

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

Official Report
(Hansard)

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authority of
The Honourable Daryl Reid
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	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
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MELNICK, Christine	Riel	Ind.
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
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim	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
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	The Pas	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 3, 2014

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 73—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2014

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald) that Bill 73, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2014; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2014 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Howard: This bill implements budget measures that were contained in this year's budget supporting good jobs and steady growth, particularly a series of tax credits designed to encourage employers to hire apprentices and to help businesses do good succession planning so that we can keep good jobs right here in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? [*Agreed*]

Any further introductions of bills?

PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: Seeing none, petitions.

Tabor Home—Construction Delays

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

And the background to the petition is as follows:

(1) Morden's population has grown nearly 20 per cent in five years.

(2) Twenty-three per cent of Morden's population is over the age of 65.

(3) The community worked for years to get the provincial government's commitment to build a new personal-care home, and as a result, construction of the new Tabor Home was finally promised in 2010.

(4) The Minister of Health indicated initially that construction of the new Tabor Home would commence in 2013.

(5) The Minister of Health subsequently broke her promise and delayed construction until spring 2014.

(6) The Minister of Health broke that promise as well, delaying construction again until fall 2014.

And (7) in March of 2014, the Minister of Health broke her promise yet again, once more delaying construction of Tabor Home until 2015.

(8) Too many seniors continue to live out their final days and months in facilities far from home and family because of a shortage of personal-care-home beds in the area.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to stop breaking their promises, stop the delays and keep their commitment to proceed with the construction of Tabor Home in 2014.

And this petition is signed by E. Dyck, K. Friesen, M. Hildebrand and many other fine Manitobans.

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

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's submitted on behalf of A. Carter, L. Reimer, F. Herzber and many other fine Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any further petitions?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: Seeing none, committee reports.

Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development Third Report

Mr. Dave Gaudreau (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Third Report of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense? Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT presents the following as its Third Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on June 2, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 254 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 48)** – *The Sioux Valley Dakota Nation Governance Act/Loi sur la gouvernance de la nation dakota de Sioux Valley*
- **Bill (No. 53)** – *The Fisheries and Wildlife Amendment Act (Restitution)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche et la Loi sur la conservation de la faune (dédommagement)*
- **Bill (No. 56)** – *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les statistiques de l'état civil*
- **Bill (No. 61)** – *The Peatlands Stewardship and Related Amendments Act/Loi sur la protection des tourbières et modifications connexes*

- **Bill (No. 68)** – *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Critical Incident Reporting)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille (signalement des incidents critiques)*

Committee Membership

- *Hon Mr. ALLUM*
- *Mr. ALTEMEYER*
- *Mr. BRIESE*
- *Hon. Ms. IRVIN-ROSS*
- *Mr. GAUDREAU*
- *Hon. Mr. LEMIEUX*
- *Hon. Mr. MACKINTOSH*
- *Mr. MARTIN*
- *Hon. Mr. ROBINSON*
- *Mr. SCHULER*
- *Mr. WISHART*

Your Committee elected Mr. GAUDREAU as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected Mr. ALTEMEYER as the Vice-Chairperson.

Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following nine presentations on **Bill (No. 48)** – The Sioux Valley Dakota Nation Governance Act/Loi sur la gouvernance de la nation dakota de Sioux Valley:*

*Vincent Tacan, Sioux Valley Dakota Nation
Bruce Slusar, Private Citizen
Antonio Johnson-Wombdiska, Private Citizen
Wayne Wasicuna, Private Citizen
Donna Elk, Private Citizen
Carol Johnson, Private Citizen
Ivan Ironman, Private Citizen
Marge Roscelli, Private Citizen
Ken Guilford, Private Citizen*

*Your Committee heard the following four presentations on **Bill (No. 53)** – The Fisheries and Wildlife Amendment Act (Restitution)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche et la Loi sur la conservation de la faune (dédommagement):*

*Ken Guilford, Private Citizen
David Carrick, Private Citizen
Gaile Whelan-Enns, Manitoba Wildlands
Rob Olson, Manitoba Wildlife Federation*

*Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 56)** – The Vital Statistics*

Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les statistiques de l'état civil:

Ken Guilford, Private Citizen

Karen Busby, Centre for Human Rights Research

*Your Committee heard the following six presentations on **Bill (No. 61) – The Peatlands Stewardship and Related Amendments Act/Loi sur la protection des tourbières et modifications connexes:***

Paul Short, Manitoba Peat Producers

Stephanie Boudreau, Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association

Ken Guilford, Private Citizen

Pascal Badiou, Ducks Unlimited Canada

Gaile Whelan-Enns (by leave), Peguis First Nation

Gaile Whelan-Enns, Manitoba Wildlands

*Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 68) – The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Critical Incident Reporting)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille (signalement des incidents critiques):***

Ken Guilford, Private Citizen

Written Submissions

*Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 61) – The Peatlands Stewardship and Related Amendments Act/Loi sur la protection des tourbières et modifications connexes:***

Ron Thiessen, Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society - Manitoba Chapter

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 48) – The Sioux Valley Dakota Nation Governance Act/Loi sur la gouvernance de la nation dakota de Sioux Valley**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 53) – The Fisheries and Wildlife Amendment Act (Restitution)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche et la Loi sur la conservation de la faune (dédommagement)**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 56) – The Vital Statistics Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les statistiques de l'état civil**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 61) – The Peatlands Stewardship and Related Amendments Act/Loi sur la protection des tourbières et modifications connexes**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 68) – The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Critical Incident Reporting)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille (signalement des incidents critiques)**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

Mr. Gaudreau: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Burrows (Ms. Wight), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Human Resources Second Report

Ms. Melanie Wight (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Second Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Human Resources—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense? Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on HUMAN RESOURCES presents the following as its Second Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on June 2, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 10) – The Fires Prevention and Emergency Response Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la prévention des incendies et les interventions d'urgence**
- **Bill (No. 21) – The Churchill Arctic Port Canada Act/Loi sur la Société canadienne du Port arctique de Churchill**
- **Bill (No. 33) – The Apprenticeship Employment Opportunities Act (Public Works Contracts)/Loi sur les occasions d'apprentissage en milieu de travail (marchés de travaux publics)**
- **Bill (No. 54) – The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board**

Decisions and Hearings)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail (délais relatifs aux décisions et aux audiences de la Commission du travail)

- **Bill (No. 65)** – *The Workers Compensation Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail*

Committee Membership

- *Hon. Mr. ASHTON*
- *Hon. Ms. BRAUN*
- *Hon. Mr. CHOMIAK*
- *Hon. Mr. CHIEF*
- *Mr. HELWER*
- *Hon. Ms. OSWALD*
- *Mr. MARCELINO (Vice-Chairperson)*
- *Mr. PIWNIUK*
- *Mr. SMOOK*
- *Mrs. STEFANSON*
- *Ms. WIGHT (Chairperson)*

Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 10)** – The Fires Prevention and Emergency Response Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la prévention des incendies et les interventions d'urgence:*

Danny Thorsteinson, Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs

Ken Guilford, Private Citizen

*Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 21)** – The Churchill Arctic Port Canada Act/Loi sur la Société canadienne du Port arctique de Churchill:*

Ken Guilford, Private Citizen

Lloyd Axworthy, Churchill Gateway Development Corporation

*Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 33)** – The Apprenticeship Employment Opportunities Act (Public Works Contracts)/Loi sur les occasions d'apprentissage en milieu de travail (marchés de travaux publics):*

Ken Guilford, Private Citizen

*Your Committee heard the following three presentations on **Bill (No. 54)** – The Labour Relations Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board Decisions and Hearings)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail (délais relatifs aux*

décisions et aux audiences de la Commission du travail):

Ken Guilford, Private Citizen

John Doyle, Manitoba Federation of Labour

Garry Bergeron, UFCW

*Your Committee heard the following three presentations on **Bill (No. 65)** – The Workers Compensation Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail:*

Ken Guilford, Private Citizen

John Doyle, Manitoba Federation of Labour

Phil Kraychuk, UFCW Local 832

Written Submissions

*Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 10)** – The Fires Prevention and Emergency Response Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la prévention des incendies et les interventions d'urgence:*

Doug Dobrowolski, Association of Manitoba Municipalities

*Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 65)** – The Workers Compensation Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail:*

David Sauer, Winnipeg Labour Council

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 10)** – *The Fires Prevention and Emergency Response Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la prévention des incendies et les interventions d'urgence*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 21)** – *The Churchill Arctic Port Canada Act/Loi sur la Société canadienne du Port arctique de Churchill*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 33)** – *The Apprenticeship Employment Opportunities Act (Public Works Contracts)/Loi sur les occasions d'apprentissage en milieu de travail (marchés de travaux publics)*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 54)** – *The Labour Relations*

Amendment Act (Time Lines for Labour Board Decisions and Hearings)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail (délais relatifs aux décisions et aux audiences de la Commission du travail)

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 65) – The Workers Compensation Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

Ms. Wight: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Any further tabling of reports—or, pardon me, tabling of reports, I should say? Seeing none, ministerial statements?

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I have a number of guests that I would like to introduce to the honourable members.

Today in the public gallery we have with us Mr. Don Duguid, who is just a recent recipient of the Order of Manitoba, who is a guest of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

And also seated in the public gallery we have with us today from Hugh John Macdonald School, we have 12 grade 9 students under the direction of Glen Henson, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Multiculturalism and Literacy (Ms. Marcelino).

And also seated in the public gallery we have from River West Park School 20 grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Todd Johnson. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger).

And also seated in the public gallery we have from Willow Grove School, we have 17 grades 5 to 8 students under the direction of Donnie Loewen, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Ambulance Services Patient Off-Load Wait Times

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, the NDP have been mismanaging Manitoba's health-care system for the last 15 years and it is, unfortunately, Manitobans who have been suffering as a result.

In 2013 the average wait time for an ambulance off-load was 75 minutes. In the first quarter of 2014 that number has risen to 81.5 minutes. Under the watch of this minister, the situation is getting worse, not better.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit that she has badly mismanaged the health-care system and Manitobans are being left to suffer as a consequence?

Hon. Erin Selby (Minister of Health): I thank the member for the question.

And, Mr. Speaker, we don't want to see wait times of 83 minutes. We think that's not acceptable and neither do our front-line workers, but I think it's important to note that the vast majority of people are transferred within the benchmark time.

Mr. Speaker, we have one of the fastest response times in the country. When someone calls 911 in Winnipeg, they see an ambulance there in about seven minutes on average, which is a fastest amongst the country.

We are doing a number of things to make it faster through the ER, making sure that people have the care that they want where they need it, and we're going to keep working with our front-line staff in order to do that.

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, the numbers speak for themselves, Mr. Speaker. They're getting worse under this NDP government, not better.

Mr. Speaker, since 2011, when fines began for waits longer than an hour, the waits have increased by 23 per cent. In January we saw an average wait time of one hour and 23 minutes. Under the watch of this minister, the situation, again, is getting worse, not better.

I'll ask the minister again: Will she admit that she has badly mismanaged the health-care system

and, unfortunately, Manitobans are suffering as a result of that?

* (13:40)

Ms. Selby: Members opposite seem to think that the only thing that paramedics need to do is drop somebody off at the front door. Well, we just don't agree. We have highly trained paramedics and we do want them to stay with people and until that they are safely transferred, until the hospital.

We know that the majority of time, 75 to 85 per cent of the time, people are transferred within the benchmark. Occasionally, there are longer waits, but people in the front line, they prioritize who needs to get in; they decide who are the most urgent cases. Sometimes that's someone who arrives by ambulance, but sometimes it's somebody who arrives in another way, and we leave it to the people in the front line to decide who is the most urgent case and who needs to be seen first.

Mrs. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, let's review the facts because the facts speak for themselves.

In 2011 the average ambulance off-load time was 66 minutes; 2012, 74.6 minutes; 2013, 75.6 minutes; 2014, 81.5 minutes. Time isn't on the side of heart attack victims, stroke patients and those undergoing serious health incidents.

The fact is that things are getting worse, not better, under this NDP government.

Will they just admit that their mismanagement of the health-care system is putting patients at risk here in Manitoba?

