

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

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	Ind.
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	St. Boniface	

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, May 10, 2018**

*The House met at 1:30 p.m.*

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

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS  
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 28—The Public Sector  
Construction Projects (Tendering) Act**

**Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure):** I move, seconded by the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade, that Bill 28, The Public Sector Construction Projects (Tendering) Act; Loi sur les projets de construction dans le secteur public (appels d'offres), be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Schuler:** Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce Bill 28, The Public Sector Construction Projects (Tendering) Act.

This legislation will create a fair and more competitive bidding process for publicly funded construction projects. This fairness will be accomplished by ensuring that the tendering process is unbiased with respect to the unionization status of bidders and their employees.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Bill 227—The Animal Care Amendment Act  
(Dog Breeding and Exotic Animals)**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I move, seconded by the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino), that Bill 227, The Animal Care Amendment Act (Dog Breeding and Exotic Animals), be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Ms. Fontaine:** Bill 227 recognizes that there is no place for puppy mills in Manitoba and it brings Manitoba in line with other jurisdictions across the country in respect of a provincial ban on exotic animals.

Bill 227 seeks to acknowledge the responsibility that each of us have in this Chamber for all of our animal relatives in this province.

Miigwech.

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

**Bill 228—The Animal Shelter  
and Rescue Awareness Day Act**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I move, seconded by the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith), that Bill 228, The Animal Shelter and Rescue Awareness Day Act, be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Ms. Fontaine:** Bill 228 recognizes the phenomenal work being done by those on the front line of animal rescue and spay and neutering clinics and mobile clinics across the province.

I have the great honour—Manitoba—of working with Katie Powell and Dr. Jonas Watson from Save A Dog Network on occasion, and they—alongside Manitoba Mutts, D'Arcy's ARC, Winnipeg animal services and the Humane Society—inspired for me Bill 228.

To them, I say miigwech.

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

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs  
Second Report**

**Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Chairperson):** Madam Speaker, I wish to present the Second Report of the Standing Committee of the Legislative Affairs.

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense. Dispense.

*Your Standing Committee on LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS presents the following as its Second Report.*

### Meetings

Your Committee met on May 9, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 254 of the Legislative Building.

### Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 7)** – *The Sustainable Watersheds Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur les bassins hydrographiques durables (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)*
- **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act (Enhanced Powers Respecting Governance and Accountability)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la garde d'enfants (pouvoirs accrus en matière de gestion et d'obligation redditionnelle)*
- **Bill (No. 14)** – *The Traffic and Transportation Modernization Act/Loi sur la modernisation des lois relatives à la circulation et au transport*
- **Bill (No. 17)** – *The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules et le Code de la route*
- **Bill (No. 18)** – *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Taking Care of Our Children)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille (soins conformes aux traditions)*
- **Bill (No. 22)** – *The Queen's Counsel Act/Loi sur les conseillers de la Reine*

### Committee Membership

- Mr. ALTEMEYER
- Hon. Mr. FIELDING
- Ms. FONTAINE
- Mrs. GUILLEMARD (Chairperson)
- Ms. KLASSEN
- Ms. MORLEY-LECOMTE
- Mr. JOHNSON (Interlake)
- Hon. Ms. SQUIRES
- Mr. MALOWAY
- Hon. Mrs. STEFANSON
- Hon. Mr. SCHULER

Your Committee elected Mr. JOHNSON (Interlake) as the Vice-Chairperson.

### Public Presentations

Your Committee heard the following eight presentations on **Bill (No. 7)** – *The Sustainable Watersheds Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur les bassins hydrographiques durables (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)*:

Pat McGarry, Ducks Unlimited Canada  
 Jill Verwey, Keystone Agricultural Producers  
 Gary Wayslowski, Manitoba Conservation Districts Association  
 Ian Stepler, Manitoba Beekeeping Association  
 Alexis Kanu, Lake Winnipeg Foundation  
 Jim Fisher, Delta Waterfowl  
 Dimple Roy, IISD – International Institute for Sustainable Development  
 Tim Sopuck, Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation

Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 9)** – *The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act (Enhanced Powers Respecting Governance and Accountability)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la garde d'enfants (pouvoirs accrus en matière de gestion et d'obligation redditionnelle)*:

Cindy Curry, Private Citizen  
 Gisele Roch, Child Care Coalition of Manitoba

Your Committee heard the following two presentations on **Bill (No. 14)** – *The Traffic and Transportation Modernization Act/Loi sur la modernisation des lois relatives à la circulation et au transport*:

Gavin Van-der-linde, Association of Manitoba Municipalities  
 Chris Lorenc, Manitoba Heavy Construction Association

Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 17)** – *The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules et le Code de la route*:

Len Eastoe, Traffic Ticket Experts

Your Committee heard the following ten presentations on **Bill (No. 18)** – *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Taking Care of Our Children)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à*

*l'enfant et à la famille (soins conformes aux traditions):*

*Judy Mayer & Billie Schibler (by leave), Manitoba Métis Federation & Métis Child and Family Services Authority*

*Doreen Moellenbeck-Dushnitsky, Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services*

*Natalie Daniels, Southern Chiefs Organization*

*Joanne Crate, Manitoba Keewatiowi Okimakanak – MKO*

*Dr. Mary LeMaître, Private Citizen*

*David Monias, First Nations of Northern Manitoba – Child and Family Services Authority*

*Cora Morgan, First Nations Family Advocate Office*

*Amy Komus, Private Citizen*

*Matthew Shorting, Private Citizen*

*Chantel Hendersen, Private Citizen*

*Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 22) – The Queen's Counsel Act/Loi sur les conseillers de la Reine:***

*Melissa Beaumont, Manitoba Bar Association*

#### **Written Submissions**

*Your Committee received the following three written submissions on **Bill (No. 7) – The Sustainable Watersheds Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur les bassins hydrographiques durables (modification de diverses dispositions législatives):***

*Joe Masi, Association of Manitoba Municipalities*

*Bill Elliott, FortWhyte Alive*

*Michel Leclaire, The Wildlife Society Manitoba Chapter*

*Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 9) – The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act (Enhanced Powers Respecting Governance and Accountability)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la garde d'enfants (pouvoirs accrus en matière de gestion et d'obligation redditionnelle):***

*Jodie Kehl, Manitoba Child Care Association Inc.*

#### **Bills Considered and Reported**

- **Bill (No. 7) – The Sustainable Watersheds Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur les bassins hydrographiques durables (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)**

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill with the following amendment:*

*THAT Clause 55 of the Bill be amended in the proposed subsection 19(4) by striking out "each fund is" and substituting "each fund (other than the fund known as the Land Management and Legal Liability Fund) is".*

- **Bill (No. 9) – The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act (Enhanced Powers Respecting Governance and Accountability)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la garde d'enfants (pouvoirs accrus en matière de gestion et d'obligation redditionnelle)**

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.*

- **Bill (No. 14) – The Traffic and Transportation Modernization Act/Loi sur la modernisation des lois relatives à la circulation et au transport**

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.*

- **Bill (No. 17) – The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules et le Code de la route**

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.*

- **Bill (No. 18) – The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Taking Care of Our Children)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille (soins conformes aux traditions)**

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.*

- **Bill (No. 22) – The Queen's Counsel Act/Loi sur les conseillers de la Reine**

*Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.*

**Mrs. Guillemard:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table the 2017 Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba Annual Report and the 2018–2022 Five-Year Plan, and the 2017 Appeal Commission and Medical Review Panel Annual Report.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage, and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

### Manitoba Day

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** Madam Speaker, I am a few days early, but I'm excited to highlight Manitoba Day, which is this upcoming Saturday. Since 1986 Manitoba has formally recognized May 12th as Manitoba Day. May the 12th is an important day in our province's history because on May the 12th, 1870, The Manitoba Act was passed by the Parliament of Canada and received royal assent, recognizing Manitoba as Canada's fifth province. This Saturday marks the province's 148th anniversary of entry into Canadian Confederation.

Manitoba Day is a great opportunity for everyone to celebrate our wonderful province. It gives us a chance to reflect on the achievements of our past that have shaped our province and look towards our promising future.

Ever since Manitoba's centennial in 1970, celebrations of our province's anniversary have blossomed. Throughout the month of May, museums and heritage organizations have organized a variety of Manitoba Day events to showcase the diversity of our wonderful province. Madam Speaker, many of these events are made possible through the efforts of our invaluable volunteers and local heritage groups. These dedicated volunteers and community groups are so important to help preserve Manitoba's unique history.

The contributions of past generations is a source of inspiration for us to keep striving for a society where inclusion, diversity and innovation are valued and supported.

Madam Speaker, I invite everyone to visit the Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage website and click on the Manitoba flag for a listing of this year's events. I encourage everyone to take part in the celebrations and pay tribute to this important date in our development as a province.

Thank you.

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan):** I thank the minister for her statement.

Madam Speaker, this Saturday marks Manitoba's 148th birthday, 148 years of growing and shaping the province we all call home today. It also marks Treaty Day, which promotes the understanding and significance of treaties between provincial governments and First Nations. Manitoba Day provides the opportunity to recognize how this integral relationship shaped our province's history and reflect on the rich historical achievements and tragic missteps.

Manitoba has many things to be proud of. It is home to 63 First Nations with five distinctive linguistic groups. It is also home of the Metis nation. Reflecting on Manitoba's strong indigenous communities is vital to ensuring we move towards reconciliation.

Manitoba is also a community of newcomers. Here in the House, with elected members from all walks of life, we see how embracing diversity has allowed our province to grow and flourish. Multiculturalism is a big part of being Manitoban. As we continue to welcome newcomers and refugees to our province our cultural diversity grows, bringing with it new perspectives, values and better understanding of our world.

Manitobans value hard work and kindness and we are consistently known to be the most generous people in the country. This is demonstrated in the many community organizations here in our province dedicated to uplifting their communities. Manitoban's selflessness and volunteerism ethos improves the lives of many in all corners of the province.

I'm proud to call Manitoba home.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to speak in response to the minister's statement.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the member have leave to respond to the statement? *[Agreed]*

**Ms. Lamoureux:** Happy almost 148th Manitoba Day, Madam Speaker.

\* (13:40)

While the popularity of the date is still growing, we know that it's a time to celebrate our province.

Madam Speaker, I love our province and I thought one of the best ways to display how great our province truly is would be to find out what Manitoba Day means to the people here in this building, people who work hard every day to make Manitoba the best province possible.

Over the lunch hour you may have witnessed me running between the Clerk's office, the cafeteria, down to security, and around to the journals and to a couple of my colleagues' offices. Madam Speaker, this is what I heard: people are grateful for our diverse history. They're excited about travelling our province and celebrating who we are today. Someone spoke proudly of how he was born and raised here in Manitoba while another person complimented our beautiful provincial parks. Almost everyone mentioned the Winnipeg Jets. And one of my colleagues were very quick to remind me that not everyone sees provincial boundaries and that this can be a beautiful thing in itself.

Madam Speaker, this makes me proud to be a Manitoban and a Winnipeg Jets fan, so thank you, go Jets go, and happy Manitoba Day.

**Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia):** Madam Speaker, I seek leave to respond to the ministerial statement.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the member have leave to respond to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Fletcher:** Glorious and free. Those are the words that former Premier Gary Filmon's government added to our motto. Glorious and free, indeed.

Manitoba joined Confederation in 1870, one eighteenth the size that it is today. Six hundred and fifty thousand square kilometres, minus 50, is the size of Manitoba: from the 49th parallel to the 60th, from the Ontario border to the Saskatchewan. In that space, we have tundra; over 100,000 lakes, including among the world's largest; we have boreal forests, polar bears, black bears, golden wheat fields. We have a hundred–1.3 million people from all sorts of walks of life. Our province is glorious and free because of the exceptional country in which we live and the exceptional people that inhabit it.

Manitoba, land of the prairie–

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Fletcher:** I ask leave to just finish.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the member have leave to complete his statement?

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Madam Speaker:** I hear a no.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Historical Museum of St. James-Assiniboia

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families):** I am pleased to recognize the historical museum of St. James-Assiniboine, located right at the corner of Portage Avenue and Banting in Kirkfield Park.

The historical museum is a general and living history museum incorporating over 5,000 square feet of museum gallery, a historical house and interpretive display building. It's historically designed; the two-storey, Red River frame William Brown log–oak–log house is hard to miss. Built in 1856, the house is furnished with period pieces between 1860 and 1890. Hudson Bay Company employee William Brown and his Metis wife, Charlotte Oman, raised six children in the house.

The museum was created to collect, preserve, research exhibits and interpretive objects, really, that best serve—that illustrates the founding settlement and the development of St. James-Assiniboia. The museum hosts visitors and families locally from the community, from the city, from the province, other parts of Canada and, yes, also international tourists. The museum has a wealth of knowledge to share, and in effort to make the museum an inclusive and accessible as possible, admissions are free. Sounds good for Manitobans.

No matter how many times you walk through the museum, you'll always find and learn different things and see things that you haven't seen before. The staff are very kind and very friendly, extremely 'inforative', and they're well versed in everything to do with St. James.

The museum not only offers the museum itself, but also offers and hosts a variety of events, one of which notable is the Pioneers Heritage Day which I've attended, too, on many occasions, and I can tell you the fun experience that people of St. James have with it.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the residents of Kirkfield Park and the member from St. James as well, I'd like to thank the historical museum of St. James-Assiniboine board, their staff, for their hard work and their positive impact on the community. I'd like to thank them and recognize the members of the board. Some are here today and we'll have them stand up here in the House.

Mary Longbottom, I believe—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Fielding:** Just ask for leave just to finish off the names, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave for the member to complete his statement?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Madam Speaker:** I heard a no. Leave has been denied.

**Mr. Fielding:** Could I ask for leave to put the names in Hansard, Madam Speaker?

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to include those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

*Historical Museum of St. James-Assiniboia board members: Mary Longbottom, vice-president and acting treasurer; Judy De Lange, second vice-president; Barry Hillman, ways and means chair; Bonita Hunter-Eastwood, director and curator*

### **Boys with Braids**

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** Many years ago, Cecil Sveinson chose to support his son, who was getting teased for his long hair, in cutting it. Now as an adult Cecil's son and grandson both have

long hair, but many indigenous males continue to face bullying because of their long hair.

After indigenous parents began reaching out to Cecil about the need to educate the community on long hair in indigenous culture, he noticed an initiative taking place in Saskatoon called Boys with Braids. After learning more, Cecil started a social media page, posters and hashtag on Boys with Braids here in Manitoba and in Winnipeg, creating a social movement.

The first Boys with Braids event was held in 2016 at the University of Winnipeg. The response was overwhelming with over 300 people in attendance. People were sitting in the halls and stairwells just to be a part of the spectacular event.

Boys with Braids is a gathering to share indigenous teachings with men of all ages and hair lengths and the community about the sacredness of hair to foster a sense of pride for boys who choose to grow long hair and uses education as a means of ending teasing, bullying and harassment.

With great success, Boys with Braids has now teamed up with the Winnipeg School Division to host their second event at R.B. Russell School this Saturday, May 12th, at 1 p.m. Hairstylists will be onsite to teach parents and boys how to braid and each participant will receive hair-care packages.

But most importantly, youth will leave with shirts that say: Under Manitoba's Human Rights Code, section 19(2) defines harassment as a course of abusive and unwelcome conduct or comments undertaken or made on the basis of a characteristic referred to in subsection 9(2), meaning it is illegal to harass me due to any aspects of my culture, including my long hair.

Events like Boys with Braids are beginning to occur throughout North America—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

Is there leave to allow the member to conclude her statement? *[Agreed]*

**Mrs. Smith:** Events like Boys with Braids are beginning to occur throughout North America to ensure indigenous culture is understood, respected and practised.

I ask everyone to join me today in uplifting Cecil and the Boys with Braids committee, who are here in our gallery and doing amazing work on educating the community on the sacredness of long hair.



