sitting would be dedicated to dealing with interim appropriations, including consideration of the relevant motions and bill in the

Committee of the Whole and the Committee of Supply.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House that tomorrow morning the House meet from 10 to 12:30? There would be no routine proceedings at this sitting; I would—as this sitting would be dedicated to dealing with the interim appropriations, including consideration of the relevant motions and bill in the Committee of the Whole and the Committee of Supply. Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

Ms. Howard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would you move us into Committee of Supply.

Mr. Speaker: We'll now resolve into the Committee of Supply as indicated on today's Order Paper.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. Chairperson (Tom Nevakshonoff): Order. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

In accordance with the agreement reached in the House on July 10th, 2013, the committee will now continue voting on motions and accompanying resolutions deferred from sittings of the Committee of Supply last week.

CONSERVATION AND WATER STEWARDSHIP

Mr. Chairperson (Tom Nevakshonoff): The next question before the committee is the deferred resolution 12.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$12,106,000 for Conservation and Water Stewardship, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2014.

Resolution agreed to.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The next question before the committee is the motion moved by the honourable member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen), during the Estimates of the Department of Healthy Living, Seniors and Consumer Affairs,

THAT line item 34.1.(a) be reduced to \$1.08.

A recorded vote having been requested by two members, call in the members.

All sections in Chamber for a recorded vote.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Chairperson: Order. The one hour provided for the ringing of the division bells has expired. I'm directing that the bells be turned off and the committee proceed to the vote.

The question before the committee is the following motion moved by the honourable member for Spruce Woods,

THAT line item 34.1.(a) be reduced to \$1.08.

A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 17, Nays 29.

Mr. Chairperson: The motion is accordingly defeated.

* (16:00)

HEALTHY LIVING, SENIORS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairperson (Tom Nevakshonoff): The next question before the committee is the deferred resolution 34.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$662,000 for Healthy Living, Seniors and Consumer Affairs, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2014.

Resolution agreed to.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The next question before the committee is the motion moved by the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), during the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism,

THAT line item 14.1.(a) be reduced to \$1.08.

A recorded vote having been requested by two members, call in the members.

* (16:50)

All sections in Chamber for a recorded vote.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Chairperson: Order. The question before the committee is the following motion moved by the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet,

THAT line item 14.1.(a) be reduced to \$1.08.

A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 16, Nays 30.

Mr. Chairperson: The motion is accordingly defeated.

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND TOURISM

Mr. Chairperson (Tom Nevakshonoff): The last question before the committee is the deferred resolution 14.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,464,000 for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2014.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: This now concludes the business before us. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 5 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, July 18, 2013

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