Ms. Selby: When it comes to serious urgent cases, Manitoba has a very good record. When it comes to stroke patients, we have the fastest door-to-needle time in the country.

Mr. Speaker, we know that sometimes people go to an ER that perhaps they could be seen somewhere else that would be more sufficient for them to get the need that they—the care that they need, and that's why we brought in a number of initiatives to take some of the pressure off an ER. We brought in the Mental Health Crisis Response Centre; it sees over 500 patients a month. We brought in QuickCare clinics that have seen 70,000 people since we've started them, and, of course, we're connecting people with a family doctor. We have a commitment to have everyone connected by 2015. These are some of the initiatives that we are doing.

So far they've offered no solutions other than to cut a half a billion dollars from the system, and they want a two-tier, American-style system so that rich people can move to the front and everyone else can wait in line.

Ambulance Services Patient Off-Load Wait Times

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Well, the initiatives the minister is talking about obviously aren't working, because the numbers are going backwards, they're getting worse under this government.

Mr. Speaker, ambulance off-load times have exploded since this minister became the Minister of Health. In the first quarter of 2014 the wait has grown by 23 per cent. This will put Manitoba families at risk.

So I'd like to ask the Minister of Health to explain: Why have off-load times become so bad under her watch?

Hon. Erin Selby (Minister of Health): Let me put some facts and clarity on the record.

The average wait times for April through March of 2013-2014 was higher than in the same period in 2012-2013 by just under a minute.

Now, we don't want that. We do want to see that those numbers go down. It's why we've got another— a number of initiatives in place.

But, Mr. Speaker, the WRHA is saying that we had a very difficult flu season; that brought the numbers up. Weather-related trauma also had an effect on it.

I know people on the front line are doing what they can to move those numbers to get people through the ER, but we also want to make sure that those people who get the—who have the urgent need get seen first.

Mrs. Driedger: Well, Mr. Speaker, we heard of a case yesterday where an ambulance was stuck at the Victoria hospital for eight hours with a patient having chest pain. Seems to me that's a patient that needs urgent care and was stuck on a—in an ambulance waiting for care.

Mr. Speaker, there is flu that happens every year too, so that doesn't even make sense in the minister's answer.

This government promised two years ago that they were going to fix this problem, and under this Minister of Health, instead it's getting worse.

So I would like to ask this Minister of Health: Why has she so badly mismanaged this file?

Ms. Selby: As I said yesterday, eight hours is not acceptable and I wish that they would share some more information so we could find out exactly what happened in that situation.

Mr. Speaker, we're talking about average times, and on the most part they are being seen within the benchmark. Even by the Tory numbers, eight hours is much longer than people are waiting on average.

Time and time again, this member has brought in cases, very serious cases, and has accused people of the front line of not perhaps performing their job, and I have asked her many times to share that information with us and I'm still waiting for it. I would ask that she would stop playing partisan politics and share that very important information so we could look into it.

Mrs. Driedger: The person that is not doing her job in this province is this Minister of Health, and there are a lot of people wondering out there about her credibility and ability to do the job.

So we have a problem. She needs to pick up the phone and phone the ERs and talk to the ERs because these problems are happening all the time under her watch. When ambulances are queued up in parking lots at hospitals, they are not available for the next emergency on the street.

So I'd like to tell—or I'd like to ask this minister to tell Manitobans why her and her government have dropped the ball on this issue, because, year after year, it's getting worse. They've dropped the ball. Why the complacency? Why is she messing up on this issue?

Ms. Selby: We agree that we'd like to see that average time go down, absolutely. It's why we brought in a number of initiatives to do that.

But to imply, Mr. Speaker, that there isn't an emergency paramedic there available for you when you call 911 is just not true, and this member should not be scaring people into thinking that.

In Winnipeg we have some of the fastest response times in the country. When you call 911 in Winnipeg, you will see a paramedic—a highly trained

paramedic—either in an ambulance or a fire truck available.

We are not leaving people in a situation where there is no paramedic on the street, and I think it's very irresponsible for this member to scare people into thinking that.

Cancer Treatment Patient Wait Time

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, on December 24th, four months after his first experienced clinical signs of cancer, Abe Penner received his first scoping, and that led to an emergency surgery on December 28th of 2013. At that time, he was scheduled into CancerCare for as soon as possible. Three months later, in March, he was called to schedule an appointment. He finally saw a doctor on May 23rd, a full nine months after his experienced clinical signs of cancer.

Mr. Speaker, when did this minister decide that nine months is an acceptable wait time for a cancer patient?

Hon. Erin Selby (Minister of Health): Certainly, anyone who's undergoing a cancer scare or cancer treatment or family member who is knows that it is very difficult in that time from learning that you might have cancer until you've got a treatment.

It's a difficult time, and we know that, which is why we've brought in the Cancer Patient Journey, Mr. Speaker. We've introduced this initiative, a first-in-Canada initiative, so that we would reduce the entire journey from suspicion of cancer until treatment begins until two months and less. We've gone a long way in making that happen in many cases, and we've brought down many of those times, but we know there's still more work to do.

Certainly, we know that we want to see people get that timely care, and we know that in some areas, such as radiation therapy, we've gotten an A+ from the Wait Time Alliance.

But there is more work to do to make sure that we see all cancer patients get their treatment within two months or less.

Mr. Graydon: Well, Mr. Speaker, on May 12th, just days before he had an appointment with CancerCare, Abe went to Selkirk ER in an immense amount of pain. The doctor recommended a CT scan, but the machine wasn't working.

Abe went back on May 14th. Then he waited in ER in Selkirk for over seven hours for a doctor. The doctor told Abe that it was simply too late, that his cancer had spread so that he should just go home and wait for an appointment with a specialist. This happened a full nine months after his first clinical signs.

Mr. Speaker, again I ask: When did this minister decide nine months is an acceptable wait time for cancer treatment?

Ms. Selby: As I said earlier, that's not acceptable to anyone in this House. Nobody wants to see a loved one, a family member, have to wait on what is a very difficult and scary journey.

It's why we've brought in the first-in-Canada initiative to bring the cancer patient journey down to two months or less. We've done that by hiring new front-line staff, including eight more pathologists so that people can get those test results quicker. It's by bringing in two new cancer testing co-ordinators and 35 more technologists. We're also hiring more cancer patient journey navigators so that people will be able to co-ordinate those tests better.

* (13:50)

Mr. Speaker, I would ask this member, if he hasn't given me the contact information or my office that information of this particular patient and their family, to let us know, because we certainly think nine months is too long. It's why we're working to bring that time down.

Mr. Graydon: The last time that this minister asked me for more information, I said I would provide the obituary, and today I table that obituary.

And, Mr. Speaker, on May 23rd Abe was advised that he should start two weeks of chemotherapy—or treatment and that he would need to come back for cancer care in three months. The only problem was that he needed a family doctor to control the pain, something that he didn't have. Abe also needed to see an oncologist to further assess his treatment and condition. The wait times were another month, pushing his wait time for 10 months.

This is an epidemic of unknown proportion created by this NDP government, not just an individual case.

Mr. Speaker, when did 10 months become an unacceptable wait time for a cancer patient in the province of Manitoba? When will this minister put down the script and start caring for—

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

Ms. Selby: Mr. Speaker, this is a tragic case that the member brings forward. And, of course, our hearts go out to their family.

This is not acceptable. We don't want to see people waiting. It's why we brought in a \$40-million initiative to bring those wait times down. I would hope that everyone's cancer patient journey gets down within two months or less. We're not there yet, but we're working on it.

We have the best times in order for people to get radiation therapy across the country. And we have done another number of initiatives to help bring that cancer patient journey shorter.

Nine months is not acceptable to anyone.

CFS Case Concern Update (Matias de Antonio)

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, this government and the minister responsible for CFS are being less than honest with the family of little Matias de Antonio. They have promised the results of the coroner's report, and they have not received them. They were promised a meeting with the foster family that looked after little Matias; that has been cancelled.

The minister promised this family information and results. Neither has happened.

When will we see more than empty promises for the family of little Matias de Antonio?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Acting Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I think all of us in this House—well, hopefully, none of us know first-hand the tragedy of losing a child. All of us, I think, can, for a moment, imagine how difficult that is, and especially when there aren't answers forthcoming.

My understanding is there are people from the minister's office who have attempted to make contact today with the family. I'm not sure they've been successful.

My understanding is that the CME is close to completing that report, and when that report is complete, it will be provided to the family.

Mr. Wishart: What this family needs is more than broken promises.

Mr. Speaker, what has this government and the minister done? Has he—has she made sure that all

relevant information has been secured? Has she co-operated with the investigation from the Children's Advocate office? Have records of baby Matias's transport been secured?

Mr. Speaker, it has been two months since the tragic death of Matias, and the family knows little more. When will the minister start sharing the information she promised this family?

Ms. Howard: My understanding is that the minister has sat and spoken with this family. I know that the office of the minister, as late as today, has attempted to talk to the family to share the information that is available.

I know that the Chief Medical Examiner takes his responsibilities very seriously, especially in a case like this, to want to bring forward as complete information as possible, so when a family is seeking answers, they can have confidence in that information. My understanding is he's close to completing the report, and that will be shared.

In terms of the Children's Advocate, of course, it was this government that expanded the role of the Children's Advocate so they had a role to investigate when deaths happened to children who were in care. That investigation will happen. It will be independent. And when that investigation is completed, if there are recommendations, those recommendations, of course, will be acted upon.

Mr. Wishart: Well, under this government, the Children's Advocate has been a very busy person. The list of children lost under the care of CFS and this government is long: Phoenix Sinclair, Gage Guimond, Jaylene Redhead and many more. The list of recommendations from the inquests involved is even longer, with over 1,000 recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, do we have to learn all of our lessons from the death of someone under the care of CFS? Will little Matias just become another list of recommendations to this government?

Ms. Howard: I know, as a former minister of Family Services, that every minister who has served in that role, from any party, including the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), knows the pain and—first-hand of learning about the tragic death of a child in care. I expect that every minister who's ever had that responsibility took that responsibility extremely seriously.

The Children's Advocate has an expanded role under this government. The Children's Advocate's

office has tripled in size because we gave them the responsibility to look at situations like this, to investigate, to provide recommendations. We also have worked with the Children's Advocate office to do reports proactively on ways that the system can improve. We also brought in place a requirement for the Children's Advocate to come to a legislative committee to share that information.

We continue to look for ways to improve the system every day. We've put in place better funding, better tools to take care of those—

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

Post-Secondary Education Government Funding

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, it seems that the deputy minister seems to have quite a bit of information; maybe she can pick up the phone and contact the family.

Mr. Speaker, this new Minister of Education and his government have a history of broken promises. The minister went door to door in the 2011 election promising no new taxes. Two years later he broke these promises with increased fees and a 14 per cent increase to the PST, to a total of half a billion dollars. This government promised post-secondary institutions a 5 per cent increase in funding, broke that promise and instead gave them 2 and a half per cent and told them that they have lots of money, suck it up.

Why is this new minister forcing university students to clean up this minister's mess?

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): I just want to say to the member that the record of this government when it comes to education and post-secondary education is second to none in Canada.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, and I've tried to explain to the member many—on many occasions, we have among the lowest tuition for students in colleges and universities in Canada and we also continue to fund universities and colleges at among the highest levels in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we'll take no lessons from the opposition when it comes to the post-secondary or education system, for that matter. We're going to continue to build a strong post-secondary system for all of our students so they can get a quality education

and go on and get a good job and stay right here and live in Manitoba.

Bill 63 Concerns Institutional Autonomy

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, this Minister of Education has written legislation that would give him power to dictate what courses, programs and buildings post-secondary institutions will open, close or operate.

Jim Turk, executive director of the Canadian association of teachers, had this to say about Bill 63: It's appalling that any government in Canada, especially an NDP one, would do what this government is doing. This you would expect to find in a totalitarian state.

Mr. Speaker, this minister can't be trusted. What program is he going to cut first?

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): Well, Mr. Speaker, Bill 63 is designed to streamline the decision-making process so that our educational institutions can spend more time in the classroom and less time on red tape and paperwork.

Now, we have a process of public hearings here in Manitoba. We heard from our friends in the post-secondary sector about improvements they would like to see to the bill. We've listened to what they have to say. We've reached out and talked to those individuals in those groups. We're continuing to talk to them.