Miigwech.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Point Douglas.

**Mrs. Smith:** I ask for leave to have the names included in Hansard.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to include those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

*Boys with Braids committee: Melissa Brown, Brett Huson, Jerilyn Huson, Warren Huson, Craig Settee, Kevin Settee, Cecil Sveinson*

### Sun Valley Scouting Group

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** Madam Speaker, I am delighted to rise in the House today to recognize the outstanding and amazing Scout leaders of the 1st Sun Valley Scouting Group, who have been providing our River East youth with a fun and welcoming place to grow and learn for over 25 years.

\* (13:50)

The Sun Valley Scout group is a shining example among Scout groups. It's a co-ed group of 45 youth ranging in age from five to 26, led by a dedicated and devoted team of nine volunteers who together have a combined 103 years experience as Scout leaders.

The Sun Valley Scouts are focused on providing children a friendly place to experience new adventures while also gaining valuable leadership skills and self-confidence. Children discover the world by participating in exciting outdoor adventures like building campfires and rock climbing. And for many new campers, the first night sleeping in a tent under the stars is an experience they will never forget.

Just a few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of visiting the Sun Valley Scouts to present them with a province of Manitoba flag and pins. And, Madam Speaker, the smiles on their faces were priceless as they were so enthusiastic when it came to raising the new flag. It was also their annual race night, where the children had the opportunity to race their handmade Beaver Buggies and Kub Kars. And judging from the noise level and the endless activity, it was obvious the evening was a great success.

Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate the leaders of the Sun Valley Scout group for their exceptional work in promoting important values like respect, honesty and teamwork.

They've reinforced the importance of helping those less fortunate and giving back to the community by undertaking neighbourhood cleanups, helping out at Winnipeg Harvest and volunteering at the Christmas Cheer Board each and every year.

I ask all members of the House to please join me in welcoming and thanking Sun Valley Scout leader Gordon Forzley and the Sun Valley Scout leaders for their commitment to our future leaders.

And, Madam Speaker, I ask to have their names placed in Hansard, to be recorded for eternity.

Thank you so much, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to include those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

*1st Sun Valley Scouting Group leaders: Ward Elder, Andrew Flook, Gord Forzley, Ryan Jurkowski, Kevin McKenty, Donna Moran, Tim Moran, Jolene Prosolowski, Richard Tebinka,*

### NorWest Co-op

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the great work that is being done by the NorWest Co-op, which has been an engaging partner in the community of Burrows for many years.

NorWest operates not only as a community health centre, but it is also part of Community Food Centres Canada, a network that aims to increase access to healthy food by bringing people together.

Madam Speaker, the community-oriented approach focuses on education, from planting the seeds to communing around the table for a healthy meal. Whether it be healthy cooking tutorials for children of all ages or various drop-in clubs, NorWest is consistent in creating new programs that engage many people with a primary focus of giving back to the community.

Madam Speaker, next week, the fourth annual Art of Good Food fundraiser will be held at the Manitoba Museum, and all proceeds will support NorWest's continued work in the community.

This event, which will take place on May 16th, will feature tasty dishes by some of our most talented local chefs and beautiful artwork from local artists. Many of the chefs will be preparing dishes focusing on local ingredients and some with a flair of international cuisine.

What better than to bring the community together with a language that reaches all tastes and palates: the art of good food.

You're all invited.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### **Fishing in Manitoba**

**Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye):** Manitoba is a great province to be living in, and I will tell you one of many reasons why. Not only is it Manitoba Day, fishing season in southern Manitoba opens this Saturday, May the 12th.

Manitoba is home to some of the best freshwater fishing in the world. Our province is blessed with an abundance of natural resources and countless lakes and rivers that offer some great fishing experiences.

Sport fishing is an important part of tourism and a great contributor to Manitoba's economy. We have many different species of fish that anglers come from all over the world to try to catch their favourite one: walleye, pike, trout, bass, catfish and more.

Recreational angling continues to grow in Manitoba, with more than 190,000 anglers dropping a hook in Manitoba waters each year.

Fishing is a sport for all ages and not expensive to get started in. Have you seen the smile on a child's face after they've landed their first fish? It's priceless.

We have fishing opportunities in all parts of this great province and usually not too far away. Even here in Winnipeg, the Red River offers some great fishing.

I am proud to be part of a government that knows how important tourism is to Manitoba and supports tourism with initiatives like 96-4.

If you are an angler, I need not tell you more. If you are not, I would encourage you to get out there and try it—you will get hooked.

Thank you very much.

### **Introduction of Guests**

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, we have some guests in the gallery.

I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from Otetiskewin elementary school in Nelson House: Lexie Joos; Rhianna Spence; Natalie Tays, teacher and science co-ordinator; Bailey Tays, educational assistant;

Priscilla Bighetty, bus driver; Rhonda Spence, Angela Spence and Gladys Spence.

Lexie and Rhianna are on their way to Ottawa for the national science fair. They are accompanied today by their moms and grandmother and are the guests of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey).

On behalf of all honourable members here, we welcome you to the Manitoba Legislature.

Also in the public gallery from Melita School we have 17 grade 6 students under the direction of Leanne Bugg, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Piwniuk).

On behalf of all honourable members, we also welcome you here to the Legislature.

### **ORAL QUESTIONS**

#### **Jordan's Principle Government Position**

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** We have spoken about Jordan's Principle in this House many times. The principle is clear: the health care of First Nations people should always come first. It should never be impacted or delayed by jurisdictional disputes. The truth and reconciliation calls to action affirm this. Hundreds of school children from Winnipeg came to the Legislative grounds today to voice their support for the principle.

Will the Premier affirm his unconditional commitment to Jordan's Principle in this House today?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Madam Speaker, it was Dante Alighieri who said three things remain with us from paradise: stars, flowers and children.

It is my great pleasure to rise today, here, and to offer our unconditional support for Jordan's Principle, along with our unconditional support for Dr. Lisa Monkman and her partner, the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew), on the birth of their son, named in honour of the member of Fort Rouge's father. We wish this young man long life and much happiness. Congratulations.

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

**Ms. Fontaine:** Unfortunately, we see far too often lip service to Jordan's Principle with new barriers appearing each day. After the province cut supports

for prosthetics they have now informed medical professions Manitoba Health will not process claims for First Nations covered by federal insurance.

This policy change risks needlessly delaying prosthetics care patients need. This forces patients to navigate bureaucratic mazes instead of getting health care as soon as possible.

Madam Speaker, why is the government violating Jordan's Principle?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** As already indicated by the Premier (Mr. Pallister), the Province does support Jordan's Principle. I've had a number of different discussions with the federal Health Minister and with ministers of Health across Canada about Jordan's Principle. Certainly, we want to ensure that it operates properly and effectively. That requires a strong federal partner and I've been encouraged by the discussions that we've had, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for St. Johns, on a final supplementary.

\*(14:00)

**Ms. Fontaine:** Diabetes has hit indigenous communities especially hard and has increased the need for services like prosthetics and orthotics. The Pallister government in its zeal to cut costs is violating the spirit of Jordan's Principle.

I table a letter sent to medical service providers by the Pallister government. It clearly states that there will be no processing of claims until another level of government pays first. This bureaucratic game is putting the health care of First Nations and Inuit peoples at risk.

Will this minister rescind this policy and respect Jordan's Principle?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Madam Speaker, of course we do respect Jordan's Principle, and we continue to provide more support, more investments in the health-care system, more than \$500 million more this year than any year under the previous NDP government. That includes investments in diagnostics in the North; that includes investments in emergency room facilities in the North; and that includes investments in doctors in the North.

We will continue to provide those services not just to residents in the North, but throughout all of Manitoba as we continue to provide record investments to those who need it, Madam Speaker.

### **Mifegymiso Drug Review Full Cost Coverage**

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Madam Speaker, Manitoba women are entitled to reproductive choice, and they deserve to have a government invest in this essential health care and a government that's a leader, not a holdout.

National provincial bodies have recommended the drug Mifegymiso, commonly known as the abortion pill, be fully covered by provincial drug plans. Six provinces have now fully funded the drug so all women can afford and have access to their choice in reproductive health care.

Will the Minister of Health commit today to a modern standard of reproductive health care and services for all Manitoba women by covering the cost of the abortion pill?

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for the Status of Women):** Our government does take the health of women very seriously and we do respect a woman's autonomy over her reproductive rights.

When we made Mifegymiso available to women in the province of Manitoba free of charge, we did so in a way that has rolled out, from many viewpoints, very successfully. We've had about 350 women receive the kits at no cost, compared to about 26 women who have paid out of pocket. So we know that the drug is being handled responsibly in the community.

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

**Mr. Swan:** If this government did support women, they would fully fund the abortion pill across Manitoba and not just in Winnipeg and Brandon.

And, Madam Speaker, it's the Minister of Health who controls the funding of drugs to make them accessible and affordable. It's the Minister of Health who controls the funding to extend delivery to women in rural and northern areas so they can get the treatment that they need close to home.

Women were counting on the proposed review to get them the health care they need, but instead the Minister of Health is silent as this government misleads Manitobans about a review that didn't happen at all.

Does the Minister of Health support free access to the abortion pill for all Manitobans who choose it?

**Ms. Squires:** You know, Madam Speaker, I would like to correct the record that members opposite continually assert. Our plan provides access for most women in the province, and let me be clear that women of low income, women with no income and indigenous women receive the product free of charge under our plan and the federal government plan.

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

**Mr. Swan:** Well, Madam Speaker, the minister who keeps getting up and answering the question doesn't control the funding. The Minister of Health, no matter how uncomfortable it may be for him, is accountable for funding women's health. The Premier said so in his own Estimates from questions from the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine). The Minister of Health is accountable for decisions in his department and the Minister of Health is accountable to provide a modern standard in women's reproductive health choices to be free and accessible for all Manitobans.

We know there are those who support women's choice and those who don't.

I ask the Minister of Health: Which side is he on?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** It's a fair question, whose side is one on, Madam Speaker. Whose side is the NDP on when the federal government guts health-care transfers to the provinces and they stand back and say nothing? I would suggest not on the side of Manitobans who need health care. I'm talking about over \$2 billion over the next decade that Manitoba will not have to provide health-care services. Not a peep out of the members opposite.

We're fighting for better health care for Manitobans. They got us last on the list, Madam Speaker. That record speaks for itself. Where they got it wrong, we'll fix it.

#### **ACCESS Bursary Reason for Cancellation**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Madam Speaker, the ACCESS bursary provides targeted assistance to indigenous and underrepresented Manitobans to allow them to access post-secondary education. For example, students at the Winnipeg Education Centre and community-based Aboriginal education programs were eligible for this bursary. It enhances the diversity of our teachers and it is important.

In Estimates this Minister of Education confirmed that his government has cut its contribution to this important bursary and, in fact, cut it to all bursaries since they came into government. And the ACCESS bursary is one of the major parts of that.

So I ask the minister: Why has the minister eliminated this valuable bursary?

**Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training):** I thank the member for the question.

As we discussed in Estimates the other day, our government has actually changed the structure for Manitoba bursaries to make it accessible to all Manitobans, not just a specific few. And we have actually increased the amount of money that we have put specific for First Nations students so that they can get better access to education.

Our government has increased not only the total amount of Manitoba scholarships and bursaries to \$20 million but we've increased Manitoba Bursary Program to an additional 13—or to a \$13.2 million.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Madam Speaker, the Minister of Education in Estimates confirmed that this—he cut this bursary without any data or without having done any evaluation. In fact, he didn't even consult with the students or with the universities who rely on this bursary.

He's got the money to maintain it. He cut \$65 million in tuition income tax rebates for students. And his own consultants told him to put that money right back into post-secondary education. But he's not doing that. And, in fact, this government's contributions to bursaries have decreased, have declined, since they took office.

So I ask again: Why is this minister cutting the ACCESS bursary if he hasn't even evaluated it?

**Mr. Wishart:** Certainly, our government is trying to make the best use of the bursary dollars that are available. Under the previous program there had been dollars that had been left unused because no student had applied for them.

We're making better access for all Manitoba students, which is why we have made changes to Manitoba scholarship and bursary program so that all Manitoba students have better access and easier access to these programs. There's a total available,

which includes loans, of \$80 million to Manitoba students.

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

#### **Educational Bursaries Distribution of Funding**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Madam Speaker, we're talking about bursaries here that have transformed the lives of hundreds of Manitobans. Now, the minister is happy to tell us about how he's moving this money around, but the reality is that he has cut support for bursaries in this province. And in his rush to cut, the minister has never stopped to consider that he could choose to enhance other bursaries while maintaining important supports like the ACCESS bursary.

Instead, what we're seeing again is a shell game where the government cuts its own funding, moves it around and tries to tell Manitobans that everything is okay. Well, you know what, Madam Speaker, this government is only focused on the bottom line at all costs, and it's being done on the backs of students.

When will he start standing up for students in this province?

**Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training):** I certainly hope the member is paying attention: we have increased the amount of dollars through Manitoba bursaries. We've increased access to those dollars. We're now providing support for more than 700 First Nations students with a supplemental program where previous programs only provided support for 230 additional students. If that's not an improvement, I'm sorry for the member. Clearly, he doesn't want Manitoba students to get good—get a good education.

\* (14:10)

#### **Health Sector Bargaining Unit Review Act Proclamation**

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** In the dead of night, this Premier decided to upend labour relations again for more than 52,000 people who work in the health-care system.

We now know more than ever why it's important to not let this government pass legislation and not proclaim it. It's because the Premier will decide to proclaim laws like this without warning or without consultation. Perhaps, maybe, that's what they'll do with Bill 8, parts of Bill 19.

No front-line worker wanted this. In fact, they told the Premier to stop.

Why is the Premier refusing to listen to our front-line health-care workers?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Madam Speaker, we have tremendous respect for front-line workers, enough that we understand that we needed to reduce the amount of management above them by 15 per cent.

We've started with that project, and we'll continue with it because we respect front-line workers. We listen to them, we continue to listen to them and we will in the future as well.

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

#### **Changes to Health-Care System Impact on Front-Line Workers**

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** Bill 29 is a needless distraction from this Premier who loves picking fights. He picks fights with the federal government, with the mayor of Winnipeg, with indigenous groups, with newspapers he's threatening to sue.

All these fights will have real consequences for Manitobans. It will force more chaos and confusion in a health-care sector where front-line workers are already stretched and stressed.

Madam Speaker, the Premier should stop his heavy-handed approach. Try a new 'tractic.' Try listening.

Will the Premier listen to front care—health-care workers now?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** Listening, Madam Speaker, is what this government's good at and what we'll continue to do.

In our prebudget consultation this year, we had over 10,000 pieces of input—separate input—from front-line government workers. They know that the number of bargaining units in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia combined is 19, and they know there are 186 bargaining units in the WRHA alone.

The member speaks for an antiquated, archaic system that positions workers away from the things they're skilled at, that they want to do, and unnecessarily puts them in a bargaining situation that wastes money for them, for taxpayers.

Madam Speaker, the member's arguing for the past. We're developing the future in partnership with organized labour.

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

**Mr. Lindsey:** The point to this distraction is really quite clear. He's trying to change the conversation from the real issues: the Premier's plan to shut down ERs, to lay off nurses, to have massive overtime for nurses being forced to work.

Front-line health-care workers do an amazing job, but instead of giving them the supports that they need, this Premier's undermining them at every chance he gets.

We on this side of the House will always stand up for nurses, health-care aides and attendants and all health-care workers.

Why won't this Premier?

**Mr. Pallister:** What the member is standing up for by defending an archaic, prehistoric, Jurassic-Park-style system, Madam Speaker, is higher union dues, more red tape, more restrictions at work for labour, less job security, a less sustainable system, less time spent at your job, more time spent at a bargaining table and higher taxes.

Madam Speaker, that's what he's standing for. It's been made eminently clear repeatedly here. And last weekend, when they left their little conference, they went out and said, we're for higher taxes yet again.

Finally, some sincerity from the members opposite.

### **Carbon Tax Plan Impact on Stakeholders**

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, recently the trucking industry came out swinging against this government, saying they've broken a promise and that now jobs and opportunities are going to be leaving as a result of the way the government is approaching climate change. The solar industry insists Manitoba's about to go from the best place in the country to the worst because this government has let an important subsidy end. The entire board of Manitoba Hydro quit. Stakeholders are walking away from this enormous credibility gap on climate, and now a new angle.

Can the minister today please tell us who is going to suffer the most under their climate scheme? Will it be the rich or will it be the poor?

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development):** We know who suffered the most under the NDP regime, and that was all Manitobans.

We had—we saw under their plan 17 years of failed action on the environment, and now in opposition they continue to oppose our government's efforts to take meaningful action on the environment to reduce carbon emissions and to help all of our Manitoba economy and all of our stakeholders transition to the low-carbon future. And that is exactly what we're going to do.

We're working with industry and all Manitobans to transition to the low-carbon future, to reduce our carbon emissions, and we're going to do that while reducing taxes and reducing the deficit in Manitoba.

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

### **University of Manitoba Report**

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Well, while I'm waiting for a unicorn to arrive in everyone's driveway, Madam Speaker, allow me to table a document—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Allow me to table an analysis which should bring this minister back down to earth.

We have always maintained that all carbon revenue raised in Manitoba should go to two purposes: fighting climate change, creating new green jobs along the way, and making sure that our most vulnerable citizens do not suffer in an unfair manner.

Well, wouldn't you know it, the analysis I table today indicates that our poorest families will on average pay \$113 more, only receive \$23 back, and the richest families will receive 10 times that in a rebate.

How is this the future that she is talking about?

**Ms. Squires:** Well, Madam Speaker, we know it was the poorest families that were hit hardest by the NDP tax hike on them, the PST tax hike. But one thing I can also tell you that would be really hard on Manitoba's poorest families is the NDP \$300 price on carbon that they spent the weekend debating, and

we know that that would be an irresponsible move to make.

We have come up with a flat \$25 price on carbon that is predictable. Industry and Manitobans in general, they know what to expect, and we're working with all Manitobans to transition to the low-carbon future so we can all reduce our carbon emissions and take responsible action on the environment while protecting the economy.

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

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Well, Madam Speaker, Manitobans certainly do know what to expect from this government and it is not good. They are not going to be surprised that, yet again, the same group that brought in a 20 per cent salary increase for the Premier and ministers, enshrined it three times in legislation, is again looking out just for themselves.

If the minister doesn't want to listen to my questions, that's fine. Will she please at least commit to meet with Mr. Harvey Stevens, a professional associate with the University of Manitoba faculty of economics who wrote this analysis and would be happy to tell her how to actually do the right thing by Manitobans? He's in the gallery today. Will she make that commitment to him? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** The member stands on a crumbling pedestal, Madam Speaker, because the Auditor General's report clearly reviewed and condemned the NDP lack of a green plan, saying that a lack of progress was found in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This is a 17-year government. Gaps were found in underlying management practices, little change in greenhouse gas emissions over that 17-year period, no emissions reduction targets.

They were aware in the fall of 2009 that their 2008 plan would not work and they did not update their plan until days before the last provincial election. Madam Speaker, it's clear to the people of Manitoba, absolutely clear, that the NDP has no idea when it comes to green in this province—not one idea.

We have a plan. Our plan was developed in consultation and partnership—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:** —with Manitobans. Unlike the members opposite, we have a plan which will work

better for our economy and for our environment. We will see that plan through.

### **Lions Prairie Manor Reports of Seniors Abuse**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, today I table a report from family members of residents in Lions Prairie Manor in Portage la Prairie. It tells of seniors there being traumatized by inhumane and neglectful treatment, of a senior who was so poorly treated that his wife became severely depressed and suicidal, of family members being bullied and harassed by staff.

\* (14:20)

Will the Minister of Health, who's been previously made aware of this through letters, address these issues and meet today with family members who are in the gallery and listen to their stories and discuss with them the issues raised in their report?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, I understand that there is an investigation that's been undertaken by the protection of persons in care office. There has been about 100 interviews with families and staff members that have happened as a result of that investigation.

As a result of the investigation the Continuing Care branch of our department has put the home's licence under review. There are—have been a number of unannounced inspections during that time to ensure standards are being met. We expect to get the results of the PCPO—or PPCO investigation in about 60 days.

I can't speak to the actual investigation, but I will meet with family members to listen to them, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for River Heights, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I thank the minister.

The dignity and respect of seniors in personal-care homes requires staff to be knowledgeable and caring with respect to residents and their individual needs. Staff have been found to be unaware of important details of a person's care, in one case talking to a resident's left ear instead of the right ear through which they can hear. Another resident had a misplaced hearing aid and wasn't

checked for hours. Residents' care plans are often ignored and not followed.

There needs to be sufficient properly trained staff to adequately care for seniors.

Will the minister ensure seniors in the Lions Prairie Manor will be treated with dignity and humanity, and that issues like hearing, toileting and cleanliness are properly addressed?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, Madam Speaker, I don't think there's a member of this House who doesn't believe that a senior should be treated with dignity and respect wherever they are in Manitoba.

I've indicated to the member that there is an investigation that is well under way from the protection of persons in care office. There's been more than 100 interviews with family and with staff. We have the licence under review within the Continuing Care branch. I've agreed to meet to hear the stories of the family members immediately after question period.

But he knows that I can't speak to the ongoing investigation or the allegations, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for River Heights, on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, on several occasions serious medical issues were missed and not treated quickly when they should have been. One senior who was severely short of breath was only taken to the Portage hospital to be checked after the family insisted on it. Arriving at the hospital, the family were told the woman had three litres of fluid on her lungs, and that if she had not had the fluid removed she would likely have drowned in her sleep overnight.

On another occasion, a woman with a broken hip was not able to see a doctor for 24 hours.

Will the minister ensure that staff at the Lions Prairie Manor are better trained to recognize serious medical issues so that they are addressed promptly?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Madam Speaker, while I can't speak to the specific allegations because they are part of the protection and persons care office investigation, as I've mentioned in the previous two answers there is a full investigation that is under way. There's been more than 100 interviews, I understand, with families and with residents.

I'm more than willing to listen to the families that I understand are here today, immediately after question period, Madam Speaker.

### **Municipal Board Appeal Management Process**

**Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake):** A quick two years ago our Progressive Conservative government was elected on a promise to repair the services that Manitobans depend on. This includes our promise to give municipalities their fair say.

Yesterday morning I was privileged to recognize, on behalf of our PC government, the importance of the changes being adopted by the Minister of Municipal Relations.

Can the minister update the Chamber on what this means for Manitobans who are making appeals to the Municipal Board?

**Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Municipal Relations):** I'd like to thank the member from Interlake for that great question.

The Manitoba Municipal Board, Madam Speaker, is launching a new innovative appeal management process. This new process will expedite appeals through settlement discussions or case management.

Madam Speaker, to date there are approximately 2,500 outstanding files, and we expect to address these files within the next 24 months.

Unlike members opposite, Madam Speaker, our government is committed to partnering with the City of Winnipeg and municipalities to ensure a better service for Manitobans.

### **Families Office (Killarney) Request to Reverse Closure**

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** The Premier's (Mr. Pallister) attack on rural communities continues. When word came out that the Province was closing the Department of Families office in Killarney, workers and their families were devastated.

The Premier does not care that his cuts and closures are hurting small communities across the province. The Premier did not consult the workers before moving their jobs. Instead, he listened to high-priced consultants.

Will the Premier please reverse his decision to close the Killarney services office?



**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families):** I can tell you that services will be provided to residents of Killarney and surrounding areas. That will be taken care of from the Winnipeg region or the branch outside Killarney. I can tell you the same services and supports are there. The workers that were associated with this have been relocated to other types of jobs, so the jobs are there, and the services will be there and will remain to be there.

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

#### **Rural Community Supports Government Position**

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** This is not the first instance where the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) actions have caused massive disruption.

The Premier ordered dozens of Hydro offices to close across rural Manitoba; the Premier gave a massive contract that took business from pharmacies across rural Manitoba; and now the Premier is cutting jobs.

When will the Premier offer real supports to our rural communities?

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families):** This government is supporting rural communities, city communities, all communities in a more facet way than we had with the NDP government. We know the types of services and supports that are there. That's why a key element of our plan is to repair some of the services that were left in jeopardy after 17 years of NDP rule.

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

#### **Families Office (Killarney) Request to Reverse Closure**

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** The Premier's plans to close EMS stations, to close emergency rooms and cut education budgets, are hitting our rural communities hard. Now he's closing offices and centralizing services. It is the job of this Premier to ensure families have access to services in every part of our province.

Will the Premier reverse his decision to close the Killarney services office?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance):** Well, Madam Speaker, I can recall very clearly when the NDP closed numerous Hydro offices, numerous Agriculture offices, but what the member fails to talk

about is a very significant transformation strategy that we kicked off yesterday in government. We were talking today about a need to consolidate back-office function.

Why do we do any of these things? Because results matter. Because we must deliver services in new ways. Because we are concerning ourselves with the very real challenge of eliminating a deficit left too large by the former NDP government.

The outcome of all of these things will be stronger services to Manitobans. The outcome will be focusing on new opportunities and transformation. That's worthy work, and we're getting to it.

#### **Music Programs Level of Government Support**

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan):** The Pallister government's cuts on music continue. Last year the Pallister government forced Sturgeon-Heights Collegiate to cut a music teacher and two band programs. Students protested this cut and through tears explained the importance of this teacher and this program. But the minister turned a deaf ear.

\* (14:30)

Will he listen now and reverse his cuts to music programs across the province?

**Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training):** I thank the member for the question. Our government has given school districts and school boards a—more flexibility when it comes to how they manage their own affairs, more choice as to what classes they prioritize, more resources. We put—where it's now \$50 million more than there ever was under the previous NDP government.

I think we've provided the school boards with the choice. I know this is a choice that school boards make, as to whether they prioritize music or other programs in their school division, and I think they appreciate the fact that we give some local autonomy.

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

**Ms. Marcelino:** It's Music Month, but the Pallister government's cuts to music programming continues. Yesterday, we revealed that the Pallister government cancelled its plans for a music room expansion at the Gimli High School. The MLA for the area explained that music projects like this are a low priority. It

seems this government is only focussed on the bottom line.

I ask the minister again: What does he have against music?

**Mr. Wishart:** I certainly enjoyed the opportunity to kick off Music Month here on Monday, Music Monday, which was done all across Canada. As I just explained to the member, we provide the local school boards with the opportunity to make some choices as to their own local priorities.

Perhaps the member doesn't appreciate that ability to be flexible and to make some local autonomy and make some local choices, but I know I hear from many teachers and many school boards and many parents to know—that express the ability—appreciation for the ability to make some local choice.

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

**Ms. Marcelino:** In *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* it was the music of children that warmed the Grinch's heart and inspired him to return all that he had taken. I plead with the Premier and the Minister of Education to open their hearts and ears to the songs and music of the children and youth.

I urge the Premier and the minister: cancel your cuts on music, and restore music programming across the province.

Will they do so today?

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier):** The member makes an insouciant argument, Madam Speaker, and I would just give her two facts. First of all, our budget this year for Education is \$468 million higher than the NDP ever funded Education for. Secondly, that is in spite of the fact that the previous government added, every day for the last five years they were in power, \$10 million of additional debt to this Province.

So if the member is aware and understands the nature of the challenge of dealing with the interest only on that debt, she would understand how unmusical that reality is for the future of Manitoba and for the children of Manitoba.

In spite—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pallister:**—of these challenges, Madam Speaker, we continue to value education, and the investments we make are the highest in Canada per student.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

#### **Affordable Housing Initiatives (Brandon) Tax and Land Incentives**

**Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East):** Unlike the previous NDP government, the PC government is getting things done in Brandon. Just last week, Madam Speaker, the Minister of Families, in conjunction with the mayor from the City of Brandon, had some exciting announcements to make in my constituency of Brandon East.

I'm wondering if the minister could please inform the Chamber on how looking for unique ideas, concepts and specific proposals to create new affordable housing at 705 Lorne Ave. in Brandon.

**Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families):** It's always a pleasure to work with the City of Brandon and the member from Brandon East in terms of getting things done in Brandon. We know that affordable housing is an important facet for people of—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Fielding:**—all regions, and it truly is a pleasure to work with the City of Brandon to have some innovative, creative solutions. The Province is going to partner with the City of Brandon where they're going to supply the land as well as a tax abatement, that's a part of it. And the Province will tune in in terms of financial supports to create some innovative housing solutions in Brandon, Manitoba.

We're very pleased that we can create some of these solutions for the city of Brandon.

#### **Jordan's Principle Government Position**

**Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook):** Jordan River Anderson was born in 1999, and he passed away in 2005. He never spent one day in his home. These are the same years in which the NDP came into power. They had years to help Jordan get home. To even spend one day, even a week, that would've made such an impact.

Can this new government explain for us if and how they advocated for this young man when they were in opposition?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the fact that the member has brought forward a specific case. When it comes to any situation in Manitoba that deals with a young person, I think that all of us as legislators feel in our heart the need to advocate, to bring forward our views and the interests of those young people. I don't think that there's a member in this House that doesn't care for those who are vulnerable, for those who are being mistreated, for those who are in difficult situations.

Regardless of our partisanship, regardless of the parties that we were elected for or the areas that we were elected for, I think all of us bring that heart here, and if all of us collectively keep that as our primary interest, I think we'll make advancements for all of those who are in those positions, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The time for oral questions has expired.

## PETITIONS

### Tina Fontaine—Public Inquiry

**Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Tina Fontaine was murdered at the age of 15 years, and her body was found in the Red River on August 17th, 2014.

(2) Tina Fontaine was robbed of her loving family and the Anishinabe community of Sagkeeng First Nation.

(3) Tina Fontaine was failed by multiple systems which did not protect her as they intervened in her life.

(4) Tina Fontaine was further failed by systems meant to seek and pursue justice for her murder.

(5) Tina Fontaine's murder galvanized Canada on the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, MMIWG, as she quickly became our collective daughter and the symbol of MMIWG across Canada.

(6) Manitoba has failed to fully implement the recommendations of numerous reports and recommendations meant to improve and protect the lives of indigenous people and children, including the Manitoba Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, Royal

Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Phoenix Sinclair inquiry.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier of Manitoba and the Premier—or the Minister of Justice to immediately call a public inquiry into the systems that had a role in the life and death of Tina Fontaine, as well as the function of the administration of justice after her death.

(2) To urge that the terms of reference of a public inquiry be developed jointly with the caregivers of Tina Fontaine and/or the agent appointed by them.

Signed by Christina [phonetic] Knott, Larry Wood and Billy Pezar and many, many other Manitobans.

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

The honourable member for Point Douglas—or sorry, for St. Johns.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition.

(1) Tina Fontaine was murdered at the age of 15 years, and her body was found in the Red River on August 17, 2014.

(2) Tina Fontaine was robbed of her loving family and the Anishinabe community of Sagkeeng First Nation.

(3) Tina Fontaine was failed by multiple systems which did not protect her as they intervened in her life.

(4) Tina Fontaine was further failed by systems meant to seek and pursue justice for her murder.

(5) Tina Fontaine's murder galvanized Canada on the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, MMIWG, as she quickly became our collective daughter and the symbol for MMIWG across Canada.

(6) Manitoba has failed to fully implement the recommendations of numerous reports and recommendations meant to improve and protect the lives of indigenous people and children, including

the Manitoba Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People and the Phoenix Sinclair inquiry.