And as he knows and as I told him yesterday, we're prepared to make changes in order to ensure a strong educational system here in Manitoba.

Mr. Ewasko: All after the fact, Mr. Speaker, all after the fact.

This minister can't be trusted. It seems he has spent too much time at the university of NDP. He raised the PST by 14 per cent, broke his three-year, 5 per cent increase promise to universities, has broken his own law and upset almost every post-secondary institution and student group in the province. Now, in typical NDP fashion, Mr. Speaker, he's being reactive instead of proactive.

*(14:00)

I ask the minister to rip up Bill 63 and start over or come clean today: What program or course are you going to be cutting first?

Mr. Allum: We've tried to explain the intent of the bill to the member, and we're going to continue to work with our partners.

I was out at the U of M for a convocation this morning and I saw happy students and I saw happy parents, and they were happy because they know they got a quality, affordable and accessible education that will position them to go on and get a good job and stay right here in Manitoba.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the parts of that bill is to protect student affordability. If the member opposite is thinking that he should raise tuition to market rates, as was suggested in other quarters yesterday, then he should tell students that and he should let this House know that today.

Lake Manitoba Outlet Construction

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): Mr. Speaker, the minister assures the farmers, ranchers, First Nations and property owners around Lake Manitoba that the Fairford outlet is running at full capacity and that the emergency ditch is ready to use.

Well, the Fairford outlet was running at full capacity in 2011 and the emergency channel does nothing to reduce the levels of Lake Manitoba, yet a devastating flood occurred around Lake Manitoba in 2011.

Why is this NDP government refusing to prioritize the new outlet for Lake Manitoba?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that the member is actually correct about one thing, and that is that we have been operating the Fairford outlet for four years at full level. That's one of the reasons Lake Manitoba is 1.8 feet below the state of nature.

The second point is we have, in fact, built the emergency outlet from Lake St. Martin. We have equipment there. We are in the process of contacting the federal government. We've already talked to them, and if we need that we will do it.

Now, for the member to suggest that the outlet from Lake St. Martin doesn't help Lake Manitoba, he should perhaps check a little bit of his geography because it made a significant difference in 2011. And, Mr. Speaker, if we need it, we'll not only drop the levels in Lake St. Martin but we'll assist with Lake Manitoba, not only in the next few months

but particularly over the winter months. So we're prepared.

Perhaps the member would like a briefing and a lesson on the way the flood works work in this province.

Mr. Briese: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister should put accurate facts on the record.

He says [*inaudible*] Fairford's been running full force for four years; they had blocks in it this past winter. The minister speak—and the minister goes back 50 years and uses a phony number that he refers to as state of nature; dumping half the flow of Assiniboine River into Lake Manitoba isn't the state of nature.

We are one weather event away from another disaster.

Why doesn't the NDP government move from the defensive to taking some action to give the Lake Manitoba flood victims some confidence that they won't face another flood of the magnitude of 2011?

Mr. Ashton: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I think it's extremely important to note that we have already given notice to the federal government about our intent to use the outlet from Lake St. Martin if necessary. Again, we did contact the federal government some time ago. They indicated that since it was an emergency outlet, we would have to hit flood stage. Flood stage is 803 in terms of Lake St. Martin; it's 814 at Lake Manitoba. And, again, we are prepared to use it.

But I do want to point out that there is a very significant difference from 2011 when levels on Lake Manitoba hit 817 and were in—over 805 on Lake St. Martin.

But while it is not 2011, because of the initiative of this government to put in place the emergency outlet, we have it available and, in fact, we will use it if necessary. We've already asked the federal government for the approvals to do that.

Mr. Briese: Mr. Speaker, Lake Manitoba is very close to flood levels right now. High winds this past weekend raised concerns of flooding around Lake Manitoba. Flood waters continue to flow into Lake Manitoba from the Portage Diversion.

Once again, flood forecasting was sadly lacking. The NDP have been wrong three out of the last three years.

In 2013 the NDP raised the provincial sales tax by 14 per cent and said it was for flood mitigation. They then said they would provide a new channel for Lake Manitoba sometime between seven years from now and eternity.

When will the NDP stop spinning their phony numbers and false promises and actually stop revictimizing the Lake Manitoba flood victims?

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, it was the NDP government with the work of some of the most dedicated public servants, some of the best engineers in the province, that in the middle of the 2011 flood, in months, built the Lake St. Martin outlet, which is there for the people of Lake St. Martin and Lake Manitoba.

And I will put on the record, I'll compare our record in terms of flood management any day, because one thing we don't do on this side, we don't quit in the middle of preparation for a major flood. As EMO minister, we don't quit provincial politics in the middle of a major flood. And, Mr. Speaker, we don't come back as Leader of the Opposition, joke about flooding Winnipeg, support people blocking the operation of the Portage Diversion.

We take very seriously our obligation to the people of Manitoba. We don't play politics like members opposite do.

Property Registry Teranet Service Fees

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): When I asked the Minister of Finance yesterday about Teranet, she told me to find it online.

Well, online one can find the fees for public instruments like a property title abstract. The cost for this in Quebec and New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island is \$1. In Manitoba, with Ontario's Teranet now operating our property registry, the cost for the same instrument is \$16.

I ask the NDP minister responsible for Teranet: Why are Manitoba's costs for services from our property registry up to 16 times higher than those in Quebec, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance): Of course, every province has a different system of land registration. Every province has a different system of how they administer fees and how that system works. They're not strictly comparable.

In Manitoba, under the deal with Teranet, we have an agreement that caps the rate at which a price can increase for existing products at CPI plus 1 per cent, so Manitobans have guarantee on a price increase cap going forward.

We have ensured, I think, through this deal that the rights of Manitobans as consumers are protected. The rights of those Manitobans who work in that office are protected. We know that it is a good deal for Manitobans in terms of the revenue that's been received not only one time but in an ongoing way.

I'd be pleased to offer the member opposite a longer meeting and discussion if he wants to delve into the details of the Teranet deal and the property registry.

Mr. Gerrard: The minister spoke yesterday and now today about the guaranteed prices for Teranet services, guaranteed high prices, it's important to know, particularly under her government.

Mr. Speaker, in her Roadmap for Change, Supreme Court Justice Beverley McLachlin wrote of the importance of keeping costs of public services affordable. In the decision on the Eurig case, the Supreme Court ruled that it was illegal for governments in Canada to charge unreasonably high fees which are much greater than the costs of the service.

I ask the minister: Did she privatize our provincial property registry in order to charge Manitobans unreasonable costs for public services?

Ms. Howard: Again, I will say for the member opposite, the systems that he is trying to compare are entirely different systems. Provinces in the western part of the country have an entirely different land titles registration system.

What we have accomplished through this deal is to ensure that those land title products that Manitobans are buying will not go up in price—those existing products—by more than the consumer price index plus 1 per cent. There is a cap on how much those prices can go up in order to ensure that they remain affordable to Manitobans.

What we've also ensured through this deal is that the people who are working there maintain their jobs, maintain their pensions, maintain their benefits right here in Manitoba.

But also through this agreement, we have realized an investment in the IT system to make searches more easy, to make that system more

modern, without saddling the taxpayers with that cost.

Mr. Gerrard: The minister talked yesterday and again now about Teranet's new, fancy IT system. What she needs to know is that people in Ontario are all too familiar with Teranet's crash-prone system. People have to pay online before getting the service and then, too often, the system crashes before they actually are served.

* (14:10)

While property registers in other provinces have managed to maintain crash-free operations, the Teranet system causes delays, inconveniences and frustrations as well as added costs.

Instead of thinking of the public first with high quality and low costs, why does this NDP government think of Manitobans last involving Teranet with its high costs and poor service?

Ms. Howard: Well, in addition to a price increase cap that was negotiated to protect Manitobans, we also have—if the member has gone and looked at the agreement with Teranet, he will see in there there is also a mechanism to ensure that Teranet delivers on the time it takes for it to provide service, and that if it doesn't deliver there is a way for the Province and Teranet to sit down and talk about that, resolve that dispute so that we can ensure that Manitobans get timely service.

When we sat down and negotiated this agreement, we absolutely put Manitobans' interests first. We managed to get an agreement that gives an upfront money of \$75 million, pays every year, protects jobs of Manitobans, modernize the system, gives consumers a price cap as well as a dispute resolution mechanism so if there are problems with service we can talk to Teranet and resolve those difficulties.

River Point Centre Addictions Treatment Facility

Ms. Melanie Wight (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, today we heard some kind of unusual comments by members opposite complaining that we had held a committee to hear from the public and then we had the nerve to actually amend the bill because we'd heard from the public to make it better.

Well, our government hears from the public all the time and we had a whole bunch of announcements today on initiatives about things because we had heard from the public.

The one I'd like to know about, Mr. Speaker, is the one from our Healthy Living and Seniors Minister with regard to addictions.

Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors): I'd like to thank the member for Burrows from the question because I know she understands the value of communication and collaboration in achieving a vision.

And today I was pleased to join the Minister of Family Services (Ms. Irvin-Ross), addiction services providers and community members who have been working in partnership to open the new River Point Centre at the former site of Sharon Home in North Point Douglas. Now here in North Point Douglas at the new River Point Centre, the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, Behavioural Health Foundation and the Main Street Project are joining forces to provide better access to addiction services and supports all under one roof.

This 85,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility will provide comprehensive, seamless care for Manitobans struggling to overcome addictions and to rebuild their lives. There are a total of 70 beds at the centre. There's also 30 transitional housing units to help clients get back on their feet.

It's a beautiful centre, and today was about celebration, inspiration and transformation and integration and—

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

Moose Populations Hunting Tags Issued

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Mr. Speaker, almost three months ago I asked the minister if he would share information on the survey of game hunting area 19A. I believe the answer at the time was soon.

The numbers for GHA 19A are below any reasonable sustainable threshold: 68 moose and fewer than 20 bull moose.

The minister was warned in 2013 that the numbers were dangerously low, but he issued tags anyway. He was warned again in February of 2014 that the numbers remained dangerously low.

Why is this minister prepared to issue 30 tags for the bull—for the moose season this year, or is his goal to eliminate any trace of moose in this part of the province?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship): Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess I'm just asking a question. If the member opposite or, indeed, any of them opposite were so concerned about wildlife populations, why did they try to make natural resource officers second-class law enforcement officers last session by taking away their ability to do covert investigations and investigations on private land?

They're on the side of poachers; we're on the side of law and order.

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, good game management would ensure only a maximum of 10 per cent of wildlife can be harvested. For the minister to issue 30 tags in GHA 19A, he would have to be confident in a bull moose population of at least 300 and a total moose population of over 1,000. He seems to be short about 932 moose.

The minister is issuing tags in areas he has been told are too low and too few moose to ensure that the moose will ever recover.

Mr. Speaker, why is this minister dragging his heels on the decision to close the season in 19A? Why would he even hold the Big Game Draw, knowing these numbers?

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, Mr. Speaker, this coming from members that spent—that invested a pathetic fraction of what we are investing in the surveys. In fact, we're investing four times more than members opposite ever did when it comes to surveys for wildlife.

If the members were so concerned about wildlife populations, Mr. Speaker, why did they try to cut in half the amount of fines for poaching, of all things, endangered species? I don't know if they get it, but extinction is forever.

Mr. Martin: This coming from the minister who diverted moose survey dollars into the general revenues of his own department.

Mr. Speaker, there are closures on moose hunting in most game hunting areas around the Swan valley—river. This was accomplished, in large part, due to efforts of hunters in the area, including First Nation hunters who stepped up to ensure the sustainability of the population. First Nations have co-operated in the moratorium in much of their traditional hunting areas.

Why is this minister threatening that co-operation by issuing tags that will wipe out a moose population in nearby areas?

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, Mr. Speaker, just to deal with 19A, the hunting area, the hunting season hasn't started yet. And the member might want to do some research on that one.

But we've been listening to the west-side moose advisory committee. We listened to the passionate people that are on Moose for Tomorrow in the area. And we also listened to the surveys. And all of them say that there is very significantly increased concern about moose populations.