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(2) To urge that the terms of reference of a public inquiry be developed jointly with the caregivers of Tina Fontaine and/or the agent appointed by them.

Signed by many Manitobans.

**Madam Speaker:** Grievances?

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

*(Continued)*

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

#### House Business

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader):** Pursuant to rule 33(8), I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for St. Johns. The title of the resolution is Protecting and Promoting French Language Services.

Merci.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine). The title of the resolution is Protecting and Promoting French Language Services.

\* \* \*

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I'm seeking leave of the House to, for today and tomorrow, to have the Department of Families in room 255 to replace Executive Council in Committee of Supply.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to switch Executive Council with Families in Committee of Supply in room 255 for today and tomorrow?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Madam Speaker:** I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

**Mr. Cullen:** Madam Speaker, would you call Committee of Supply.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the House will consider Estimates this afternoon. The House will now resolve itself into Committee of Supply.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the chair.

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

#### FINANCE

\* (15:00)

**Madam Chairperson (Sarah Guillemard):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Finance, including Crown Services.

As previously agreed, questioning for this department will proceed in a global manner.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Crown Services):** I just wanted to table today for the committee some matters that were taken under advisement from May 8th and May 9th. I will just pass them.

**Madam Chairperson:** Seeing no further questions, I will now deal with the resolutions.

Oh, you have a question? [*interjection*]

The floor is now open for questions.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** I do have just a few questions here. And I understand folks have places to be, and I would certainly want to respect their time. So I'm hoping that the minister can answer as quickly as possible and we can move on this afternoon. It is—I will not make a speech. I will simply ask the questions; however, there are there are a number of parts. So, if the minister can get these in and out, and we can move along.

So the Province recently put out a request for proposals on Procurement Services, and a winning bid should now be selected. So the questions are: Who was the winning bid? How much was their award? Are there now any contractors working alongside staff or in terms—or, sorry, on terms with

the government, and, if so, how many? And how much are they being paid?

And if the minister wanted to take that under advisement, get that back to us.

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance):** In respect of the tender for Procurement Services, as the member mentions, that process actually is not concluded. The contest is now closed, but the negotiations continue. So I cannot advise him as to the detail of what he's asking for specifically to that contract. And, if he wants to make a different request globally, I'll ask him to restate that.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, I'm not quite sure I follow where the minister's going on that. But what I would then ask is, if he was willing, if it's just a matter of a very short amount of time, that he will have that information, that he could provide that for us as soon as it's available.

**Mr. Friesen:** So, just to provide a clarification to the member, then, as I said, the contest has closed, and there's a process that then ensues by which the terms of the agreement are negotiated. We're in that process right now; however, we can bring back an update to him, although he will be aware that that process should end very shortly. And, of course, the rules require that that contract would have to be disclosed on the contract disclosure site within 30 days. That information disclosed at that time would be both the name of the award winner, the terms of the agreement, the length of term of agreement and any remuneration or any payments as well. So that will be live shortly. And, if the member prefers it, we could send—we could provide the letter through the Estimates process at some point.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Okay, so I think that covers off; most of my questions will be available, and I appreciate the response there.

The one outstanding question that I think is how—are there any contractors that are now working alongside staff or on terms with the government on this proposal—or, sorry, on Procurement Services? Are there any right now, and how many?

**Mr. Friesen:** There are none.

\* (15:10)

**Madam Chairperson:** Seeing no further questions, I will now deal with the resolutions. This—oh, sorry. I will now deal with the resolutions.

Resolution 7.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$707,000 for Finance, Crown Services, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

*Resolution agreed to.*

RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$32,233,000 for Finance, Fiscal and Financial Management, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

*Resolution agreed to.*

Resolution 7.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,371,000 for Finance, Treasury Board Secretariat, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

*Resolution agreed to.*

Resolution 7.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,075,000 for Finance, Priorities and Planning Committee of Cabinet Secretariat, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

*Resolution agreed to.*

Resolution 7.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,581,000 for Finance, Intergovernmental Affairs, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

*Resolution agreed to.*

Resolution 7.7: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$147,679,000 for Finance, Central Services, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

*Resolution agreed to.*

Resolution 7.8: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$73,138,000 for Finance, Costs Related to Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

*Resolution agreed to.*

Resolution 7.9: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$63,000,000 for Finance, Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

*Resolution agreed to.*

The last item to be considered for the Estimates of this department is item 7.1.(a), the minister's salary contained in resolution 7.1.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Mr. Wiebe:** And I'd like to move, seconded by the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), that line item 7.1.(a) be amended so that the ministers' salaries be reduced to \$67,200.

***Motion presented.***

**Madam Chairperson:** The motion is in order. Are there any questions or comments on the motion?

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, Madam Chair, I think this is an appropriate measure in light of the quite shocking, I think, information that we gathered through this Estimates process, and we spent a number of days in this committee room reviewing this government's obsession with austerity and the impacts that are being felt throughout government, throughout the programs and the front-line services that people count on, and it's become quite clear that this government values that austerity above all else and is willing to make those cuts even though, in the last election, they were quite clear in saying that they would protect the front-line services that Manitobans count on. And as we've gone through line by line some of the information that's been provided by the minister, we've uncovered multiple examples of cuts in positions, cuts in funding, and it paints a fairly bleak picture of this minister's commitment to those front-line services.

However, I do think that the most shocking element that was uncovered throughout these proceedings was the fact that this minister has stashed away hundreds of millions of dollars in his budget for items that he cannot answer either to me in this committee and to the public or to the media or anyone else and cannot tell us why he has written in those numbers. And despite his best attempts to cloud the information and to pick pieces and tell us parts of it, the reality remains that there are roughly \$300 million in appropriations that this government has booked as a one-time cost to government that have no specific use, have no directed use. And yet when we come forward and we say we should be investing in health care, we should be putting that money back into education, we should be supporting post-secondary education, we should be supporting Manitoba Housing, we should be lifting people out of poverty, this minister over and over again has said no, no, no.

This money is Manitobans' money. We think that they would choose to put that into the services that they count on. And yet this minister has put it in a fund that he can use at his discretion without any accountability. That's a concern to us. That's a

concern to Manitobans. And we'll be watching. And, when the minister comes back at the end of the year and says, look, we did so much better than our budget anticipated, look at how much we're slaying the deficit, it'll become increasingly clear that it's only this minister's shell game and his ability to move money around that is achieving those goals, coupled with an austerity that is hurting Manitobans and the services they count on.

**Madam Chairperson:** Is the committee ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Shall the motion pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** Pass.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Madam Chairperson:** I heard a no.

**Voice Vote**

**Madam Chairperson:** All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**Madam Chairperson:** All those opposed to the motion, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Madam Chairperson:** In my opinion, the Nays have it.

**Mr. Wiebe:** On division.

**Madam Chairperson:** On division.

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**Madam Chairperson:** Resolution 7.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,481,000 for Finance, Corporate Services, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

***Resolution agreed to.***

This concludes the Estimates for the Department of Finance.

The next set of Estimates to be considered by this section of the Committee of Supply is for the Department of Infrastructure.

Shall we briefly recess to allow the minister and critic the opportunity to prepare for the commencement of the next department? *[Agreed]*

*The committee recessed at 3:19 p.m.*

*The committee resumed at 3:20 p.m.*

\* (15:20)

## INFRASTRUCTURE

**Madam Chairperson (Sarah Guillemard):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Infrastructure.

As previously agreed, questioning for this department will proceed in a global manner.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I'd like to ask the minister several questions regarding Water Management, Planning and Standards providing general geotechnical advice to local governments, including the City of Winnipeg.

I would like to know whether his department is involved in geotechnical advice to local governments, including the City of Winnipeg, regarding riverbank stability problems and options for addressing those problems.

**Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure):** I thank the member for Elmwood for the question.

And I'm going to ask department officials to have a seat and I'm going to ask the member for Elmwood to—if he would ask that question one more time. And I'm going to ask Jeremy—I'm going to ask Ruth to answer that question.

Could he ask that again?

**Mr. Maloway:** I'm actually going to do better than that. I'm going to give you a bit of a history which prompts these—this series of questions.

We have a seniors home at 404 Desalaberry on—in Winnipeg called Columbus House, and it's about—I think 80 residents live there. It's right on the river. And what is—what has happened is that the riverbank has had erosion issues, but just a couple of weeks ago it had a serious—actually, a sidewalk is collapsed

and the riverbank is—this is, like, now 15 feet away from the building itself. The riverbank is—or the riverbank has dropped about three more feet. So this is becoming a serious issue.

Now this is not far away from the La Salle Hotel, actually, very close to the La Salle Hotel, which had had issues in the 2011 flood and money was put into it. How much provincial money, how much city money, I'm not really sure, but La Salle Hotel did not pay for that entirely on its own.

And just around the bank from that is the Elmwood Cemetery. And you'll probably know that Elmwood Cemetery was a private cemetery, and the owner of the cemetery, you know, stopped paying his taxes and moved to Toronto, and so the grass grew very high there for a number of years in the '90s 'til the City had to take the cemetery over on a tax basis. And what it did was the provincial government of Gary Filmon did pay—I don't know what the formula was—but they did pay to restore the banks of the river around the cemetery because there were one or two examples of coffins showing. And this was well documented at the time, in the 1990s.

But the City themselves didn't have the resources to do this, and so the Filmon government did step in to—and, by the way, Charlie Birt had a lot to do with this, as did Mayor Bill Norrie, who—both of whom had mothers buried in that cemetery.

So it goes to show you that the co-operation between the Province and the City, you know, can accomplish good things. And, in this case, it was good. And the cemetery did get set up under a non-profit, and it's operating to this day very successfully. So, in this case with Columbus House, we are just seeing a situation deteriorate over time and it's getting worse, particularly in the last week. *[interjection]* Exactly.

Yes, and the—there was a solution about four years ago when the former city councillor Thomas Steen had—was able to—with him and Mayor Katz, had made sort of—they were close to making an announcement to—the Louise Bridge was going to be, you know, rebuilt, and it was going to be angled through they—just past the parking lot of La Salle Hotel. So what would've happened was that that riverbank erosion problem from the seniors home being right next to where the bridge was going to be, would, in fact, be dealt with. And, matter of fact, Steen had trucked—few trucks of gravel or rocks there. And we really thought this was going to go through, and then all of a sudden things didn't

happen. But the problem would've been solved had that bridge been built.

**Mr. Schuler:** The member for Elmwood is talking about my former hood. I grew up. I'm a graduate of Elmwood High school, and right under the Louise Bridge a friend of mine—Joe [*phonetic*] was his name—we went from school one day and decided to—we had found some pallets underneath the bridge and the river was very high, and we decided we were going to try to raft down the river. And to this day, it was an act of God. An off-duty police officer must've been driving over the bridge, saw those two boys down there, parked his car and walked down, and he said, what are you guys doing? And we said, oh, we're just go rafting down the river, and he said, that'll kill you; you can't do that. And he said, boys, I have to walk you up and you can't do this again.

So I know exactly what he's talking about. What our suggestion would be is that if you would work with your city councillor, who we both know very well, Councillor Schreyer, and with the mayor's office, and engage with Municipal Relations, and that's where that would go through. Now, there—because the other example that the member referred to, and that was a cemetery, because that's an emergency situation and the Province does have some responsibility there, they did move in on an emergency basis, and I remember that case very clearly. There were graves being exposed, and it just—it was very uncomfortable, and the Province and the City worked on it to mitigate it.

Insofar as this particular building and the facility he speaks of is on the former site of Concordia hospital. And I remember being in the old Concordia hospital right there, and then they tore it down; it just wasn't in a shape to be used, and they put that seniors home in. Certainly, if you would work through the City and tie in to Municipal Relations, there could be some grants and things done to shore that up. I know there are, throughout the river, some serious, serious erosions taking place, and because we live on gumbo and it gets wet and then it dries out and it cracks, and it gets wet again, slowly it slides in.

So want to thank the member for Elmwood for flagging that issue. We flagged it here, and I will also ask my department if they would just send a note in to Municipal Relations that they already know that this is an issue and they can count on it coming to them from the City.

**Mr. Maloway:** Could the minister also determine for us—try to determine for us what the cost of the

remediation was in those days? I mean, I don't know how much money was spent on the project, but it would be interesting to know, you know, just for no other reason than to know how costs have escalated.

\* (15:30)

**Mr. Schuler:** I thank the member for the question, and just—in consultation with my officials, a project like that would for sure have been in the millions, because the sense is that there probably weren't caissons put in to shore up the shore, it was scoped. The graves that were exposed were moved, I remember that. They moved them bit further in.

And this was a project where the Province would have done a cost-share with the City, and the City probably would have been the one undertaking the work. So we don't really have a cost for that. We wouldn't have any—it's been a while, 20-some years ago. The cost really depends on if they have to put caissons in, because then that really starts to add into the price. If it's just a matter of putting some rock down; that does help bring down the costs, so.

**Mr. Maloway:** It's been—thank you, Madam Chair—it's been my information that, of all the erosion problems in the city of Winnipeg itself, along the river, that this is, like, rated pretty much No. 1. There was a report done when Steen was still the councillor, and his assistant did share it with me that they actually used this picture of this part of the bank at the—at 404 Desalaberry as an example of the worst case.

So it makes me wonder if they could identify that particular bit of erosion as the worst case of erosion in the city back four years ago, why they've let it go this long, to the point where now, as of last week, the sidewalk has collapsed.

**Mr. Schuler:** And I'm sure wherever the Minister of Municipal Relations (Mr. Wharton) is, that he's probably keyed on, with one ear, on this conversation, in that this is a serious issue. And I would ask the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), if he works through his councillor, through the mayor's office, and that is raised with the Minister for Municipal Relations.

Again, I know exactly where that building is, and it's been a while since I was behind there, but the last time was a while ago, and there was—already the soil was slumping and it was—actually I think where—last time I saw it, we were kayaking by, and the riverbank was slumping.



And these are really serious issues. I kayaked from perimeter to perimeter with my brother-in-law one year, and we—at one point in time, we were kayaking, and the river threw trees. A whole section had slumped, take all—taken all the trees, everything with it into the river, and those trees would have ended up floating away at some point in time.

So, a serious issue, and we want to make sure it is flagged for the important department, and go from there.

**Mr. Maloway:** I think we could probably solve the problem right now by—if we agreed to, minister and I go out and take a look at it tomorrow, if you've got time, or any time during the weekend. You—we'll be celebrating from the win, big Winnipeg Jets win, so we'll be just fresh off the win and we could go out there and take a look. Well, I mean, it doesn't have to be tomorrow, but the sooner the better, obviously, because the residents are concerned.

**Mr. Schuler:** And I will endeavour to co-ordinate with the member in the next week. I'll see. There's a chance that I could even do tomorrow, and I would go and have a look at it. Maybe we could take some photos. And I don't know if he would have the opportunity, maybe Councillor Schreyer could meet us as well, and we could have a look at, you know, yes—we'll have the chance to look at it, and it doesn't take long, it's on my way. So I will endeavour to do that with the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

**Mr. Maloway:** I want to thank the minister for making that commitment, and I'm sure that he'll have a good time revisiting his stomping grounds. He—we can take him by his old high school there, Elmwood High, and I'm sure he and I will have a good time getting over there. And the residents are—the residents will be awaiting our visit, I'm sure.

So I want to ask the minister several questions now about this whole water bomber issue and the whole attempt to privatize the Air Services. We have a number of employees, I guess, of the government air who are, you know, more than a little bit concerned about their future. I understand there were, you know, maybe 90 employees there, and now that may be as low as 50 or maybe a little bit higher than 50. But people are certainly leaving because of the uncertainty to do with the whole government Air Services.

And I'd like to just ask the minister why he is so convinced that sending out an RFP trying to privatize

this service, how it is going to benefit the government. What is the rationale there?