That area will see conservation measures brought in. We are looking at the tags. We are looking at the seasons. And we are looking, perhaps, at a potential for a moose refuge, as well, for that area.

We know that actions like this make a difference. Moose in 26A are up 58 per cent because of actions taken by this government.

Cattle Enhancement Council Statement of Expenses Request

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): Recently I, along with my colleague from Emerson, attended the Manitoba Cattle Enhancement Council annual general meeting. At that meeting, I specifically asked for a breakdown on the expenses for the past four years, not the summary sheets as are available on the Internet but the specific breakdown.

So today I get a package from the MCEC, courtesy of the minister, and there is the summary sheets as available on the Internet.

Now, why is this minister so afraid to open up the books to discover the expenses that ranchers' and taxpayers' money has been put into this account? What is he afraid of? What is he hiding?

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, as we indicated at the meeting and the chairperson indicated, there is the available audited report that's been done by a chartered accountant firm. It's fully transparent to the member opposite. If he choose to—has any more questions, it'll be available.

But let me be more specific, Mr. Speaker. The importance of the cattle industry is what it is. That's why we put over a million dollars into community

pastures to build back the population. That's why we brought back livestock price insurance.

Members opposite choose to do whatever they choose to do. We're focused on the reality of bringing back the cattle population, not when they don't even want to call their federal counterparts to support the beef industry in the province of Manitoba and play politics in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: It's time for members' statements.

Ashley Schlag

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to honour a very special young woman, Ashley Schlag. Ashley Schlag was a beautiful young woman from Oakbank area of Manitoba. Unfortunately, as a result of a tragic accident on August 28th, 2012, she passed away at the young age of only 17.

Ashley was an avid soccer player, and thanks to the hard work and love shown by her family and her soccer community, Ashley's spirit will live on through her passion for the game. In Ashley's memory, a scholarship has been established: The Ashley Schlag Memorial Scholarship.

The scholarship consists of two distinct awards. One award is designated for a girl who is or has been involved in a provincial-level competition with the Manitoba Soccer Association, and the other is designated for a girl active in team sports who will be graduating from Springfield Collegiate institute in Oakbank, Manitoba.

* (14:20)

Ashley had an enormously strong character and was known for her positive and outgoing disposition. As such, the scholarship is based not only on athletic or academic performance, but on the embodiment of these positive character traits.

Mr. Speaker, to date, the scholarship has been awarded to three amazing young women. The 2013 recipient of the Memorial Soccer Scholarship was Emma MacLennan and the 2013 recipient of the SCI Graduate award was Sydni DeJong. On March 15th, 2014, at the MSA awards banquet, Ali Caron was awarded the scholarship as well.

In addition to this scholarship, Ashley's family would like to raise enough funds to one day help

contribute to the development of a sports complex in the RM of Springfield in Ashley's memory.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus, I would like to offer our condolences to the Schlags for the loss of their daughter, as well as to commend them for helping to keep their daughter's dream alive and allowing her spirit to live on through the game she loved so much. Thank you.

Evan Wiens

Ms. Nancy Allan (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, joining us in the gallery today is a young man who embodies courage and determination, and is one of the coolest guys I've ever met, Evan Wiens.

At 16 years of age Evan advocated for his right to advertise a student-led gay-straight alliance at his school. Evan recognized how important it is for every student in every community to have a safe space at school so that young people can reach their full potential.

While Evan was pushing forward with what he believes was a human right, our government introduced the safe and inclusive schools act. As a young person facing intense homophobia, Evan became the face of Bill 18 and the very people the legislation was designed to protect.

As the nation's eyes turned his way, Evan handled his unexpected exposure with humility, poise and confidence. He proudly stood in front of news cameras and spoke about how GSAs save lives. In Evan's own words, students should not have to feel ashamed and they should not have to hide themselves.

Last spring Evan appealed his case to the Hanover School Division board of trustees. The next day he learned of their support. Steinbach Regional Secondary school's GSA is now reality and going strong. Evan and his peers have spent the year sharing their ideas, supporting one another and spreading acceptance and respect. Evan is now graduating high school, but he leaves behind a lasting legacy.

Last month Evan was selected from over 3,500 applicants across Canada for the prestigious TD Community Leadership Scholarship. The post-secondary scholarship, worth up to \$70,000, celebrates Evan's commitment to social justice, the tremendous impact he has had on his community and the unwavering leadership that he has displayed.

Evan, you set out to change your school, and in the process you transformed our province. You've touched so many lives. You inspired so many people. We cannot wait to see the great things you will accomplish.

Thank you for everything you've done. Thank you for being my Bill 18 soulmate.

Congratulations. Good luck.

Pastor Henry Ozirney's Retirement

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of attending the celebration of Pastor Henry Ozirney's retirement from ministry of the New Life Church after 44 years.

Back in the fall of 1969, a group of Christians in Stonewall began to meet in a home for prayer and Bible study. Later they decided to form a new church. At this time, Henry Ozirney, a student at Winnipeg Bible College, was invited to hold Bible studies in Grosse Isle. Henry was asked if he would consider being a part-time pastor while continuing his studies. He agreed, and this group of believers officially organized as the Stonewall Baptist Church in 1970.

In 1971 Pastor Henry was called to be full-time pastor, settling in Stonewall. Plans began for a new building. The sod turning was held in June 1972, and construction began. The building was dedicated on October the 22nd, 1972. By 1996 the church purchased 18 acres of land on the east side of Stonewall. Over 700 people now comprise the New Life Church family.

In recognition of these accomplishments, a celebration took place last month on April 26th at New Life Church in Stonewall with a crowd of 350 people. A sit-down meal and program followed. Pastor Glenn Miller was the gracious emcee for the evening. A video presentation portrayed Pastor Henry's life from his childhood days right up to the time of his retirement. Quartets sang to entertain the crowd and congregational hymns rang out. Henry's son, Craig, celebrated the event in a fun way with a roast to his father. Cardboard testimonies displayed how Pastor Henry impacted the lives of some of those in attendance that evening. Presentations were made, at which time I had the pleasure of presenting Pastor Henry with a 'congradulatory' plaque for his work and service over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Pastor Henry for his many years of service. May he and his

family have many more years of health and happiness in his retirement.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Don Duguid

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, joining us in the gallery today is Canadian curling legend Don Duguid.

Mr. Speaker, Don was one of several extraordinary Manitobans inducted into the Order of Manitoba at a magnificent ceremony featuring their Royal Highnesses, the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, on May 21st, 2014.

After Don was married, he moved to Parade Drive in Transcona. In fact, our own Speaker went to school with one of Don's sons. Don now resides in Charleswood with his wife, Barbara.

Early in his curling career, Don claimed many championship titles, including the 1957 Manitoba Consols and the 1965 Canadian Brier. He retired from curling in 1969. Fortunately, that retirement would not last long.

In 1970, Don emerged from retirement to form one of the most successful teams in curling history along with third Rod Hunter, second Jim Pettapiece and lead Bryan Wood. The Winnipeg powerhouse went undefeated at two back-to-back world championships, going 8-0 in 1970 and 9-0 a year later.

After finally retiring his broom, Don became one of the first curling broadcasters, working with both CBC and NBC. After his many telecasting innovations, Don was the first to introduce the centre line, to mic curlers and to use the telestrator. Don was the first to introduce curling schools to Canada, the US and Europe. His program is now taught by the Canadian, US and European curling associations.

In recognition of his accomplishments—curling—his accomplished curling career, Don was inducted to the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame in 1974, Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 1991 and the world curling hall of fame in 2013.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure some in this Chamber remember the fever that swept over Canada when Team Duguid proved time and again that they were the best in the world. Don's gutsy plays and steady hand have earned him a spot in curling legend.

Congratulations, Don, on an accomplished career, and for being inducted into the Order of Manitoba.

Robert H. Williamson

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods): Mr. Speaker, it is with great privilege I rise in the House today to introduce you to Robert H. Williamson, known locally as Bob or Willy. Bob is a gentleman with incredible energy and enthusiasm in all that he does. Professionally, Bob is a teacher, but also a member of the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame, a musician, a dancer and, in his spare time, a successful farmer.

Bob began teaching in 1976 at the Belmont elementary school and became principal in 1981. Bob always kept his students active with outdoor and indoor activities. Bob also taught his students to dance. They learned the proper steps and etiquette of square dancing, old-time waltzing, two-step and polkas. Many of the students still enjoy the talents they learned at school under Bob's direction to this day.

After retirement from Sandy Bay colony school, Bob returned as a part-time teacher at the Glenboro School. It wasn't long before Bob had the students of Glenboro forming their own band, and he was busy teaching kids the old-time dances.

Other schools heard of Bob's teachings and requested that he teach their students as well. Bob is currently teaching dance at 12 schools in the division. A street dance was held May 8th in front of the Prairie Mountain Elementary School in Swan Lake. Close to 500 attended the event.

On Tuesday, April 15th, 2014, Bob bused his current class from the Valleyview Colony School, near Swan Lake, to play at the Legislative Building. It was a real pleasure to listen to these talented individuals and their teacher.

Bob Williamson was born and raised and still resides in Belmont, Manitoba. Ironically, just concluding at Celebrations Dinner Theatre is a production called Footsloose! In the production—the production takes place in the town of Belmont, and in the play, the mayor has enacted a new bylaw strictly forbidding all dancing within city limits. This clearly doesn't sit well with the local youth, and clearly it doesn't sit well with Bob Williamson, either.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and all members of the House join me in celebrating Bob Williamson

and his excellent teachings to all his students past, present and future.

Thank you very much.

* (14:30)

Mr. Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader):

On House business, could you please call for second readings, Bill 74; and then concurrence and third readings of bills 23, 37, 55 and 58; and following that, debate on concurrence and third reading of Bill 51.

Mr. Speaker: We'll now call bills in the following order: second readings, Bill 74; followed by concurrence and third readings of bills 23, 37, 55 and 58; and then followed by third readings of Bill 51.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 74—The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: And we'll start by calling Bill 74, The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan), that Bill 74, The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la divulgation de la rémunération dans le secteur public, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Ms. Howard: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise today to speak to this bill. I want to start off, of course, by recognizing Mike Sutherland and the Police Association, who brought forward this issue. I also want to, again, put on the record, my appreciation to the House leader for the opposition, the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), for allowing this bill to come forward at this point in the session.

What this bill does is act on a concern that was raised by the police about their security when it comes to the report that comes out every year that publicly discloses salaries paid out of the public

purse over \$50,000, and what the Police Association's concerns were, that for some of their members, of course, this could put them at risk.

We know that serving as a police officer is an inherently risky profession. We ask these folks to keep us safe from harm. They go into situations that none of us would ever dare enter. And when they come forward and ask for some legislative amendments to ensure their safety, I think it's the proper thing to do in this House that we look for a way to bring those forward.

What will happen as a result of this legislation is that those salaries will continue to be disclosed, but they'll be disclosed by badge number instead of by name of the employee.

I want to speak for a moment about some of the things that we have been able to do working with not only police, but first responders to ensure that they have a safer workplace. And certainly, this is one action.

Other actions that we have taken with respect to firefighters is to bring in for the first time anywhere the presumptive coverage under Workers Compensation for illnesses that they are exposed to in the course of their duties. We've extended that to cover now a wide range of different diseases, many kinds of cancer that we know that they're exposed to.

And that step to make those workplaces safer for those first responders has now been replicated all over the world, in countries as far away as Australia, that have looked to Manitoba for that example, as well as in provinces all over the country.

I know that some of the other actions that we've taken to try to improve policing includes support to municipalities to enhance the availability of police officers, to hire additional police officers, including support, of course, to the Winnipeg Police Service.

And, I think, in this session, we've included legislation for Thompson to have cadet programs, where you can augment the police service, but also reach out to people who may be interested in policing as a career, give them some experience in that type of work, give them some exposure to the police service so that they can be recruited into the police service and can serve.

I know that the Minister of Justice and the members of his department work very closely with police services in Winnipeg and other parts of the province, as well as the RCMP, to look at changes in

policy and the way things are done in legislation and in funding, to help them be able to do the work that they do.