**Mr. Schuler:** Well, I want to, first of all, assure the member and I want to assure all the employees that nothing has been done. What we have done is announced that we'd like to look at an RFP, currently the RFP for individuals looking at potentially doing some or all of the work that we do right now with our whole Air Services.

But I want to point out to the member, and to all our employees, the only RFP that we've let is for a consultant to help us put that RFP together. In fact, the other day—I don't know if it was the member for Elmwood. I don't believe it was. It was the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) who tabled the RFP that was put out by the NDP in Alberta, and he said, have a look at it, and I've sent it over to the department. And again, it's got to be somebody who knows how to put these together, and it's got to be done right.

But I would caution him, and I would caution everyone, it's sort of like the P3s for schools. You know, we made the announcement, and the member for Elmwood might have been one of those individuals who, you know, got a little excited about that. And, in the end, we didn't do it.

And I want to tell the member, because we went into this and we said we would not do this for ideological reasons—so we wouldn't do an RFP for schools, come hell or high water, that it was an ideology. We tested it to see if there was a different way we could do this at a better price. And, surprise, we could actually—it worked way better in that we do it in-house. And we made the announcement of all the schools that we're building, quite a number of them. And it's way better, and we found a better system of letting the schools go. And we're very pleased the way the prices are coming, and better than we would have gotten had we taken those to a triple P.

So I would say to the member, the same thing applies to this process. And I've been very clear with the department, I've been very clear in all the stakeholder groups that we've talked to, that this is not an ideological thing. What you do once in a while is you take something like air—the Air Services branch, and you test it. And I think a lot of people are surprised that, often, government can actually do it cheaper than the private sector. But we don't know that because we haven't tested it. So what we are going to do is we're going to test that. And if we find

that we do it far better, far cheaper in-house, then that's where it'll stay.

**Mr. Maloway:** I just want to present some of the arguments that have been given to me to support why it's pretty efficient the way it is. And they, you know, understand the government's financial issues. And, you know, we had those issues too. And we did take action on a number of fronts. We were reminded every day in question period about—in your responses, right? So all governments, you know, have to relook at expenses every once in a while.

\* (15:40)

And you're right, absolutely right. Sometimes it makes sense to leave things the way they are. For example, I am told that if you farm out, for example, the water bombers or the medical flights to a private carrier, that the costs per trip are going to escalate hugely. Right now, evidently the—I don't know that there's any, you know, waiting time fees involved in these things because you own the equipment and you've got the employees flying the flights. But, if you get a private company to do it, then it's going to be, you know, \$10,000 or \$15,000 a flight. And there's going to be fees charged for, you know, having the plane sit there for a while, all kinds of extra charges that you're not facing right now.

And also, you don't have the dedicated—the dedication of the planes. For example, the water bombers are sold to—I think there's a company in BC that might be interested. But, if you sell it to that company, the water bombers may find themselves in California where they might be more highly paid, right? So, if there's fires in California and the private company decides to send all the water bombers there, what is Manitoba going to do? Because the private company is getting probably, you know, way higher prices for fighting fires there. So, when the minister needs the water bombers, they're not going to be available. If they are, he's going to be bidding against California costs, right?

I'm also told that, for example, in a fire situation, because we're seeing a lot of that activity right now, that the difference between, you know, dropping the water in the right spot from the air could mean the difference between a half a million or—in other words, the difference between a half-a-million-dollar fire and a million-dollar fire is just a matter of, you know, 30 seconds difference in the drop time of the water.

And so, you know, I have been in the private sector business for 40 years now. And insurance is a commission-based system. And I'm not saying there's a lot of, you know, a lot of this happening, but it was pointed out to me by people that work for the air-government air services that, you know, for them, they would—if they would—they would know to drop that water right where it's needed to make sure it's only a half-a-million-dollar fire. Because they're not paid any more for it being a bigger fire. But, if it's a private sector operation and they're billing the government, then if they drop that water an extra, you know, minute longer and it gets in the wrong place, then that fire will escalate in that short period of time to a million-dollar fire, and then the province's costs are going to escalate a lot because of it.

And all of this makes—you know, makes sense to me. I—you know, I realize that, you know, people make their presentations to support their own interests, right? But in these particular cases, I can see their issues make sense to me as far as the water bombers are concerned, as far as the medical trips that are taken in the jet. I believe that's another argument for keeping it with the government, because I'm told that the current pilots that you have right now have certification for landing in short runways, which you have a number of. And, if you give it to a private company, they're going to have to downgrade. They won't be able to use the jets. They will use turboprops, which are going to take a lot longer, fly lower, be rougher. So I understand that I am running out of time on this particular question, but I give the minister his time, and then I'll ask him another one.

**Mr. Schuler:** Well, you know what; I'm going to refer back to the member and allow him to finish his question and then I'll answer it.

**Mr. Maloway:** Well, thank you. So what I have been told is that we have a number of, you know, gravel runways. I was given a half a dozen names of runways where right now, because of their certification, the pilots flying the jet are certified to fly—or to land on those limited runways. But if you turn it over to a—one of I guess it's three or four private operators, none of those people have the staff that are qualified to fly jets—I believe so. And they wouldn't have the qualifications to land on such short runways. That's my point. So now the jets would be taken out of those situations, and they would put in these turboprops. And, of course, the turboprops are slower, and, you know, they don't fly as high because

they're not jets, and it's a much rougher ride for the patients that are being, you know, rescued.

I would think, when you're picking up patients, you would want them to be as comfortable as possible when you're transporting them. Plus, they'd also told me that when they take trips to, you know, BC or whatever, that it takes them, like, six hours to get there because—as opposed to a jet, which is like half the time.

So I would ask the minister that if he could, you know, listen to these people and listen to what their arguments are, and, you know, if you still don't feel that their arguments are good enough, then—but you could save yourselves a lot of grief and effort by drilling down into these situations and making sure that, well, you would know you would be able to prove whether their arguments are valid or not.

And I have a lot more examples like that. We could chase this around for a long time, but I just wanted you to know that.

**Mr. Schuler:** Well, the member for Elmwood makes an ironclad case of why we've got to make sure that we have a very good consultant putting together the RFP. And the member for Elmwood raises a whole series of issues and a whole series of questions, whether it's gravel runways or trained pilots. And that's why we want to make sure that—through the design of the RFP, that we have everything checked off.

So, for instance, he mentions, you know, what happens if they could make a lot more money in a fire somewhere else. So the RFP would have to stipulate that, for our fire season, they have to be available here. Now, a company might say that's just not going to work for me. Well, then don't bid on it. Right. I mean, that's—like, the RFP has to be very tight. And we know that the RFP that the member's colleague tabled in the Legislature—and that was the one they—the NDP in Alberta went to a private service. And I forwarded that on to the department, and we'll make sure that our consultant gets it.

In fact, I will also endeavour to make sure—and I will ask the department to make sure they do this—that—take the member's concerns that he raised, and we'll make sure we send those over to the consultant as well to have a look at. I suspect they probably have covered those off, but, I mean, one more just to make sure.

And that's why we have to make sure we get it absolutely right, that we protect ourselves. And one

of the things the member was trying to say—and I happen to know this one very clearly—is that we have to make sure that our pilots are trained to fly by instrument and not just by sight, because they get into a very heavy, smoky situation, and then the flights can't fly. So those things have to be covered off. Our fires tend to be a lot less flame and a lot more smoke. And they have to be able to get down close to the ground to drop their payload, and a lot of it tends to be smouldering.

So he's absolutely right in that, and that's why we decided that we would go that extra step, invest in a really good company to do the proper RFP and protect us so that when we go to the market, that we're all very clear on what it is that we're asking for. And, if he has some more examples, by all means, but I want him to know that if, for instance, he has a list, if he has, you know—it could be 20, 30 different concerns. If he wanted to, he could send it to my office, and we'll make sure they get over to the consultant, because it is important that we get the RFP right. It's important that whoever bids on it knows what the expectation is. And then if they decide they're going to bid on it, the price is accordingly. If they're not going to, well, then we have an answer there as well.

**Mr. Maloway:** Well, certainly—very important part of all of this is the safety issues, and I certainly—I'm told that on the medical flights, the nursing staff who are on these medical flights are, you know, very happy with the—flying with the government pilots, because they have a perfect track record. You can't get better than a perfect track record.

\* (15:50)

On the other side of the coin, there have been examples of actual crashes with some of the private carriers. I—you know them as well as I do. They've been reported. But there's been at least two or three, I guess, crashes where there were fatalities with private carriers. And not to say that can't happen with a government pilot, too, but so far, evidently, it's perfect safety record. And so, if you're a nurse flying on those flights, you're going to want to fly with the people that do have the perfect safety record, right, and not one that doesn't. So that is a big concern as well.

Also, I wanted to ask the minister about the bombers themselves, the water bombers themselves. Certainly, they—I've got nothing against, you know, older equipment, but I can tell you that those water bombers are old. Like, really old. Now I'm told that

the water bombers don't even—that they don't make them anymore. I don't—I can't believe that there's no replacement for water bombers. Does the minister know anything about, you know, about getting new—*[interjection]*—I knew that was coming—whether there's any or there were any plans to look at some new equipment for the—in terms of water bombers?

**Mr. Schuler:** Well, again, I haven't really delved into the age of the fleet, but I would point out to the member, if there's one thing that is very clear—and this is federally mandated—it is that our aircraft, No. 1, must be maintained 100 per cent. So it really wouldn't come down to, necessarily, the age of the fleet. It comes down to how well maintained it is. And one thing we do pride ourselves in as a department; over the years, we've maintained those aircraft very well.

I'd also point out to the member that we have an incredibly rigorous training program for our pilots. We spend really good money on training, and that, again, I would point out to committee—not just to the member but to the committee—that is also federally mandated. Like, these are not options. It's not—you can go through, oh, well, you know, maybe we won't do the—this test or this test. Actually, you must do the tests. And we follow those by the law. We do have almost 50 per cent of our flights are private, and the expectation is that they live up to that standard as well.

The one accident, the one flight that did crash just a couple of years ago, that was neither the equipment nor was it the pilot. It was on the ground. Somebody put the wrong fuel into the airplane and the—I had friends on—that was very scary. A boyhood friend of mine was on that flight. And he has four sons, and my son was just—now we're off into story time again—but my son was just leaving for Europe for Bible school, and so we saw him that next morning while he was still in step-down, and that was very emotional because my son knows him from—well, when he didn't even know him, when he was born—so, like a very close friend. And that's scary. And, you know, that was an issue at the airport. They had put the wrong fuel in the airplane. And, you know what? Unfortunately, those things happen.

But I just want to assure the member, and I want to assure committee, that the aircraft and the flight crews—the aircraft are very well maintained and the crews are very well trained.

**Mr. Maloway:** And so that—the minister actually makes my point for me, that these pilots are well trained. They have a perfect flying record. They're well trained. They're better trained than the private pilots, I would think. The equipment is very well maintained, although I—you know, it is old. I know. I've seen some of it. And I don't think they're making any more water bombers. I've been told that. I don't know what—how that's going to turn out because eventually they're going to have to be replaced.

But you've got the best pilots right now, the best trained pilots right now. You've got aircraft that are well maintained. And yet you're losing your staff there because you started with 90 and now you're down to 50 or 60. And where do you think these people are going?

You know, it's no different than the Concordia emergency room situation, that once you tell—once you put an order out that you're going to close the emergency room by a certain date, what do you think happens? Your staff start to look around and look for other opportunities. And that, in fact, has happened, where staff have moved, taken positions with—in Grace and in St. Boniface. You know, I know they're short, like, five positions in some diagnostic area right now. So it's just human nature that it's going to happen, that why wouldn't a staff at government air, pilots be looking around for other opportunities and making the jump now rather than waiting to the end when the thing is privatized and there's no more openings for—may not be openings in the private sector.

So you can understand why—and the private pilots, by the way, are paid—are well paid. There's no denying that, that they can leave. They have left to join other air services, so there are jobs there. The danger is that, you know, just by toying with this idea, that you're actually losing staff who are making the jump now rather than to wait when there may possibly no—be no job for them.

**Mr. Schuler:** Okay, and I want to assure the member and I want to assure committee, first of all, all the parts are still being made for the water bombers. And it looks like Viking manufacturing, they manufacture these aircraft, are looking at starting up the manufacturing. It's called the 415 water bomber, and it looks like they're going to start that.

I do want to, however, explain to committee something, and I—far be it from me to correct the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), but I want to be very careful on this one. The pilots, whether they

fly for government or whether they fly for private industry, are all trained at the same standard. That is a federal standard. They must be trained at the standard. I think what the member is trying to get at is there is still the difference between a new pilot and an experienced pilot, and I would suggest to committee that currently there is a real shortage of experienced pilots across the country, and this is happening now, North America and worldwide. And the reason is there were a lot of pilots at a certain generation. I can remember a lot of my friends wanted to get into flying and did get into flying, and you couldn't get flying time. Nobody needed them. We were chock full of pilots.

So a whole generation decided not to fly, and a lot of pilots went into other things. And now all of a sudden you're having that drop-off of retirements and we are looking, because we've lost almost an entire generation or two, and we are looking for that generation or two because they're missing from the natural progression of pilots coming in and retiring. There are a lot of pilots retiring right now, so we are cognizant of that.

I would, however, like to point out to the member and to committee, yes, we did have several pilots leave, and they came back. And I think they understand that what we're doing is a very recent approach that we're—there's no—we're not creating any instability in this process. What we're doing right now is having someone come in, help us write the RFP. It still has to go out. And that we've made it very clear, and I want to assure the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), I want to assure committee and all individuals that are flying for us right now, I have said to the department, to the deputy minister, the ADM, the directors in all the meetings that this is not a decision going to be made on ideology. This is going to be to test to see if we can get at a minimum the same standard of service at a better price. And we will see if we can get better service, better price, at least the standard we have right now, and we'll test the market, as we should. We should test it. We've tested it in other areas. Sometimes it was worthwhile; sometimes it wasn't.

\*(16:00)

But I would suggest to all members, you run that same system in your own home. You have an old vehicle and it's starting to cost you a lot in repairs. You go out and you see—if I buy a new vehicle, am I going to save myself money? And you test to see if

you can get a vehicle for a good price and you're not putting all the repairs into your own vehicle.

We make these kinds of decisions all the time.

So, to be clear, we've actually had pilots return to us, which we're really happy about because, you know, we believe we're a very good employer as a department, and I just wanted to assure the member of those issues.

**Mr. Maloway:** The—but the reality is somewhat different because what the minister is stating here. The fact of the matter is that—my information is that you did have 90 staff there, and now you've got 60. So 30 people disappeared on you. Why did they do that? Well, they're out talking to us. They're out talking to your MLAs. *[interjection]* But they are, and they're very concerned that they're—that they're showing commitment by staying and they see the government making these moves.

Obviously, you know, perhaps there's—minister's not communicating well enough with them, I guess, because they are very concerned about this situation, and, you know, I've given you the issues that they—that they're interested in talking about, and they have every reason, I guess, to worry that they're not going to have jobs in short order, particularly with this RFP request. And I mean, I understand it's a request for—an RFP—proposal, but my understanding is that the minister's going to be in a position to do something about this perhaps as early as the fall, and 30 staff have already left.

So I don't know how he can say he's gained staff back. Like, yes, so maybe one or two out of the 90 did leave and came back; that's like a 2 per cent return. Hold on here. We're talking about a 30 per cent loss of his department staff; that's got to affect any type of operation with fires. You know, with—we're into fire season right now. The fires are—there's quite a number of them out there; there may be more, and you're trying to operate this service with a third less staff, 33 per cent. And so you say, oh, yes, well, 2 per cent came back. That's still a net loss of like, I guess 31 per cent.