Some of the things I know that we've worked on together include specialized units to go after child exploitation. We've worked together to do things like protect animals that serve also in the police force, police dogs, from being interfered with, making that, I think, an offence in the province.

So this is the latest in what I believe has been a record of trying to ensure the safest workplace as possible for our first responders, be they police or firefighters or EMS workers, and we'll continue to look for ways to do that. This is, perhaps, what may appear to be a small action, an administrative action, but we know that if it can give comfort to police officers, to their families and loved ones, that they're a little bit safer, then it's certainly well worth the effort that we can make to do it.

Also, in looking at this concern that was brought forward by the police, it also caused us to think about other people who may have concerns for their safety in terms of being listed in the public disclosure, and so we're going to continue to work on some of those concerns and may certainly, in the future, bring forward further amendments.

One area that I am aware of is we want to make sure that anyone who has been a victim of domestic violence or stalking and they fear for their safety, that they are not unwittingly put at risk because their name is disclosed in a public document and their place of employment is disclosed in that public document. So we'll continue to work on those types of changes to protect other people's safety, and we look forward to potentially bringing forward other changes to ensure that we can keep everybody safe.

In conclusion, I just want to thank, again, all members of this House who've been co-operative in being able to bring this bill forward. It is timely. I will say, for the benefit of the House, the next disclosure, I think, is scheduled to take place before the end of June. Of course, that disclosure will be based on the old rules so it will still disclose people by names. These rules will be in effect for the next disclosure, which will happen next June. Passing this bill now, I think, gives people lots of lead time to be able to accomplish that.

I'm not sure that there are—there may be—will be other members who wish to speak to the public disclosure bill, and if there are other members that

would like to speak to the bill, I'm certainly prepared to allow them to do that, in a timely fashion, and because I know that this is a bill that enjoys support across the aisle, and—well, I look forward to hearing that this is a bill that enjoys support across the aisle. I've been led to assume that. It was seconded at first reading by the member for Steinbach, but he's allowed to change his mind, I suppose. Anyways, I look forward to hearing what other members do.

I think this is a good example of where this Legislature can co-operate when there are issues of public policy that come forward. I think, frankly, that happens more often than not, and it's probably worth saying once in a while, to whoever is still listening out there in the public, that we who are elected do find cause to work together when it comes to protecting the safety and well-being of Manitobans. We do that often in this House, and I always treasure those moments when we can work together to make life a little bit better, a little bit safer for Manitobans.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak to this bill this afternoon, and it is something, I think, that will find broad support.

I recognize that it's an unusual measure, and there'll be members of the public who have questions about it and those are legitimate questions. Certainly, we agree strongly with the principle of disclosure, of disclosure of public salaries over a certain threshold. One can debate the threshold, I suppose, but we do believe in the principle of that public disclosure, Mr. Speaker. And so this wasn't something that we considered lightly. In fact, it was something that we spent, the time that we had, speaking with different groups and organizations. I did have an opportunity to speak to some of those representing law enforcement in the province, and they expressed to me that this is a real concern, unfortunately.

* (14:40)

I recognize that it's not something that is done, I don't think, in other jurisdictions in Canada, but from what I've been told by police officers, this is, unfortunately, a more violent jurisdiction, in many ways, than other jurisdictions, so it's needed more the—perhaps, than in other areas because of the significant violence and gang activity that, unfortunately, we have under this government in the

province of Manitoba and in the city of Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker.

So there is, I think, a real reason to have the protection for police officers, but there is a balance because it's not as though there'll be no disclosure of public salaries for those police officers. The salaries will still be disclosed. They'll just simply have a numeric delineator attached to them, Mr. Speaker. So, while you won't be able to see the individuals name, there'll still be disclosure on the salaries by virtue of the numeric delineator and also ranking, I believe. So it is a balance, and I think it strikes the appropriate balance, although not an easy one to come up with.

I don't think this is something that will become commonplace. I don't think it needs to become commonplace, nor do we want it to become commonplace, but there were special circumstances in talking with law enforcement and hearing the stories about how the disclosure of the names provides the ability for those in the criminal element who want to cause harm to police officers to make it easier to do that, Mr. Speaker. So, with those provisos, and speaking with those in law enforcement and measuring out the balance between the important reason to have disclosure on these, I think sometimes they're called sunshine laws, but to have disclosure in terms of public sector salaries, but also weighing that with the need to have protection for our police officers, I think it was important that we end up having this legislation go forward in the form that it has.

So I look forward to it going to committee. I suspect we might have some presentations by those who are impacted. There may be people who disagree, and, you know, I didn't get into politics because I wanted everybody to agree with me, Mr. Speaker. There are many times when people don't agree with me, and that's fine, and you sort of live with those sort of things and, ultimately, you make decisions that you think are the right decisions. And it's a free country, so when there is healthy debate in a respectful way, I think that makes the democracy and the process of our governance better, and those who wish to disagree are certainly welcome to come and bring those disagreements forward, and if they have suggestions that can achieve the same goal in a different manner, then I'm sure we're open to listening to those things. But it is important that we have the objective of police protection in this legislation, and I look forward to it going to

committee and hearing what representation there may be from the public.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment briefly on this legislation dealing with public sector compensation.

I'm certainly very supportive of this initiative, which provides a balance in providing disclosure but also provides some protection from people who could be targeted, in this case police officers, and I think it is an important issue that has been brought forward by Winnipeg police officers and the union and Mike Sutherland, and I'm pleased to see that we are moving forward on this issue.

On the other hand, given that the legislation is being opened up in this fashion, I'm extremely disappointed that the issues that we have raised over the last couple of years of problems in the way that public sector compensation is reported were not addressed at all. More than one occasion I have raised the problem of the fact that public sector compensation may be, for a single individual, be reported in more than one place. This was happening, for example, for physicians who earned compensation from a regional health authority and separately on fee for service, but I'm sure it happens in many other areas of compensation.

And, surely, with the sophistication that we have in identifying individuals, we should be able to have one list of all the compensation in which individuals are identified and their individual compensations, where there's more than one, added up so that we can see what they are and what the sources are. Surely, it's high time that—and past time that this is done because the way that this is being done at the moment under the current government obscures the situation and it makes it harder for people to understand what individuals' public compensation are because this incident of dual compensation for individuals, I'm sure, if it was looked at very carefully, would probably be more common than one might initially expect.

And so I would hope that the government would look at this issue, and instead of bringing of a bill at the last minute which addresses only a piece of what needs to be done in terms of the public sector compensation act, would address it more thoroughly and, hopefully, we can see that legislation coming up this fall. Thank you.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Very briefly, I thank the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard), the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) and the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) for their comments on this bill, and I think it's fair to say we'll have unanimous support of the Legislature to make things, frankly, just a little bit safer for police officers.

This is a request. This bill came about as a request by police officers not to fail to disclose their salaries, but to replace their names with their badge number. Certainly, concerns have been expressed by police that Winnipeg, although a large city is in many ways not that large of a city, and there was a concern that that sort of disclosure was not helpful to police officers for protection from criminal elements.

We know, as well, that it's actually the police officers that do the most that often wind up having the higher salaries listed in the disclosure. Of course, officers who work overtime, unlike many other working folks who go home at the end of their shift, many times we know that police officers stay well past the end of their shift to conclude investigations, to comfort families, to doing all the different things that police officers are required to do. We know that police officers often log a great deal of overtime when they're testifying in court, and although measures have been made by our government and by the federal government as well to try to minimize the time, it is still necessary for police officers in many cases to be there to give their evidence. Many times those are officers who've been involved in very long and complex investigations, who, despite the best efforts by Crown attorneys, still may wind up spending more time sitting on the benches of the Law Courts Building than they would prefer.

As well, we know there are many officers who are assigned to deal with gangs, with organized crime, who may be undercover, who do spend far more than a 40-hour work week and, again, no one wants to see a situation where an officer who's giving great service shows up in somebody's list as one of the highest paid police officers. I don't think that benefits anybody and I know the Winnipeg Police Association doesn't think that benefits anybody.

Certainly, it's fair to say that the relationship between the provincial government, the police service and the police association, I can honestly say has never been better. We have in Chief Devon Clunis an individual who's dynamic, who's committed to engaging with Manitobans, who is not

afraid to come out to communities and hear from people on their ideas on public safety and how the police can best provide, as he would call it, a culture of safety.

With the Winnipeg Police Association we have excellent leadership under Mike Sutherland, and there are a number of arrangements and improvements that have been reached, the first one being the auxiliary cadet program. Of course, that was reached by investment of our government, by the City of Winnipeg and agreement between the Winnipeg Police Service and the Winnipeg Police Association on how this properly-supervised properly trained cadet program could come to fruition. And it's certainly our hope that, as we roll out cadets outside of the city of Winnipeg, the model here in Winnipeg will be very, very useful to us.

We know the police have been tremendous, a tremendous support in rolling out the Block by Block initiative in the William Whyte area. Police officers will tell us that it is frustrating to have to go back to the same house or the same apartment night after night after night. The police have told us they want to be part of a larger circle of care so that they're not just investigating and dealing with things after they happen, so that they're part of measures to get out in front of the problem, to prevent disorder, to prevent chaos and to prevent crimes from occurring.

So for all those reasons we certainly, I believe, have an atmosphere of mutual respect with our police officers in Winnipeg and across the province. We believe this is a reasonable request. I'm very pleased that all members of this Legislature appear quite prepared to allow this to move on to committee.

So, with those comments, Mr. Speaker, I certainly urge the House to move this ahead. Thank you.

* (14:50)

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on Bill 74?

House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is second reading of Bill 74, The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act.

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

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, could you please canvass the House for leave to waive rule 160 regarding the two days' notice for consideration of a private bill by a committee so that Bill 300 can be referred to a committee that's already been struck for tomorrow night?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to waive rule 160 regarding the two-day notice for consideration of a private bill by a committee so that Bill 300 can be referred to a committee? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Swan: On further House business, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to announce in addition to the bills previously referred that the following bills will also be considered at the June 4, 2014, meeting of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development: Bill 74, The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act, and Bill 300, The St. Charles Country Club Incorporation Amendment Act.

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that in addition to the bills previously referred that the following bills will also be considered at the June 4th, 2014, meeting of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development: Bill 74, The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Amendment Act, and Bill 300, The St. Charles Country Club Incorporation Amendment Act.

The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Mr. Swan: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could please canvass the House to see if there is leave for a number of following items that have come about as a matter of negotiation and agreement by members of this House. There are seven parts to this leave request that I'll read through.

First of all, is there leave for the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) to file a second private member's resolution this session?

(2) Is there leave for the member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff) to file a second private member's resolution this session?

(3) Is there leave to consider three private members' resolutions on the morning of June 5, 2014, in the following order: at 10 a.m., the

member for Steinbach's PMR on celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Mennonite Heritage Village Museum; at 10:30 a.m., the member for Interlake's PMR on the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, Islendingadagurinn; and at 11 o'clock, the member for St. Paul's (Mr. Schuler) PMR on freedom and dignity in Syria?

(4) Is there leave to set aside concurrence and third reading of Bill 63 and for the Minister of Education and Advanced Learning (Mr. Allum) to distribute and move report stage amendments for consideration on Bill 63, despite the fact that the normal filing deadline has passed?

(5) Is there leave for the House to set aside private members' business on June 10, 2014, from 10 a.m. to noon, so the House may consider condolence motions?

(6) Is there leave for the House to sit until 6 p.m. on June 9th, 10th and 11th, 2014?

(7) Is there leave for Bills 69, 70 and 71 to be sent to committee intersessionally and reinstated for the Fourth Session of the 40th Legislature, with the bills to be reported back to the House and considered for the remaining stages of the bill enactment process?

Mr. Speaker: I'm going to address each of these items individually. Is there leave of the House for the following items:

Is there leave for the member for Steinbach to file a second private member's resolution this session? *[Agreed]*

Is there leave for the member for the Interlake to file a second private member's resolution this session? *[Agreed]*

Is there leave to consider three private members' resolutions on the morning of June the 5th, 2014, in the following order: at 10 a.m., the member for Steinbach's private member's resolution on celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Mennonite Heritage Village Museum; at 10:30, the member for the Interlake's private member's resolution on the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba's 'isladingadam'—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense. My—pardon my pronunciation. I'm sure we'll give this to Hansard folks later so they'll have the exact spelling. And at 11 a.m., the member for St. Paul's private member's resolution on freedom and dignity in Syria? *[Agreed]*

(4) Is there leave to set aside concurrence and third reading of Bill 63 and for the Minister of Education and Advanced Learning (Mr. Allum) to distribute and move report stage amendments for consideration on Bill 63, despite the fact that the normal filing deadline has passed? *[Agreed]*

(5) Is there leave of the House to set aside the private members' business on June the 10th, 2014, from 10 a.m. to noon, so that the House may consider condolence motions? *[Agreed]*

Is there leave of the House to sit until 6 p.m. on dates June 9th, 10th and 11th, 2014? *[Agreed]*

And, finally, is there leave of the House for leave for bills 69, 70 and 71 to be sent to committee intersessionally and reinstated for the Fourth Session of the 40th Legislature, with bills to be reported back to the House and considered for the remaining stages of the bill enactment process? *[Agreed]*

Thank the honourable members.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 23—The Cooperative Housing Strategy Act

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call Bill 23, The Cooperative Housing Strategy Act.

The honourable Minister of Justice, under concurrence and third readings.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister for Housing and Community Development (Mr. Bjornson), that Bill 23, The Cooperative Housing Strategy Act; Loi sur la stratégie en matière d'habitation coopérative, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Housing and Community Development): I'll just put a few words on the record as we move into third reading, and I appreciate that we have this opportunity to do so.

First and foremost, I have to start by saying that I had the privilege of attending the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association 46th annual congress in Edmonton last month, and of course I did so because Winnipeg will be hosting the 47th annual National Congress of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association next spring. Now, unlike our hosts in Edmonton, I did assure them that we would

have a National Hockey League team that would be in the playoffs at that time of year. So I do hope that our Jets are in the playoffs while this congress meets next year here in Winnipeg.

Now I did also speak about the substance of the legislation in the first two readings when I had the opportunity to do so. I'm just going to speak briefly about the history of how we got to this particular point, because one of the things that we will be pointing out and highlighting at the national housing—Canadian Housing and Renewal Association congress next year is the fact that we are leaders in Canada with respect to this type of legislation and supporting co-operative housing through legislation here in Manitoba. So this'll be something that will be on the table next year as well.

But this has been part of an ongoing strategy that Housing and Community Development, under my predecessor, the Minister of Family Services (Ms. Irvin-Ross), had initiated in 2012 with consultations that took place on housing—co-operative housing policy framework for Manitoba where many of the stakeholders in co-op housing were at the table to discuss what we could do to better promote housing in Manitoba, the co-operative nature and living co-operatively, and that stakeholder consultation took place from June through to October 2012. And there was a document produced and brought to my attention with respect to the framework. And one of the things that the framework did call for was a co-operative housing legislation. So we're very pleased that we're here having this third reading of this bill today, and I'm looking forward to its passing, Mr. Speaker.

I think, just to reiterate some of the comments that I made in the second reading, there are a lot of political leaders who I quoted in that particular reading, including parties or people from a couple of different political parties, but I also quoted our Governor General, former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson, who spoke of the value of co-operative housing. And that housing model is a very critical part of developing housing infrastructure in Canada.

And, certainly, when you look to the European models where the costs of living are so extremely high and where the costs of housing are astronomical in many of the very geographically small but population-rich nations of Europe, this is a model that is going to become more and more relevant as our communities continue to grow and more and

more important as our communities continue to grow.

* (15:00)

And we've seen that there has not been as much co-operative housing developed in Canada in the last couple of decades, and we do know the value of co-operative housing as a model for affordable housing. So it is something that this legislation will work to promote, and it will not only promote traditional models, but new models that have been brought forward in recent examples and some models that, perhaps, there are one or two examples of them in Manitoba today, such as the equity co-operative housing model, but a model that will be promoted more fulsomely with this particular piece of legislation.

So, as I said, this is something that came from recommendations made through consultation with the stakeholders in—at the period from June to October of 2012, Mr. Speaker. And we've had input from stakeholders, but also several branches within housing community development to draft the implementation plan and we're very much looking forward to working with the stakeholders as we bring that plan to fruition.

So it's a matter of supporting the policy framework that we've been developing. It's a matter of supporting a sector—pardon me, working to support the sector by developing new legislation—pardon me, I should say, bringing this legislation to third reading and the act will commit the Province to have a co-op housing strategy with a set of defined values and principles, Mr. Speaker. It'll provide statutory framework to support co-operative housing sector over the long term and continue the Province's already established work with housing co-operatives and other stakeholders with the focus on capacity building and financial sustainability.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're very pleased that we have this at third reading and look forward to the bill passing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): I listened intently to the minister in his comments and, you know, I'm not sure, when we hear about all the wonderful things that this government has done, that anyone in Manitoba believes a word that they say. Mr. Speaker, they say one thing and they do another.

We have, time and time again, Mr. Speaker, raised in this House the issues of all of the broken promises, the lies that this government has made to Manitobans over the years, and, again, how can we believe a word they say when they make the commitment to any kind of a strategy.

Mr. Speaker, it's passing strange that we have a government that would talk about consultation and legislate consultation on a housing strategy, a co-op housing strategy, which should happen and should be able to happen without legislation, if you had a government that had a major commitment to co-operative housing. After 14 years in government, you would think that they would've had a strategy under way, but 14 years or 15 years into their mandate they are now waking up and bringing in legislation that will force them to consult.

Well, what did they do when they raised the PST? Did they consult with Manitobans? Did anyone in Manitoba indicate their support for that increase in the PST? And we know that when we went to public hearings on the bill that took away people's democratic right to vote on a referendum to raise the PST, we had the Premier (Mr. Selinger) who didn't even acknowledge that those hearings were going on; he snuck out the back door without listening to one Manitoban. And, regardless of the many, many Manitobans that came forward in rallies outside of the Legislature, in letters to the editor, in presentations at committee, Mr. Speaker, we have a government that rammed through illegal legislation, and so how can anyone trust them or believe that they're going to do anything that they say they're going to do?

Now, Mr. Speaker, we could have supported this legislation had the government accepted an amendment that we brought in that at least would require them to report on measurable outcomes as a result of the legislation. But what did they do in committee? They voted against that amendment. They don't want to be accountable to the Legislature. They don't want to have to report to Manitobans on a yearly basis what the measurable outcomes are of any strategy that they put in place. So how can they be trusted? We've learned already that they can't be trusted to keep their word on anything that they say.

So Manitobans aren't going to be fooled by this government and this minister. They are going to stand up and be critical of a government who takes Manitobans for granted, that acts in such an arrogant

way that they disregard anything that Manitobans have to say.

So we cannot stand with any confidence and vote for a piece of legislation that forces the government to consult with Manitobans around a co-operative housing strategy. Mr. Speaker, that strategy should have been in place and we should have seen some positive outcomes already as a result of a government—of a government that really cared. But, obviously, they don't care, and they've had this awakening 15 years after they formed government that just maybe—just maybe—they should develop a co-operative housing strategy.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Manitobans aren't going to be fooled, we aren't fooled and we are not going to support the piece of legislation that Manitobans don't believe in and that we don't believe the government will follow through on. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment upon The Cooperative Housing Strategy Act. I have for a long time been a very strong supporter of co-operative housing and suggested a number of innovations in this area.

This bringing forward an act to have a co-operative housing strategy, it is odd that it was not brought forward in 1999 or 2000 when this government came into power and was elected the first time. Clearly, this was priority No. 992 on this government's agenda, way down the list in terms of what the government has prioritized.

That being said, I'm going to support this legislation, even though I think that it can be much improved in terms of what it actually contains. You know, in the principles to guide the strategy, there's no reference to a principle of financial sustainability either for the people who live in co-operative housing or for the government who is maybe, at least under many circumstances, at least under some circumstances, making a financial contribution.

As to the contents of the strategy, what is surprising is there's not even a requirement for a five-year plan here, you know, that there is minister must review this once every five years, but there's no requirement to have an updated plan every five years. There's not even a requirement to have a report every five years in terms of what the outcomes are and what's actually happened.

The consultations which are to occur in this section which deals with the consultations, the minister must consult with persons who are members

of housing co-operatives, persons who are co-operative sector representatives and any other persons, organizations or entities that the minister considers appropriate. Well, the way that this is written, the minister could meet with a couple of members of housing co-operatives in his office and then meet with a couple of members of—in the co-operative sector in his office in private without any public consultations whatsoever and no public registry. You know, this is not an adequate form of consultations; it's the type of consultations which this government has undertaken far too often in the past in the backrooms and without public attention and without letting people know.

* (15:10)

And so there are major deficiencies in this bill which should have been and could have been very easily remedied. You know, it is a step above, beyond where we were, you know, before this legislation came in, but it was hardly necessary even to have this legislation to move forward much more aggressively on co-operative housing, and it is certainly, at this juncture, sad that after 14 years that we're given legislation which has got some major holes in it and could have been really, really improved from what we have today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate on Bill 23?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The House ready for the question.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 23, The Cooperative Housing Strategy Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair is the Ayes have it. The—

Recorded Vote

An Honourable Member: Recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Swan), recorded vote.

Recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (16:10)

Order, please. The one-hour allocation for the ringing of the division bells has expired and I'm instructing that they'd be turned off and we'll now proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 23, The Cooperative Housing Strategy Act.

Division

A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Allan, Allum, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Dewar, Gaudreau, Gerrard, Howard, Jha, Kostyshyn, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Robinson, Saran, Selby, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.

Nays

Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Martin, Mitchelson, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Schuler, Smook, Stefanson, Wishart.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 30, Nays 17.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Bill 37—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Connecting Schools to the Internet)

Mr. Speaker: Now proceed to—move to concurrence and third reading of Bill 37, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Connecting Schools to the Internet).

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education and Advanced Learning (Mr. Allum), that Bill 37, The Public Schools Amendment Act

(Connecting Schools to the Internet); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques (branchement à Internet), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to get up to speak to this bill and offer some final comments on it.

I'm particularly happy to do so because when I was first privileged and fortunate enough to be appointed to this very great position, one of the first things that I heard from our partners in the K-12 system was about making sure that we could get broadband access to schools in rural and remote parts of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, those schools in the Manitoba School Boards Association, Manitoba Association of School Superintendents and others such like organizations, made it clear to me that with a—in the absence of any real ability to have a partnership, they wouldn't really be able to extend what is now that most vital service that all of us depend on, that most important learning tool for kids.

And so we felt that there was some good reason to amend The Public Schools Act in order to ensure that schools and school boards have the opportunity to engage in partnerships with other public sector bodies, whether that's Manitoba Hydro or a regional health authority or other schools or whomever in the public sector to use resources in the most efficient and effective way, again, in order to ensure that that most important service, that is a broadband service, is extended to schools in rural and remote Manitoba.

And so it is with a great deal of pride that I bring this bill forward and I look forward to unanimous support for this bill in the House.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): It gives me great pleasure to stand up today and put a few words on the record to Bill 37, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Connecting Schools to the Internet).

Mr. Speaker, we know that this bill was brought forward with good intentions in mind to a point. I'm not quite sure how many school divisions throughout the province the minister had actually consulted with in the creation of this bill. I know that part of the

various groups are supporting this bill, I know that also that the Internet is a vital part of the education system and with this at committee on May 26th, we decided to bring forward an amendment to the bill which was later on voted down, which I think that the amendment would have strengthened the bill and would have actually provided school divisions some more power to make those decisions.

I know that, Mr. Speaker, that the proposed legislation amends The Public Schools Act in order to allow school boards to enter into cost-sharing agreements, to build their enhanced Internet service to schools. The legislative amendments would have granted—or it would grant the Department of Education and Advanced Learning the authority to review and approve proposals from school divisions to enter into cost-sharing partnerships with public or private organizations. School boards would be given first priority to partnering with any other public entity such as another school division, a Crown corporation, a bound council, or a municipality to help share the costs of broadband access before pursuing a partnership with a private organization. This bill aims to create the conditions for providing students with better access to digital learning resources, especially in rural and northern and remote communities in Manitoba.