So you know, I'm not sure the minister has kind of got a full grasp on this, even though he says he does. And he may well have, but I think he's not communicating well enough to the—to those staff. I mean, he—if he was communicating properly, he would've had, you know, they would've met; department would've met with them and they would've had their assurances, and rather than

phoning me about this, they would've been satisfied. But, no, what has happened? Ninety people became 60.

So he's got 30 people, 33 per cent, have just left. They obviously haven't believed his reassurances. So I just ask him to explain all of this again.

**Mr. Schuler:** Yes, I wanted to give further information to committee in that—for the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). Three of the 415 bombers are between six and eight years old. So that's three of the 415s.

**An Honourable Member:** Three of the four?

**Mr. Schuler:** Three of the 415 bombers, they're between six and eight years old.

Of the 215 bombers, the seven were bought between 1970 and 1988. So it's the 215s that are older than the 415s.

And insofar as the size of the department goes, I just want to make it clear, the member is talking about the whole air flight department, not the entire department, because he said that my entire department was down 30 per cent of the staff. That—

**An Honourable Member:** No, the Air Services.

**Mr. Schuler:** The Air Services, right? Okay. I just want to—wanted to make sure on that one. I would like to point out to the member that we have had retirements, and we continue to have retirements within our department.

And, because we are looking at going to an RFP, we are careful not to hire a lot of individuals. We're doing some on contract work, but we have a good complement of pilots, and we've got a good complement of staff that are maintaining the aircraft.

So I would suggest to the member, it's not quite as he has laid it out, but, you know, we do have individuals come and go. And we are seeing that increasingly, not just in our public service, but that's around the country. We are seeing quite a few retirements, so.

**Mr. Maloway:** Now, it's been alleged that the government is, in fact, cleaning up its balance sheet here. They will take their asset and they will sell it to private sector, and then turn around and pay double and triple the cost for the service, but it looks better on the books.

Now, is that not what some of this could be about?

**Mr. Schuler:** Yes, we have had several pilots retire. However, I do wish to tell the member for Elmwood and to the committee, that we are staffed up for fire season, and we continue to hire Lifeflight, which, by the way, is staffed at the moment. It's the inter-flight and transfer that is understaffed, and we are currently hiring pilots. So we are actually doing very well with our complement of the pilots.

And insofar as the minister—the member's other comments, I pointed out to committee, and I want to be very clear that we are only at a RFP right now for someone, a consultant, who's going to help write an RFP to go and test the whole air flight services branch in the market. No decisions have been made.

We are doing what I think all Manitobans do, and that is to shop smarter, and that's what we're going to do. We're going to go out and see if there is someone who can continue to deliver the same quality, the same standard, and perhaps even better, and do so at a better price.

**Mr. Maloway:** While I'd love to stay here 'til 5 o'clock asking the minister questions, I think it's—and I look forward to going to—with the minister tomorrow to 404 Desalaberry or shortly thereafter tomorrow, I hereby move that line item 15.1.(a) be amended so that the Minister of Infrastructure's salary be reduced to \$33,600.

**Madam Chairperson:** It has been moved by the member for Elmwood that line item 15.1.(a) be amended so that the Minister of Infrastructure's salary be reduced to \$33,600.

The motion is in order. Are there any questions or comments on the motion?

Is the committee ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Shall the motion pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Madam Chairperson:** I heard a no.

\* (16:10)

#### Voice Vote

**Madam Chairperson:** All those in favour, please say aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**Madam Chairperson:** All those opposed to the motion, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Madam Chairperson:** In my opinion, the Nays have it.

The motion is accordingly defeated.

\* \* \*

**Madam Chairperson:** Unfortunately, this motion was not in order, as we were not considering resolutions, but seeing no further questions for the minister, I will now deal with the resolutions.

Resolution 15.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$32,746,000 for Infrastructure, Highways, Transportation and Water Management Programs, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 15.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$159,829,000 for Infrastructure, Infrastructure Works, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 15.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$9,791,000 for Infrastructure, Emergency Management and Public Safety, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 15.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$430,656,000 for Infrastructure, Costs Related to Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 15.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$475,787,000 for Infrastructure, Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

The last item to be considered for the Estimates of this department is item 15.1.(a), the minister's salary, contained in resolution 15.1.

At this point, we request that minister's staff leave the table for the consideration of this last item.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Mr. Maloway:** I move that line item 15.1.(a) be amended so that the Minister of Infrastructure's salary be reduced to \$33,600.

**Motion presented.**

**Madam Chairperson:** The motion is in order. Are there any questions or comments on the motion?

Seeing no questions, is the committee ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Shall the motion pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Madam Chairperson:** I heard a no.

**Voice Vote**

**Madam Chairperson:** All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**Madam Chairperson:** All those opposed to the motion, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Madam Chairperson:** In my opinion, the Nays have it.

The motion is accordingly defeated.

\* \* \*

**Madam Chairperson:** Resolution 15.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$10,659,000 for Infrastructure, Corporate Services, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

This completes the Estimates for the Department of Infrastructure.

The next set of Estimates to be considered by this section of the Committee of Supply is for the Department of Indigenous and Northern Relations.

Shall we briefly recess to allow the minister and critic the opportunity to prepare for the commencement of the next department? *[Agreed]*

*The committee recessed at 4:16 p.m.*

*The committee resumed at 4:34 p.m.*

## **INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN RELATIONS**

**Madam Chairperson (Sarah Guillemard):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will now consider the Estimates of the Department of Indigenous and Northern Relations.

Does the honourable minister have an opening statement?

**Hon. Eileen Clarke (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations):** Yes, I do.

**Madam Chairperson:** The honourable minister.

**Ms. Clarke:** Well, I'd like to thank our Chairperson for being here today, and I'd like to thank my colleagues that have come to listen to me, and also our member of the opposition, Andrew Swan, who's joining us—

**Madam Chairperson:** Oh, sorry. I just want to remind all committee members to refer to each other by their constituency or their portfolio.

**Ms. Clarke:** I appreciate the member from Minto being here today as well.

I'm pleased to be able to comment on the 2018-19 Estimates and the opportunity to discuss some of the important activities of the Department of Indigenous and Northern Relations. Before I begin, I'm honoured to take the opportunity to acknowledge that we are on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba's on the ancestral land of the Anishinabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples and the homeland of the Metis nation. I'd also like to acknowledge the hard work of my staff within the department. Through their efforts, we continue our work in northern and indigenous peoples and communities.

My department remains committed to working positively and 'respectfully' with 'indigenous' and northern communities across Manitoba. In doing so, we continue to focus on building effective partnerships with indigenous and northern communities and all levels of government.

As part of this work, I'm pleased to note that the department has finished establishing a new engagement unit. This unit has begun work on a proactive basis to effectively engage with indigenous people, communities and partners, both in the south and the North.

November 21 of 2017 Speech from the Throne, we made a commitment—pardon me—that was made to begin a public engagement process over the next year, in collaboration with indigenous communities and all Manitobans, to develop a comprehensive reconciliation strategy that advances indigenous priorities. The strategy will build on the hard work of our government that we're already doing to heal the wrongs of the past and address the consequences of a century of racist and discriminatory policies against indigenous people in Manitoba.

Each year since The Path to Reconciliation Act was passed, we have reported on the action our government has taken to further reconciliation, and we have translated our report into the seven indigenous languages spoken in Manitoba. Our government will build upon meaningful engagement with indigenous nations and the peoples and all Manitobans to shape the priorities and the framework of reconciliation and guide the development of a reconciliation strategy within Manitoba.

The government of Manitoba continues work to establish a renewed duty-to-consult framework for respectful and productive consultations with indigenous communities. A key outcome of the renewed framework will include improved understanding for all parties to Crown-'original' consultation processes as well as more timely consultation approach that supports the aspirations and the objectives of the parties, reinforced by early and respectful engagement with indigenous communities across the province.

Manitoba also continues with work to develop a mineral development protocol in collaboration with First Nations in northern Manitoba. This work is intended to assist mineral companies wishing to do business in Manitoba, and will help create jobs and promote economic opportunities for First Nation people and the communities in the North. I'm pleased to report that substantial progress has been made on both the framework and the mining protocol, and we will continue these efforts in the coming year.

Our work on Operation Return Home continues, and I'm pleased to report that we continue to return evacuees impacted by the 2011 flooding home to



their communities. I have reported previously on our work to construct new housing and related infrastructure on lands safe from future flooding of the First Nations of Lake St. Martin, Little Saskatchewan, Pinaymootang, and Dauphin River as part of our continued commitment resolving the issues surrounding the 'twentyithimeleven' flood.

In addition, the Anderson class action settlement has been resolved, which compensates individual class members for personal damages, disruption, and losses that have been claimed as a result of the 2011 flood.

Indigenous and Northern Relations is the lead provincial department responsible for the negotiation and implementation of treaty land entitlement agreements in Manitoba. Manitoba's participation in TLE results from provincial constitutional obligations under the Manitoba Natural Resources Transfer Agreement of 1929-30 to satisfied sufficient unoccupied Crown land out of the lands transferred to Manitoba to enable Canada to satisfy its treaty obligations.

Manitoba continues to work in partnership with Canada and the entitlement First Nations to complete the transfer of lands in order to fulfill its obligations. Through these efforts, Manitoba illustrates its commitment to reconciliation with indigenous communities while fostering strong and mutually beneficial relationships.

\* (16:40)

Manitoba has a renewed commitment to improve the process of providing land and related interests to Canada for reserve creation under treaty land entitlements and other agreements. To date, Manitoba has facilitated the transfer of 651,059 acres of Crown land to federal government for reserve creation.

Addressing violence against indigenous women and girls in the incidences of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls is a very high priority for Manitoba. Manitoba continues to be involved in community-based intergovernmental and interdepartmental work to help address the issues related to missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. In addition to the provincial efforts, we continue to support the work of the National Inquiry and have expressed the province is in a unique position to contribute, given the work we have done to date.

Our government is engaging with community organizations, the National Inquiry commission and the federal government to ensure that supports are in place for families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

We continue to focus on supporting healthy, safe, and sustainable communities, and to these ends my department continues to work with Northern Affairs communities and the Northern Association of Community Councils on a variety of fronts. This includes continuing to provide ongoing support and services to Northern Affairs communities such as community programs and services, community administration and governance, infrastructure operation and maintenance, compliance to regulations.

Water quality and environmental safety remain a top priority, and we continue to focus on building and maintaining infrastructure that meets community needs and legislative requirements through collaboration and partnership with Manitoba Water Services Board.

We also remain committed to the completion of outstanding capital projects for this fiscal year while continuing to explore sustainable funding models for future delivery of capital.

Once again, the Manitoba government remains committed to working positively and respectfully with indigenous and northern communities across Manitoba. We are also committed to making decisions responsibly by directing resources towards areas that will make a true difference.

We believe that we are on the track to deliver on these commitments, and I'm personally very excited to continue our work into the future.

Thank you.

**Madam Chairperson:** We thank the minister.

Does the official opposition critic have any opening comments?

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Yes. Rather than steal the thunder from our critic, I will move that committee now recess.

**Madam Chairperson:** Does the committee agree to recess at this point? *[Agreed]*

I am interrupting these proceedings. The Committee of Supply will resume sitting tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

\* (14:40)

**Mr. Chairperson (Dennis Smook):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of Committee of Supply will now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Executive Council.

The floor is now open for questions.

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** I ask for leave to recess today and tomorrow's Executive Council.

**Mr. Chairperson:** There is a request on the floor to recess the committee of Executive Council—this section of the Committee of Supply for today, May 10th, and tomorrow, May 11th. Is that agreed? *[Agreed]*

We are recessed for today and tomorrow. Thank you.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

\* (14:50)

**Mr. Chairperson (Doyle Pivniuk):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of Committee of Supply will now resume consideration for the Estimates for the Department of Education and Training.

At this time, I invite the ministerial and opposition staff to enter the Chamber.

As the staff is ready to sit—getting ready to sit down, I'll just get the minister to introduce his staff to the committee.

**Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training):** Joining me in the Chamber are ADM Carlos Matias; my deputy minister, Jamie Wilson; Rob Santos, ADM; and Colleen Kowalchuk—Kachulak—I'll never get that right—joining me in the Chamber.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay.

As previously agreed, questioning for the department will proceed in a global manner. The floor is now open for questions.

The honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview—oh, sorry. The minister has, probably, some answers for last week—or for yesterday. The honourable minister.

**Mr. Wishart:** We had a question the other day about the Komagata Maru and where that is in terms of the

educational process, and I brought some documents to table and I will read into the record a little bit of background for that.

Experience of immigrants to Canada are addressed and mandated social studies courses, with learning outcomes targeting in different areas from grades 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 11, and 11 especially where social studies is mandated, and also available in grade 12. The learning outcomes for students include factors affecting immigration, social and cultural injustices and the role of immigrants in building and shaping Canadian society and identity.

Teachers have flexibility in choosing historical and present-day context when addressing these topics with students. Regarding the Komagata Maru incident in particular, the department has made available a special information sheet for teachers that provides a summary of the event, the references and where across grades there are learning outcomes that provide opportunities to address this particular topic to students.

So I will table this statement along with the reference material that is available around that.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Minister.

Now we are open for questions.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I can only assume listening to the minister there that that was my friend from Maples that's asked about that particular question, and I believe those—resource document was developed during my time there. And I want to compliment my friend from Maples for his ongoing advocacy on that particular issue. It is an important question in our collective history, and I know that he—my—I'm speaking, here, of my friend from Maples—I know that he takes these issues very, very seriously, and so I'm glad to see that the government is still responding accordingly.

Bill 10, the agencies, boards and commissions bill eliminates the advisory committee on advanced education. The minister has put on record on several occasions that the committee never met, they were kind of useless, didn't do anything. I'm going to give him the opportunity right now to retract that statement. Will he do so?

**Mr. Wishart:** Certainly, the member, I know, has interest in this particular area. We continue to meet on a regular basis with post-secondary institutions, both individually and as groups, and we have developed a very good working relationship that

involves all of the post-secondary institutions so that we can have a more global review of where we are going as an education process. Not only as—in terms of getting best results for students, but also as an industry.

Specific as to the committee: we don't have the actual records here with us, but my memory serves me correctly, we've found that the committee did meet a total of five times in three years of existence. I did read the minutes to make sure that there was nothing in there that we had missed; found no recommendations that were followed up with. So I think that that would summarize the interest we had.

We are approaching this in a more holistic manner, working with the whole industry rather than specific small groups.

**Mr. Allum:** Well, I'm pleased to hear that the minister continues to meet with various educational partners, separately and independently. The whole point of the advisory committee on advanced education was to bring all of the partners together to one table so that there would be a collaborative effort on improving the education system here in Manitoba, from kindergarten all the way through to career.

He'll know that that committee consisted of all of the presidents of the publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Manitoba. But it was more than just that, Mr. Chair. It also included Manitoba teachers society, The Manitoba School Boards Association, and a variety of partners from the K-to-12 system so that there was proper understanding of the continuum of education from kindergarten through to career, and so that they would have an opportunity to meet, discuss, and brainstorm together about developing appropriate pathways right through the educational system, to serve all Manitoba students.

\* (15:00)

Now, the member—minister says that the committee met five times in three years. I think that's probably not correct in the sense that it was really only, I think, a year in its—that it had before the election came; maybe a year and a half in total. But what's also true is that the advisory committee met as subcommittees on several occasions and, in fact, came together as a group to develop the—Manitoba's Post-Secondary Education Strategy, A Partnership for Excellence and Student Success.

Now, that strategy had five pillars to it: raise indigenous post-secondary education participation to

the provincial average; transition supports for all high school students; third, a pathways approach, multiple routes to advanced education credentials; Manitoba—fourth, Manitoba leadership in teaching innovation, research and student experience; and fifth, building an integrated, collaborative education system. And in that strategy, in the document outlining the elements of the strategy, it's—and I'm quoting here—the education minister's advisory committee on advanced education formed earlier this year has provided important input into the development of the strategy and will continue to advise on all aspects.

So I ask him again: Will he retract his statement that the advisory committee served no useful purpose, and will he admit that, in fact, it served Manitoba's educational community very, very well?

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, thank you very much to the member. And I know that he feels very strongly about this particular committee that he had put in place and operated with for a very brief period of time, according to him.

We—actually, when you outlined the overall goals of this committee, you actually—pretty good job of outlining the structure of our department as it exists now. We already have restructured a Department of Education and Training to make sure that we have provided connections, and we're certainly finding very many great connections between the various branches of education, whether they be the early years or whether it be the K-to-12 system or whether it be the colleges and the universities.

But—and on top of that, we, of course, added the whole area of the apprenticeship system so that we have the training and trades and the labour market information that we work with on an ongoing basis with—didn't—wasn't included in the member's advisory committee as he outlined it. And so we certainly are doing this on a daily basis, frankly.

And I did make reference to the fact that we not only meet with individual post-secondary institutions, but the post-secondary institutions as a group, which include colleges and universities. We have a much stronger working relationship because of that. We do that several times a year as it exists right now, we—and—as well as the individual ones. And we're finding, actually, some great linkages between colleges, in particular, and the training and trades and better communications. I think the member probably knows that the Auditor General's

review of the apprenticeship system did have a number of recommendations that suggested that a lot of work needed to be done in that area, and we're certainly—be working through that whole process. We've made some changes in that area as well, and—not the least of which is moving towards a much more modern system of record keeping that I think will provide a number of individuals that were in the system that had—we had lost contact with with opportunities that they weren't able to achieve on for.

So, though the member seemed to be very fond of this particular advisory committee, I think he can take some 'solsice' in the fact that we're actually working very much in the same vein in terms of the structure of our department, and perhaps even more so, because we've included a few areas that weren't in the previous committee.

**Mr. Allum:** You know, I—the minister suggests that it's—I'm concerned about it because I'm concerned about myself. I want to assure him that my legacy here will be short and probably quickly forgotten, and I'm well aware of that and I have no desire for it to be anything other than that.

But I am concerned when he puts on the public record that it was not a useful body, that it didn't involve the participation of a broad cross-section of educational partners here in Manitoba, and when he suggested it didn't accomplish anything. None of those things were true. And I have to say that I take objection on behalf of the members of that committee, who, in good faith, joined that committee at our invitation and who participated in broad working groups to develop a post-secondary education strategy that, I think, has much merit. And, in fact, if the minister is correct, then he's following in some manner the leads taken by it.

But I'll ask him one more time, because I think it's important, out of respect for the people who participated in that advisory committee, I think it's important by the official, who at the time was Paul Vogt, now president of Red River College, who organized those meetings, who undertake the work with the subgroups, who would then report it to the larger committee on the strategic priorities that had been developed, that he retract that statement. It's okay if he doesn't want to proceed with it, if he wants to go in a different direction. It's nothing to do about me. I would like him now—I'll give him one final chance—to retract that statement so that we can get on with talking about important educational issues here in Manitoba and not having to defend the work of

20-odd people who gave of their time freely for the benefit of Manitoba students.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Before we continue, I just want to warn the members to—caution to when it—parliamentary language when it comes to untruth, or if it's they're maybe 'unaccurate' or, you know, more, a bit different words to be used, you know, not considering lying or something like that—so, okay?

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, and I appreciate the member's concern. We certainly respect the time, effort that anyone puts into advising a minister, regards any number of sources. And I can assure the minister that we have contacted and thanked them for their service. If they were the basis of some of the work that was done that has built the five pillars the member is referring to—and we have built upon that even further with the addition of the training and trades aspect into that—so certainly some of the work has turned out to be of great value, without a doubt, as part of the process.

You know, the structure that we're using now, which is broadly consultative in the industry, has certainly gotten a very positive response from the membership that's been attending that. And perhaps it's the same group, though we're approaching it as their role in post-secondary education, and to a much higher degree, rather than by invitation or whatever criteria the minister used to raise his advisory committee of—at the time. We're certainly working with them in their role, their leadership role. The individual, the membership that the member referred to is now, of course, involved with Red River College and is part of that group, and certainly we value their advice ongoing, and certainly we will continue to meet with them and talk about not only the future of education but how we as—we build an education industry, in the broad sense of the word, but also how we get the best outcomes for Manitoba students, as part of that particular program.

\* (15:10)

So we do consult on a regular basis with all aspects of the industry, including the portion around apprenticeships, trades and training, which was, I gather, not part of that particular advisory group, but it is part of what we as a department value in terms of the education of Manitoba students and the linkages to get—and the member made kindergarten to career reference.

We actually talk a little bit more around the early years, and we are using the term cradle to career. But

those two are fairly close to the same thing, so the theme continues. I think the member actually knows that DSFM actually probably has the nicest way of putting this. They talk about cradle to rocking chair, which is a pretty good visual—I'm not sure that it's entirely true.

So retraining is what we do these days in the elder years education, though it's—learning for life is the approach we take. In the senior years, the amount of education is usually somewhat reduced.

**Mr. Allum:** So the minister has suggested that he does a lot of meetings with various parties, and I have no doubt that's true. I'm familiar with the schedule, myself.

But he will know just that—the sort of—the context for the establishment of the advisory committee on advanced education was that we had decided after some careful thought and consideration and consultation that we would roll the council on post-secondary education back into the department so that we could have a more direct relationship with the post-secondary institutions, between the minister and the presidents. And then try to facilitate those relationships into a broader collaborative effort with all educational partners across the system.

Is—I think I know the answer to this question, but I'm going to ask it anyways. Does the minister have an intention to—even though he's wiping it out in Bill 10—to re-establish something like an advisory committee on advanced education?

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, thank you for the question, the member Fort Garry-Riverview. And I thank you, Mr. Chair.

We certainly intend to continue our practice of consulting broadly across the industry. In fact, I suspect that over time, we're looking at ways that we can actually bring a little bit more of the training and trades in closer contact with the post-secondary institutions, in particular the college structure because they are so heavily 'interlaked'—interlinked already in terms of educational opportunities and part of the educational process.

And, as we move forward, we know that that whole area in terms of the trades, is an area that we are likely to be challenged in terms of meeting the job demand in the future, not the least of which is from all of the retirement. So—all the retirement of the baby boomers that are—make up the vast majority of the tradespeople.

We certainly appreciate the fact that we have to reach out and consult on a regular basis. You know, if the member preferred a formal structure, we actually prefer a little more fluid structure in terms of who we talked with—ongoing basis. And we do have working groups. The member made reference to subcommittees. We have working groups that are working on an ongoing basis to help us with some of the areas where we need particular attention.

So the member certainly liked one type of structure. It would appear we do some of the same things with different structures. But you know, governments vary from time to time in their methodology. We are a very consultative government on an ongoing basis. We've been moving very rapidly in terms of changes we have made. We've done the colleges review that I know the member is familiar with, and I'm sure he recognized that there was a need to do that. It had been some time since the previous college's review.

And the college review did highlight some of the—some areas that needed changes, not the least of which—which I frankly think was a very telling thing from a perspective—is that we didn't actually have a poorly co-ordinated industry, but—in terms of services needed and whether they were met—but we—what we didn't have was any real structure. It was more by coincidence than by design.

And I can tell the member that we are certainly working very constructively with the college industry and other elements of post-secondary so that we have structured industry that can respond when there's change.

One of the things that I think we're all very aware of as—in the education field is that things are changing very, very rapidly. We talk all the time about, you know, what the training needs will be for the future, and we say a little bit with tongue in cheek, but in—a little bit serious too, that we're actually training people for jobs that don't exist yet.

And there's some truth in that, as—especially as some of the higher tech industries move forward. It was certainly an interesting process when a company like Ubisoft comes to Winnipeg and they talk about what their training needs are. And, you know, programs that were in place at some of the—actually, in that case, more at the technical colleges and the high schools, are going to be what we need to train to in the future. We have to develop a mechanism that moves very quickly in the approval process. That's one of the changes we've made as part of this act as

well, and—so that we can be responsive to the needs of industry moving forward in the future and also responsive to the educational needs of students.

A lot of this is about outcome, but we need to have a very planned approach to get those great outcomes.

**Mr. Allum:** You know, I—there's so much in that answer that I'd like to discuss, and I feel like my time is not going to be long enough to be able to go through all of those elements. And so I want to return to the post-secondary education strategy after I get through a few other issues.

But just quite quickly: Does the minister intend to create his own post-secondary education strategy?

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, thank you very much for the question. In some senses, the member's true. Though ours is driven a little bit less by post-secondary strategy for themselves, it's driven a little bit more by the whole labour market strategy, which I'm sure the member is familiar with. We have a fair bit of information that has been available for a number of years in that area. Working with Growth, Enterprise and Trade, we've actually enhanced that significantly. We've—doing new—whole review of sector councils. The member, I'm sure, is familiar with some of the sector councils. Some of them have been around a long time, some not quite so long. And then there's modernization of that approach.

And so that'll be very valuable information in terms of what is the long-term labour market need. Working with that, we will also be engaging the post-secondary institutions and those sectors in the trades that feed into that as well.

So there will be some changes in terms of our strategy as a government, without a doubt, driven at least in part by labour market information because we're trying to make sure that we're training the students of tomorrow to align better with what their needs—so that when they come into the workforce that—they know that they have the skill set that is in demand at the time and that will provide some opportunities to work along with that.

**Mr. Allum:** The labour market analysis will come out tomorrow, I think he knows, and I don't think it's going to be particularly good news for him or for his government, so I want to caution him about bragging too much about making connections with labour market when there appears to be a decline in full-time jobs in Manitoba month over month since this government came into power.

I am going to table the post-secondary education strategy, A Partnership for Excellence and Student Success. If the minister doesn't have his own strategy, he's welcome to use ours.

\* (15:20)

Could the minister provide us with an update on the midwifery program, please.

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, thank you for the question—to the member from Fort Garry-Riverview, and thank you, Mr. Chair.

We're working with the Department of Health on this, an on-going basis. As the member knows, we put in place working with University of Manitoba and McMaster University from Ontario, a program that—to help the 13 students that were in the program that had failed to achieve the goals that had been put in place for it.

One of the things we're trying to work with Health on, and also with the association of midwives, is the long-term needs of midwifery here in Manitoba. There's also some been some changes in terms of services being supplied in some of the rural and remote communities with some—what nurses? Nurse practitioners—sorry—nurse practitioners being available in some of those communities that provide some of the same role that midwives would, as well. We've also had some early discussions with the medical college here, too, to make sure that whatever we do fits nice—well into their plan. So we're expecting to do something in the not-too-distant future in regards to a long-term strategy for this, but we're still in the consultation phase to make sure that we get this right and that we're in a position to meet the needs as they go forward.

The need for midwifery is a little hard to assess because some of it is, of course, driven by historical desire to have a traditional situation for rural and remote communities, but also there's also the more modern trend that we're seeing in some large urban centres to want to go to this type of delivery for children—for births. And that one, actually, is a little harder to assess. We know that it's there. We hear certainly, very vocal in regards to that. But when we actually look at the numbers, the numbers are not as great as one would think.

The question that remains, and that's what we're—one of the discussions we're having with Health is, are that are the numbers low because of a lack of midwives, or are they low because in the final situation that there's a sudden change in opinion and

they move in another direction? So, that's part of the assessment process that we're going through at this moment.

**Mr. Allum:** So, let me get this straight: after considerable challenges and admittedly so, a program was ultimately developed in partnership between UCN and the U of M; it involved an in-take and then there would be successive in-takes afterward. The minister, as one of the very first thing that he did, as Minister of Education, was to disband that program, contract out the program to McMaster in Hamilton and now he's telling us today in Estimates that there's a lot of talk going on, but there's no action.

So let me ask him this: has there been an in-take into midwifery, recently?

**Mr. Wishart:** Certainly, just a couple of minor corrections. UCN is not part of the current program. It's just University of Manitoba and McMaster on a licensing arrangement between McMaster and the University of Manitoba, so University of Manitoba is still involved with it.

That was the solution for the cohort that was in the process and had reached some problems, in terms of whether or not they would be able to get delivery of a training program that was recognized. That solution is in place.

We're looking at the long-term solutions, so whether or not an additional cohort would be needed. Are we doing anyone any favours if we don't have a market demand for them, in terms of training them? I guess that's always an arguable point.

Most of the midwives that are actually functioning in this province right now got their training through the McMaster material that is being used currently, so we're fairly confident that the 13 remaining students in that particular cohort are getting a good education and will be well trained to provide the services that we want, that Manitobans want.

We certainly want to be sure that, before we have a new group of students enter the program, that we are able to meet their needs, and that there will be a pathway forward to them at the end so that they have job opportunities that are there, and that's the assessment process that we're very actively engaged in at the moment.

We expect to have something before too terribly long in regards to that, but at this point, we don't

have anything new to announce, in terms of additional programs.

**Mr. Allum:** So the answer to the question was, no, there's been no intake, and, in fact, has set midwifery program back three or four years, and it may be who knows how long before he actually gets on to—before the minister gets on to developing a new program.

UCN's participation in that program, admittedly—quite clear on this—struggled at times, but the partnership with U of M helped to provide, I think, if memory serves, important technical expertise to enhance the program, and intake had been developed. A second intake was on the books, ready to go. And through the single stroke of a pen, the minister wiped out that program completely, and now it'll be who knows how long before another cohort is ready to go.

And it's kind of interesting to me that we hear from this government constantly about a made-in-Manitoba this and a made-in-Manitoba that program all the time, and yet the first thing that he does is to contract out the program to McMaster University, hopefully to get those 13 students through, but then with no plan and no desire, apparently, to establish a new intake based on the program, after considerable work that was done by the department, by the participating institutions, by the other midwifery partners.

And so I have to tell him that I regard that as deeply, deeply disappointing, in the sense that considerable work was done. A lot of effort was to put it on track again, and sadly, not only did the minister put it off track, but in fact took the tracks right away. And I think that that's a disservice to families across Manitoba.

I'm going to switch subjects again. I see my—that my time is growing short. I only have one other element—I have many things I'd like to talk about, but if he could update the House on Campus Manitoba. I know that the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) talked about it a little bit in Estimates yesterday. I didn't quite understand the answer when I reviewed it in Hansard, so it's just for my own clarification.

We had significant plans for Campus Manitoba. A very important office had been in place in Brandon, and we've guarded that as an exceptional educational opportunity for the educational system going forward. It's included in the post-secondary education strategy that I just tabled for the minister.

\* (15:30)

So I would ask him: Could he update the House on Campus Manitoba, which really was in the process of becoming eCampus Manitoba, and what the government's plans are on that very, very important initiative.

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, thank the member for the question. And I just touch a little bit—before I move on to answer that last question regarding the midwifery program, I would remind the member that in nine years of the midwifery program, as they had designed it, they had eight grads at a huge cost, and we won't talk about the cost here today, but the member knows that it was probably in excess of \$1 million per graduate.

We have 13 grads coming out next year within three years, so even the small amount of time that we have had to work on that program and resolve the ongoing issues that existed when we came into government, we've been able to find a better solution. And we will have a strategy moving forward, and there will be additional educational opportunities, but we're wanting to make sure that we get a balanced supply-demand situation when it comes to that, something that the members never seem to pay much attention to.

As to Campus Manitoba, that was one of the things that we also discussed with our entire post-secondary sector, and it was also touched on by the college's review. They specifically said that we should have an additional look at how we manage this so that there was chance for some better co-ordination across the system. And I would certainly agree with the member that there is great potential to do more with Campus Manitoba, moving it into the modern age, if you want to put it that way, using electronic connections that exist, and of course that's far more prevalent every year with post-secondary institutions.