What is the concerning fact, Mr. Speaker, in this bill is that it puts all the power in, again, to the hands of the minister. We already see that the Minister of Education has been blaming school boards for raising property hikes, and when he sees fit also blaming them for firing teachers, but at the same time when it comes to hiring teachers, he seems to be the first one to the front of the line to get the pat on the back. This is creating an adversarial relationship between the government and the school boards. This government is treating school boards like the enemy instead of working collaboratively with them to protect and strengthen education for Manitoba children.

*(16:20)

This aggressive and adversarial approach is not going to improve education in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, it's only going to worsen it; something we have already seen under this NDP government. As I see that this bill has some very good features, and I know that the PC Party believes in creating a better education for all Manitobans, this is why originally we had suggested a few amendments, which basically would have been taking that final

authority, that final approval process and putting it in the hands of the school boards because they're the ones who are getting the funding from the government, they're the ones who are raising the property taxes or having to balance their budgets on a yearly basis. I know that they've been given that directive from the minister's department: do as I say, not as I do. Go and make sure that you've balanced your books, even though they have not had to toe the line on that note. And that's why we brought forward, on the 26th, the amendment to basically put the final power, the final say back onto school divisions because technically it is their money that they're working with and they have to make those decisions for the betterment of their schools.

Another downside to this bill which—I know that the minister had mentioned how this is a bill that's going to increase access to all Manitoban students, well, which, in fact, Mr. Speaker, is not the case. The fact is is that there's a third of schools that have already gone and they've already put it in. There's a third of schools that it doesn't matter what happens, that they are—this bill is not going to be helping them out. There is a third that it is going to help, and with that I think that this minister could go back and adjust the—make some amendments to the bill, maybe consider those two thirds of schools where school divisions that actually could benefit from some legislation.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, connecting students to the Internet is just one step in the right direction, but there's much more to be done to improve our education system. And with those few words, I'm going to have to politely suggest to the minister to make appropriate amendments and change the bill and go back to doing a little bit more consulting and get some more facts on the record.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Interlake.

An Honourable Member: Mr.—oh.

Mr. Speaker: Typically we alternate back and forth, so, the honourable member for Interlake.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be brief so that the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) has an opportunity to speak as well, but I do want to say a few things about this bill.

First of all, commend our new Minister of Education and Advanced Learning (Mr. Allum) for carrying on in the tradition of the NDP and putting in place proactive legislation for schools, for students and so forth. This is something that is needed. I know that just based on conversations I have with my own school divisions in my constituency. The Evergreen School Division, a good case in point. This is something that is near and dear to their hearts, I know that, and I'm sure the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) would agree with me, and I await the vote to see if the members of the Conservative Party are actually going to support this legislation or not. I listened closely to the critic across the way and didn't detect any endorsement one way or another, but I know that certainly we will have endorsement from school divisions out there.

This legislation again proves that our government governs for all Manitobans, whether they're inside the Perimeter, in our cities and towns, whether they're in rural Manitoba or northern Manitoba. This is the type of innovative legislating which will allow freedom to school divisions to exercise their options, to look for partners. And, of course, Mr. Speaker, we would prefer that they work with public entities such as other school boards or municipal governments, for example, or the provincial or federal governments or our First Nations communities.

All of these things are included in this bill, and I do note Crown corporations as well. I recall when Manitoba Hydro built the—put the fibre optic line through the Interlake and up to the northern dams. This was a massive capital works project which created opportunities for the expansion of broadband, something that happened in our time in office with a Crown corporation.

And I just have to think how much better it would have been if we had retained the Manitoba Telephone System here in our province, how much more we could have done. And what happened? Well, we all know what happened back in the 1990s. After swearing on a Bible they would never privatize the telephone company—and the election, or the time leading up to the '95 election, what did they do? First thing on the auction block right after the election date—so ironic—and it was theft on a grand scale, that's really the only way to describe it, it—this was grand larceny on a provincial level.

I have to—I want to draw a comparison, Mr. Speaker, because this begs comparison. This

happened in the early—in 1995. This is when it happened, and I recall that when they sold the shares, I think they sold the shares for—*[interjection]* If I could have the floor, gentlemen, please. I'm trying to make a point here and it's a very important point. It's something that bears comparison.

Now, as I said, they sold shares in MTS. I believe there was a maximum number of shares, 1,500 shares was the maximum, the idea being that all Manitobans could then share in the purchase of their telephone company. But there was no limit on the number of shares that could be sold in the next round. You could only buy 1,500, but if there were a speculator, for instance, out there that wanted to buy up blocks of these 1,500 shares, they were allowed to do so. And there were a number of prominent Conservatives in my own constituency—within my own family, I have to say, a very prominent Conservative in my own family who was out there buying up as many of these blocks of shares as he could, accumulated quite a portfolio in rather short order—and that was how the telephone company was lost to Manitobans: one round, limits; next round, the doors were wide open.

And the timing is important, as well. This happened in 1995, but something very similar happened in the former Soviet Union just a few short years before that—a few short years before that. Now, I was—I happened to be in Russia at the time, and this was after the fall of the Soviet Union and Boris Yeltsin was going to privatize all the state-owned corporations, much like the Filmon Tories did, right, and even the numbers are similar. The Russian president was offering 15,000 ruble stock certificates to each Russian citizen, very similar to the 1,500 shares—just add a zero or take a zero off like the Tories did—15,000 ruble stock certificates.

What happened? The next day organized crime was on every street across the entire country. The mafia spread out just like the provincial Conservatives spread out after the sale of the 1,500 shares, and inside of six months or a year—I don't know how long it took—but within that time period organized crime managed to gather up all of these stock certificates. That was at a time when inflation was running high, 1,000 per cent was the inflation rate, so holding onto these certificates didn't make much sense. They devalued too quickly. So they wanted to sell them fast. The mafia picked them all up. The next thing you know, the mafia owned the oil industry in Russia, and now you have more

billionaires per capita in cities like St. Petersburg than in any other place on the earth.

So that is a very noteworthy and timely comparison, from 15,000 rubles in Communist Russia to \$1,500-stock certificates here in Tory Manitoba back in the bad old days. A very similar approach, a theft of a Crown corporation, an asset very important to the people of Manitoba, and done at a time when we were on the verge of the information technology explosion, right?

You know, in 1999 we were—I was just getting my first cellphone, I think, and I didn't even want that. Well, now we've all got our BlackBerrys and computers, and the opportunities just exploded. It would have been so valuable to the people of Manitoba if they had been on that cutting edge and had grown with the company.

* (16:30)

And I know, I was actually working in the bush—*[interjection]* Yes, I spent many, many years working hard before I came here. I'm joking, of course—18 years in the oil rigs and before that I used to cut line for MTS, as a contractor. I cut probably over 100 miles of line through the bush with a chainsaw and an axe, so—and all of that effort was put into laying the fibre optic cable for the Manitoba Telephone System. This was fibre optics and I'm just one crew, a hundred miles. The Province spent hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars on this infrastructure investment, I think in the range of 300 or 400 million dollars investing in fibre optics, and then a few short years later sold the entire telephone company for, what was it, \$600 million. Vastly undervalued, but, of course, when you're selling it to yourself, you want to keep your costs down, right. That's sound fiscal management in a Conservative's mind.

So, you know, just—I just wanted to put those few short words on the record how beneficial it would've been if history had developed differently. And, I guess, in closing, Mr. Speaker, I have to wonder what kind of secret agenda they have for our other Crown corporations. The most obvious, of course, being Manitoba Hydro, but look across the board, the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, this is where the real threat is I'm sure.

But I digress a little bit from the main topic, Bill 37, and I'm just—and I think I've said enough, you know, food for thought, and—

Some Honourable Members: More.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: More? Is that unanimous? I'm not hearing any rousing calls for more from members opposite, and I do want them to support this legislation, particularly the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler). I call upon him to stand up for the Evergreen School Division, who have called for this for years. It remains to be seen how this plays out.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to this legislation for a few minutes.

First of all, I think it's very important that students throughout Manitoba in our schools have access to the Internet and broadband access because it's essential for learning in today's environment. It gives students access to a wealth of information and material. It teaches students how to find information in today's world where so much is available on the Internet. But it is important—for students to be able to learn how to use the Internet wisely because there's also a lot of garbage on the Internet, and so learning how to distinguish between what is useful information and what is not is something which is very important that students learn, and learning in schools is an important way to do this. So I certainly support this legislation.

I think it's surprising, however, that there are so many schools in Manitoba which do not have broadband access. Now the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) says that only about a third currently have broadband access. I would guess that it's considerably higher than that, but I don't have the information at my fingertips. And the Minister of Education may, and may at some point, provide that information more clearly. But, you know, that being said, the precise number is not so important as the recognition that there are a lot of schools which should have broadband access but which don't, and this doesn't depend on where they are in Manitoba. It shouldn't depend on whether it's a First Nation or a Metis or any other community in this province. All the schools should have access.

I'm a little surprised that there's not the ability to do the partnerships which we're talking about. I'm a little more surprised that this has been something that the member for the Interlake has been aware of for many years but obviously he hasn't been able to persuade former ministers of education of the importance of it.

But that—beyond that, let me take members back for a moment to 1994, when I was at the

federal government and we set up a community access program because we recognized that there was inequitable access to the Internet. And the interesting—one of the interesting things about the Community Access Program, was that not only did it not prevent, you know, arrangements with schools and other organizations, it actually required arrangements; an involvement of schools, of health organizations, of government Internet access and businesses, to all come together in an environment that would help communities get access to the Internet. And this was done providing, what was in those days, a relatively small amount of money. I think it was up to \$33,000 per community site, but, in many cases, it was actually less than that because of the partnerships which were built. Now these partnerships may have built in a creative way and may not have required a precise level of education, but there were, you know, important Internet access points which were run from schools, Internet co-ops. I think one that was run out, for example, of a school in Carman, that provided Internet access to the whole area.

An Honourable Member: Miami.

Mr. Gerrard: Was it Miami? But the—it was an example, but it was not alone. There were, in the Interlake, there were efforts in Arborg, in Eriksdale, in a variety of other communities, in different ways, to get Internet access, and there was not a problem with schools working with businesses to get Internet access. People were creative and worked hard because they saw it as valuable and because they saw there was a need to work together, if you were going to create the pipe, as it were, to a community.

And we should have this broadband access now. Clearly, we should have had it quite a number of years ago, but we should have it as fast as possible. Let's not stumble. And let's—if the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko) is right, that there's a third of schools that won't be helped by this measure, then the member for—the Minister of Education should get to work and figure out a way to make sure that every school in this province has Internet access. And I suspect that you would find that there was a lot of support from around—right—the Legislative Chamber, for those sorts of measures because people broadly see this as very important.

So, with those comments, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to this passing, and to more schools getting broadband access.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, I'm reminded often in this Legislature, that just because a bill has a nicely worded title, it doesn't mean that it's a well-crafted bill.

And I look at this particular bill and I reflect on my own community, Mr. Speaker. I brought this issue to the Minister of Education, in second reading, indicating that we already have schools connected by high-speed Internet and what measures would there be for cost recovery for those who've already put in that capital. We had no response. Amendments were not accepted at committee.

The member for Lac du Bonnet has indicated that there is at least a third of the schools that may not be able to access any sort of partnerships or support. So a third of the schools who've already done—I will use broad numbers—a third of the schools who have already put in the investment won't be able to recover the funds; a third won't be able to access it. I don't think it's good legislation to have two-thirds of Manitoba schools left out of something that they should have as a right, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on Bill 37?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 37, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Connecting Schools to the Internet).

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion would please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion would please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In the opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

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

Mr. Speaker: On division.

* (16:40)

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Government House Leader): A recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Once we've passed on division, then the vote is concluded.

So we'll now proceed—so the vote is carried on division.

**Bill 55—The Environment Amendment Act
(Reducing Pesticide Exposure)**

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call Bill 55, The Environment Amendment Act (Reducing Pesticide Exposure).

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister responsible for Hydro, that Bill 55, The Environment Amendment Act (Reducing Pesticide Exposure); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement (réduction de l'exposition aux pesticides), reported from the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Any debate on the bill?

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to rise and speak on this piece of legislation.

Listening to, I think—I believe there was 29 presenters to the bill the other day, representing a, quite a divergent set of views and, obviously, covering many things that they would like to see in the legislation. Obviously, there were those individuals that would like to see, I think, where—probably where this government is planning to go, and that's the wholesale ban of pesticides, whether we're dealing with residential lawn care, golf courses, personal home gardens and, of course, agriculture, because we know, obviously, that this is the government's ultimate agenda.

Now, I mean, I remember when I brought that issue forward in committee to one of the presenters, and I think the Minister of Conservation suggested that the—that there was no banning of pesticides for agricultural use in the legislation. And, absolutely, the minister's right, it's not in the legislation. But you can—clear in listening to members opposite in their comments both publicly and during committee and privately during brief-ins—briefings, where that long-term agenda is taking us and, obviously, the

impact that would have, especially on the agricultural community.

One of the comments that quite struck me, Mr. Speaker, listening to the presenters, was that from the Manitoba cattle producers association. The Manitoba cattle producers association, which is the—Manitoba's single largest livestock sector in terms of the number of individual farm operations and purchases more than \$300-million worth of feed every year as well as another \$225 million in operating inputs and the values in terms of its impact on the provincial economy is in approximately \$635 million. So we're talking about significant amounts of funding.

The Manitoba Beef Producers' advice to the committee and to the minister that they, quote, support strong science-based initiatives designed to ensure the preservation of our land and water, end quote. One of their comments that quite struck me during that was what they saw as the—and, again, this was their term: the artificial distinction. And that was their—well, it was quite an interesting term—the artificial distinction that the government is perpetuating as they argue that these products are not safe for use on our lawns in any kind of a—in any—in public green spaces, but are, indeed, safe for consumption in our agricultural products. And yet it is without those products, without those pesticides that Manitoba and, indeed, Canada would not have the ability as they do to feed the world.

Mr. Speaker, it was also interesting during those presentations that, as the government likes to propagate the idea that they're these great defenders of the environment and they're banning pesticides, but they're not, in fact, actually banning pesticides. They will be, apparently, again, through regulation—and as this government often does, they will bring in this vague legislation—asks us and as well as Manitobans to support that legislation, but under the auspices of the standard NDP tried-and-true phrase of trust us, we'll work it out in regulations.

So, again, they presented a legislation in this House, Mr. Speaker, that says we will ban pesticides but we're not going to tell you what pesticides we're going to ban; we just simply—we'll deal with that after the legislation passed and we just ask that you trust us.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this same government obviously and officials that said in reference to say the PST hike that I think, if I remember right, and I'm more than happy to be corrected by my colleagues,

that it was referred to as the idea of them raising the PST as—I think the quote was ridiculous and total nonsense.

So, again, so when you have a government, Mr. Speaker, that talks about trust us, we know best and we will decide what is to be banned and what's not to be banned, there will be some hesitancy.

The other aspect, obviously, Mr. Speaker, is that one of education. And so the government, right out of the gate, just immediately talked about the need to ban pesticides and other products again under the—under this—wrapped themselves in this idea of children and pets. But, when you actually take a look at the material safety data sheet of Fiesta as a product, when you look at their ingredients, about a quarter of the product is Iron HEDTA, which is what the government propagates as, you know, obviously the safe green—as they put it—alternative to 2,4-D.

But other ingredients, Mr. Speaker, according to the label, that's 75 per cent of the product is other ingredients. So what are these other ingredients that this government says, you know, are safe for use on our lawns and in our public green spaces? Well, sodium nitrate, which is labelled according to the material safety data sheet put out by Fiesta, is labelled as an irritant. And the other product is called 'nitrotriactic' acid, which again the material safety data sheet labels as—notes as toxic.

So, again, it's quite interesting that the government, as of January 1st, will ban the use of some pesticides. But, obviously, if one is under the assumption since they stood, I think, wearing actually Fiesta T-shirts which would make you wonder if the minister and his colleagues don't have stocks in Fiesta as the alternate product.

But they didn't mention in that news conference, in any kind of press release, in ministerial statements or to any individual that actually presented to committee the other day that Fiesta's active ingredients are indeed, or at least in some components, are indeed by the, again, according to the material safety data sheet, are listed as toxic.

In fact, when you take a look again at the material safety data sheet—and these are all available online. I mean, it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, we're just talking about the expansion of broadband Internet to our school systems and we heard members go on obviously about the importance of the Internet in today's society in terms of accessing

data. And many times in this House in question period, you know, members opposite say, well, the information's available online—go and find it. So I would encourage members opposite to do just that, to take a look online and take a look at Fiesta's own site and take a look at the material safety data sheets that they make, again, publicly available.

So, Mr. Speaker, this product that the government likes to tout and tell anyone who will listen and put on the public record as a safe and product, advocates that you need to use, quote, chemical safety goggles, is the recommendation when using Fiesta, that you need to use, quote, impervious gloves, end quote, again when you use Fiesta Turf Weed Killer. Fiesta also has a LD50, which is a lethal dose 50, of 2,000 milligrams per kilogram. So Fiesta can be, like any product, can be toxic, if not fatal.

And, again, I'm not out to suggest that there is some sort of nefarious plan for the government to poison the citizens of Manitoba through the, obviously, the promotion of—or their single-minded promotion of Fiesta as an alternate product. I'm just putting that information on the record to suggest that Fiesta is not quite the green product that the government and the NDP would like the residents in Manitoba to believe it is, that there are, as with any product.

* (16:50)

And, again, sort of, on that, Mr. Speaker, a number of the presenters made that very comment, the Canadian Association of Agri-Retailers made a very, very good presentation where they provided data sheets to—information to all the committee, and I have no doubt that members opposite spent a great deal of time reviewing that, but they did note that a number of the household products in your home and my home and everyone home's here, whether it's Children's Tylenol, has warning labels on it. And, as somebody with three young children, I'm well aware of what those warning labels are. You know, we have cleaning products in our house. Bleach is in our house, you know. Salt, itself, actually, Mr. Speaker, has a lethal dose 50 rating of, I believe it's—if I remember right from my colleague the other day, I think he said it was one teaspoon is the LD 50 of common table salt.

So there are, obviously, as with any product, there are warning labels. There are caution labels. And there are labels that we need to engage in to make sure that we're using in a safe and responsible

manner. And that's just part of it, Mr. Speaker, is part of it is, obviously, educating individuals who use, who purchase these products. And these products, whether it's Fiesta, there's a number of companies that make use of this product and have for a number of years as an alternative to those customers who would like to utilize it, who may have heard or done their own research and said, you know, I would prefer, for whatever reason—and, again, that's their choice and they made the decision as a consumer. And we do, in large part, are driven by consumer choices in our economy and in our society, and they made that decision to engage a particular lawn service company and said, you know, I'd like to try out Fiesta.

But what was particularly interesting, Mr. Speaker, is one of the presenters was a Mr. Wiebe, and he's from Eco Green, and he noted that he's been—his company has actually offered Fiesta as a product for over two years, and a number of his customers do use the service, or do use—or request that particular product. But you have to heavily subsidize the cost of providing that. And I thought, you know, well, that seems odd, because I distinctly remember the member—or the Minister of Conservation on the public record indicating that Fiesta, as a product, is in terms of cost, was equivalent to 2,4-D, which would be sort of the Killex, the more common alternative that's out there and will continue to be utilized in, you know, agricultural sector. So not only was it as cost effective, but in terms of actual effectiveness in dealing with the weeds and those targeted weeds that an individual may want to deal with was just as effective.

Well, what struck me is here's an individual—and, again, Mr. Wiebe, who owns a company, Eco Green, who has, on his own volition, long before the government even started talking about pesticide bans—or I think a better word would be a pesticide limitation, but I guess they find the word ban is—has more of a ring to it. So here's an individual and a business owner who offers those products and has obviously used those products first-hand. And he said, and I'm quoting, that our experience doesn't show that to be the case at all—that being the effectiveness of said Fiesta. Quote, we sprayed Fiesta on the weekend again to our customers that take the program, and I can tell you, guaranteed, for sure, the results are not even close to the same. And it's surprising to me that you would recommend something like this without doing any testing on

yourself to make comments like that. It's just a surprise, end quote.

So, Mr. Speaker, here's somebody in the industry, who's been in industry for quite a number of years, has a very large customer base, offers a very large range of products to those customers, and he's saying to the minister, I'm shocked that you would make these kind of comments that this product that you're promoting, that you're wearing these t-shirts saying, buy Fiesta, that we should all buy stock in Fiesta as my—I and my ministerial colleagues apparently have, is just as effective in terms of dealing with weeds and cost. And even after Mr. Wiebe—and, again, as I indicated, this is an individual who actually uses this product on a regular basis—even after he said to the minister, this is simply not accurate, the minister continued to disagree. And I'm—again, I'm just quoting from the minister when he said, I can assure you that our review has looked at the science, replacement products such as Fiesta, and, indeed, it does kill weeds. It's our understanding that the level of control is as good as or better than the standard treatment such as Killex.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's always interesting. So you have a minister who sits behind a desk and makes these kind of decisions and argues that these decisions are based on sound science, and you have an individual who actually uses this product in his own company and on lawns and on surfaces throughout Manitoba and says it's simply not accurate.

Mr. Speaker, it's always interesting, too, that the minister, you know, wraps himself in his cloak and says, well, we need to take every precaution that we can, obviously, to protect young children, that if there is even the chance that these products may be carcinogenic that it's worth the taking these products away from individuals.

So, again, Mr. Speaker, if you follow the minister's logic then, I remember the Canadian Cancer Society presented at the—at committee, and I did make a comment to the individual who represented the Canadian Cancer Society about this government's attitude or embracing of a ban on tanning beds for minors, again, something that the Canadian Cancer Society has long advocated for in terms of protecting minors from potential skin cancer. And, again, it's quite interesting that the representative from Canadian Cancer noted that this government continues to push back on the idea

of having a ban on minors, and yet here they are arguing, you know, well, the Canadian Cancer Society is saying that this is a—that this is a good thing, this pesticide limitation that they're advocating.

And obviously I was there, and Canadian Cancer Society did say that. But what they, again, what they don't say publicly is that the Canadian Cancer Society also is recommending to them as a government to limit or, sorry, to ban minors in any way from accessing tanning beds, and the minister's response as of even a month ago, I think the minister's response was, well, you know, we're not prepared to go there and we'll study that and you know, the standard, I have young children and I wouldn't want to see that in my house, Mr. Speaker.

So it's always interesting that they'll embrace very selective information being put forward by these organizations that they want to use to support the legislative agenda, but those very same organizations that they wrap themselves in, as justifying these decisions, Mr. Speaker, that they will not—that they will ignore those other recommendations even if, again, even if there is that scientific validity or potential scientific validity to do that.

So, Mr. Speaker, the key component though with any kind of change in consumer behaviour, because, obviously, this is what the government wants to do, it wants to change consumer behaviour. So, as of January 1st, the government will bring in the ban or the—or actually a better phrase is that the government will now make Manitobans aware of what products that the government has deemed to be acceptable for use on their residential lawns. Again, that ban, that

redirection of products, will only apply to lawn-care products or lawn-care companies. It won't actually apply to any individual across the way. They will continue to be able to go in and legally purchase products that contain 2,4-D, which, again, according to the government, is obviously the product they would like to deal with, but so residential properties and residential owners of properties can buy those products and can use those products legally in Manitoba right up until probably at least 2015 if not 2016.

And then the government obviously brings forward this idea that now once the ban takes effect or once these limitations take effect and these new products are being suggested as the only alternative the government will accept here in Manitoba, that when individuals make a complaint on your property, Mr. Speaker, that, say, you know, the honourable member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk), his lawn just looks simply too nice, and I'm quite confident that he's got a secret stash of Killex there in his garden shed.

Well, what's to happen? Well, you know, obviously, Department of Conservation officials will have to attend his property, Mr. Speaker. They will have to issue a cease and desist order to the honourable member to deal with that. They will obviously have to take, you know, have a discussion with the honourable member. They'll have to take soil samples—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Morris (Mr. Martin) will have 11 minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 3, 2014

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