We need to make sure that it meets the needs of students and also meets the needs of the institutions. We're also, as part of our move forward in Education and Training, looking to get better data on an ongoing basis and link that data so that students are—have opportunities that we can use to identify not only their educational paths and their opportunities, but their—the—link them better in terms of what they've used and—what they have gotten in different institutions.

So, certainly, Campus Manitoba is a part of our future plans as well. I know that there was some notes on it in terms of the strategy that was in place for it, but there still needs to be an awful lot of work—that existed when we came into government. There still needs to be an awful lot of work done in that area, and we continue to show interest in doing that.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Just going to ask a few, I think, probably, questions that are more of a—in the follow-up nature or, you know—well, they're going to be all over the place. Maybe that's what I'll put. So I'll just keep the staff apprised of where we're going as best I can.

So there were three FTEs that were cut from Inclusion Support as part of the government's 2017-18 in-year reduction.

The question is: Why were these in-year reductions not reflected in the notes to the FTEs listed on page 14, as other departments have done?

**Mr. Wishart:** I have a question on clarity for—of the question here. The member referring to the three full-time equivalents that are listed on page 47, is that what he's referring to?

**Mr. Wiebe:** I'm just flipping here to page 47. I mean, that should be the page that they are on. And I'm just—as I'm just sort of scrambling here to reacquaint myself, coming from the other Estimates room, where we left off there.

The question, though, is, is about the—in the notes section on page 14 in other Estimates books for other departments, in that notes section that specific—those specific cuts would be in there, and I don't see them in there. So just a question of why they aren't reflected in those notes as other departments do.

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, thank you very much for the question.

And, certainly, I know that accounting principles that are used across the board and from the various departments are absolutely aligned. It would appear that some of the things around full—FTEs are not absolutely aligned. We felt that the way we were showing them in the various departments was actually more descriptive than just showing them all in one place like that. I guess we can consult with other departments and see how this informs the whole process of Estimates and whether or not the one solution is better than the other in regards to that. But I can assure the member that the accounting principles are consistent across the board as to how



we show FTEs. I suspect that we were attempting to provide as much information as possible and in so doing we have perhaps muddied the waters.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, yes, and I'll tell the minister why this is a concern is simply because, you know, while it's noted in one place, it's not collected together in one area that we can then sort of start looking at and get the full picture of the department, which is sort of where these questions are going. So, you know, I would find it strange if there wasn't some sort of standard that these books should be printed in, in terms of having the same information available. So hopefully that will be something that's considered in the future.

\* (15:40)

But maybe I could just ask it this way, then. Is—can the minister tell me, or provide me, the FTE reductions made across his department in the '17-18 in-year reductions? And if he could give me the name of the position and the division or branch these positions belong to.

**Mr. Wishart:** I can give you that summary total here and some element of breakdown as to full-time equivalents.

We had a decrease of 18 full-time equivalents, and they included one position as an accounting clerk; one position as correspondence secretary to the minister; one position as grants administration clerk; 0.5 position as administrative support; one position as analyst; 0.5 position of teacher for the deaf; one position as—it's just described as manager—actually another two positions exactly in the same situation, described as manager; resource consultant—one position; another position described as manager; a position described as information co-ordinator; client service representative position; a policy analyst position; an operation training co-ordinator position; a training co-ordinator; a program development co-ordinator; one that's described as assistant manager; and another one that's described as project manager.

Now I know the descriptions of—those job descriptions don't provide a lot of background information, which is why we had chosen to note them in each particular section so that they would be more relevant and you would be able to understand what they were. But the total would be 18 full-time equivalents.

**Mr. Wiebe:** How many FTEs are currently vacant in the department? If the minister could give me the overall number and what percentage that is.

**Mr. Wishart:** We're looking up that number as we speak, but I just wanted you to know that there were actually no layoffs associated with those 18 FTEs. Those were vacancies or voluntary retirements—*[interjection]*—reassignments, sorry.

**Mr. Wiebe:** I wanted to ask, the minister mentioned the teacher for the deaf was a position was eliminated. That sounds like a pretty important position. Maybe I'll just give the minister an opportunity to explain.

Sorry. I understand the minister didn't hear. The teacher for the deaf position was eliminated.

**Mr. Wishart:** Certainly can share some explanation as to what's going on. We have, as the member knows, a school for the deaf that's here in Winnipeg, and a very important educational facility for a very specific group.

But, actually, we're finding, now that we have newborn screening for the deaf, that there is a much higher success—and I think the member may recall from the newspapers just the other day that we—here in Manitoba, we had a cochlear implant with an 18-month-year old—or 18-month-old child, which is, I'm told, the youngest in Canada that has done that. And we're actually finding that the numbers in terms of school for the deaf, with the new technology that is available in terms of implants and improvements, the numbers of students that require teaching in school for deaf continue to dwindle. So we're certainly looking very carefully at what is needed there and balancing the number of teachers.

It is very important that we have good teachers, in particular in schools for the deaf, but we're also finding that technology is solving some of that problem for the individuals. And I am told that the difference is extremely dramatic for the individuals. Was always a feeling that you could only do the implants up to a certain age, beyond which it was—they were unable to make good use of the improved technology. There has been some redefinition of that with some people that were older than what were originally thought to be the range in age that they could adapt to the implants. So now we're finding an increased window and more, as the technology improves and the cost gets more in line in terms of the implants, that I think, frankly, at some point, there may be a very small number of lifelong deaf

individuals, and I think that's good news for everyone. There'll always be some that don't respond to the implants as we know them today. Of course, technology changes [*inaudible*].

So I think this is a good-news story and that we're able to provide the technology and provide them with access to regular educational formats. I know I met with one group of previously deaf individuals that were now mainstream in the school system. And in fact, one young lady was in third year university without any additional assistance and doing extremely well in the education system, where previously she would've had, at the very least, substantial assistance to excel in that system. She was very pleased with the progress that has been made in technology.

So I think that provides some rationale for why we had a 0.5 reduction in position. We're able to meet the demand on a ongoing basis because the numbers continue to be lower, and that's a good-news story.

**Mr. Wiebe:** So, on that issue, then, if the minister could just give us more information on exactly which stakeholders he consulted with before making this cut. And I still think we're waiting on the vacancy piece as well.

\* (15:50)

**Mr. Wishart:** I'll start by answering the question regarding the School for the Deaf. We actually went there to meet with the management from the School for the Deaf. We talked about the long-term trends with them on that. They're certainly very aware of what's happening in the industry and they were consulted as part of that process.

We also met with some other groups that have different approaches that take advantage of the cochlear implant and its capabilities. They, too, are looking at what their needs are as the technology improves year to year in that area and what used to be a much more onerous learning curve in terms of how to make best use of the cochlear implants is now a much more—is much more readily done, and so the training requirements in that area as well actually seem to be dropping off.

In terms of the department, we have a total of—right at the moment—of 165 vacant positions, which represents 18 per cent vacancy rate. And the reason that that would be—and I know that's considered high—not the least of which is we are an amalgamation of a number of previous departments

and we're still finding our average, if you want to look at it, in terms of what we need having amalgamated most of two and a half departments in the process of putting together the department of training and trades. So that would be something that, over time, is—may dwindle a little bit in terms of the total department size.

I also make a note that Public Schools Finance Board, which is separate from the department, has five vacancies in it as well.

**Mr. Wiebe:** The minister mentioned just, I think, one or two there, but could he break out those vacancies by areas of his department?

**Mr. Wishart:** Just for clarification, would the member prefer these—I mean, they're going to do as we did with that other list. You're going to get administrator, and it's not going to really tell you very much.

Would you prefer them listed by branch within our department? I think that would be more educational, and that's, after all, what we're about, right?

**Mr. Wiebe:** Okay.

**Mr. Wishart:** We can do that for you but I think, in terms of efficient use of time, we can provide that in writing to you, whether it's part of the Estimates process or table it in the House.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, I guess—I mean, what we want to get at here, and I'd like to have the information in front of us so that we could, you know, we can start going through that. And I thought I understood the minister to say that this was something that his staff had provided, and then they were trying to give a global because I did ask about the global, and so they added those numbers up.

So, if the minister could just kind of pick any part of that that he could provide information it would be helpful for us to kind of expedite the process here.

Just for clarification, and maybe I'm just—again, the terminology within the civil service, I'm not quite clear on. But like, what we're looking for is like, on page 13, the different divisions of his department—Administration and Finance, K-to-12 Education and Healthy Child Programs, policy and planning, et cetera, et cetera. Those broad categories would be maybe a start, or would be a level of detail that would be fine for today, and if he can get further information that's fine.

**Mr. Wishart:** No, not ready yet.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Oh, okay. I thought—I saw your hand go.

\* (16:00)

**Mr. Wishart:** Give the member some numbers here, in terms of vacancies. In administrative and finance, we have 12 and a half vacancies, full-time equivalents. indigenous inclusion, we have one. Planning and priorities, we have six. In the K-to-12 and healthy child group, which are combined, we have 57. And, in immigration, we have 12 and a half. And Post-Secondary Education and Workforce Development, we have 76. That gives us a total of 165.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, that, I mean, that's a significant number and the—I think the minister himself identified that.

Now, I have—I guess I could have gone on my phone, maybe that's not allowed, but anyway, I could have checked and gone on the website to get the absolute, most up-to-date information, but what I have here is, is that there's only two job postings currently on the government's website, and, in fact, that there's only been four that have been posted this fiscal year.

So that's a significant number, and the number of posted jobs is quite—is very low. So how—can the minister explain that? When does the minister intend to fill these positions?

**Mr. Wishart:** Well, thank you very much for the question.

And though the member's numbers are a little different than what we have because, of course, whenever possible we work to provide opportunity for people that are already part of our system, so we have numbers that show quite substantially higher positions being filled internally without having to go outside and advertise.

\* (16:10)

So, you know, numbers that you're showing would be at, I guess, a summary net needing to reach outside of our existing organization. I think the member probably appreciates the fact that with the restructure that we have done in our department we want to make sure that people that have been working in the department or one branch or the other have the best opportunity and the first opportunity to be available for—to fill those positions. So we are

also using some administrative options in terms of moving people around on a short-term basis. I think that the member might recall that we were able to marshal a very significant workforce to deal with the waiting list that was in place for Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program, which was a little over 5,000 applications when we came into government, some of them going back very nearly four years, and we were able to deal with that in a very timely manner. That was also done in methodology by moving people in to help deal with that, and yet—and they were able to go back to other positions.

We were trying to find efficiencies as government. This is one of the mechanisms that we're using to do that, both in the K-to-12 system, but we want to make sure that the valued employees that were in place prior to joining the departments together have the best opportunities in terms of long-term employability. I think that that's the type of loyalty that the member would probably appreciate, and we certainly want to try and do that.

*Mr. Greg Nesbitt, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair*

**Mr. Wiebe:** Thank you very much. Too many men on the ice there maybe, Mr. Chair. I think we had a little bit of overlap there, but we got it figured out. No penalties yet.

So I guess my question is, though, I mean, the minister himself has said that this is high; this number is high, and it sounds like there needs to be some sort of strategy to address this high number. And, you know, I would take issue with the minister saying that this is a way to find efficiency, because actually, having important positions not filled within government, you know, actually puts more pressure on others, gets worse performance out of the employees that you have there, and it, I think, puts a whole lot of pressures on people and you're probably not getting the best work you possibly can.

So I guess, I mean, would the minister confirm: 18 per cent is high. What is his strategy to get that down? He says there's more than the two positions posted and they're posted internally. Can he tell me how many positions are posted internally, and, again, what is his strategy to get that number down? Maybe I'll also add on to that, just to keep everybody moving along here. What is the target that he'd be looking for in terms of vacancy within his department?

**Mr. Wishart:** I understand that the member is concerned that we, as a department, aren't able to meet the needs of our job, and I can assure him that we are doing that, and, certainly, I appreciate the valued work that is done every day in our department.

As for vacancy targets—vacancy targets, generally, in government, run in the 8 to 10 per cent normal range. So we are certainly carrying something higher than that. And as I mentioned earlier, part of that is the fact that we are the better part of two and a half departments that have been amalgamated to form the Department of Education and Training. There was rationale behind that and I've certainly shared that with the member, in terms of desire to make linkages that didn't exist before. There's some efficiencies that are being gained in that, not the least of which—and some good fortune in this as well—the federal labour market focus, for instance, has come down to be virtually identical to our focus and so, a number of the things that were doing, in terms of we had four programs with them before, now we're down to two. And those two programs align very, very nicely with what we're doing in terms of labour market and labour market delivery mechanisms, so that that whole area is actually working extremely well for us and it's provided us with a fairly significant number of efficiencies and I think the member probably noted some of that, when he looked at the financial statements for those particular sections. It showed that we were showing some cost savings and administratively, in regards to that. And we expect to move further into those programs and do more programs in that area that some of that will continue to show, now and in the future.

So we—we're very focused—and one of the other areas, of course, that we have been doing—and I understand the department had been doing this for some time when it comes to the K-to-12 system—is to use secondments an awful lot from some of the school divisions providing expertise that existed in the school divisions that we didn't have within our department. And that continues to be practices. I know that we are using that methodology a fair bit in the literacy-numeracy strategy development area, because there's some great expertise that is out there already within the school divisions. We would want to access that in any regard, just to make sure that we had the best possible outcomes. So it's a combination of things.

You know, we're certainly trying to make sure that we provide the services that, as a department, we should be doing. And I have pointed out that in some areas we've shown significant delivery improvement. The whole area of immigration is one that we've made really substantive changes in. And now, once we're up and current, we're on a six-month turnaround. We have a process in place where we work with industry and sector councils to get high-in-demand labour positions. We have an expression-of-interest pool to draw from in terms of people that have expressed an interest in coming to Manitoba that is higher than any number we've ever had in terms of interest coming to Manitoba before; that those are all working extremely well and provide us with some efficiencies in that area as well.

So that's what we continue to do. And we'll continue down this road. We certainly, as a department, are focused on making sure that we deliver the services that 'Manitobas' need.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Last year, the minister provided a list of programs aimed at FASD, treating fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Could—maybe just the minister—he broke it out last year. That would be appreciated if he has those numbers in front of him. But any programs that are designed to prevent FASD, could he give me the amount for this year, the total amount or broken out?

\*(16:20)

**Mr. Wishart:** So I hope you have a very sharp pencil, because this is a very lengthy list.

So InSight Mentoring Program—and that's an evidence-based FASD prevention program for women who are pregnant or have children under one year of age—I won't go into all of the details, but the sites that we have are two in Winnipeg, Dauphin, Portage, The Pas, Flin Flon and Thompson. The funding for that program is \$1.5 million.

Project CHOICES is another FASD prevention initiative for women and girls who are not pregnant but who are at risk of alcohol-exposed pregnancy, and the cost to that particular program is \$201,000.

FASD Family Support Services, including Building Circles of Support services—these provide services for birth parents, adoptive parents and alternate caregivers, including support groups, recreation services, enhanced eight-week parenting information program. And the cost of that program is \$47,600.

FASD Healthy Child office also has a \$20,000 program.

Canada Northwest Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Partnership, a partnership with the four western provinces to share knowledge, expertise and resources in prevention of FASD and support individuals that are affected—they also have 80,000 FASD research network designed to facilitate linkages among researches across Canada. I'm very pleased to be part of that program. So the total costs of those programs through Healthy Child would be \$229,800.

FASD Coalition—this is a provincial coalition that meets regularly and involves other departments, as well, and work to plan together to address issues related to FASD. That's a co-ordination role. That's \$55,000.

FASD in the Classroom, a co-ordinated response designed to ascertain best academic and behavioural approaches for FA—for students with FASD, sorry, located in some of the schools. That's \$55,000.

Manitoba Key Worker Program, a program that provides support for rural families caring for children or youth up until 21 years of age with FASD. And that's \$150,000.

Visions and Voices is a public education program that support adults who have FASD diagnosis develop the skills and materials needed to speak publicly about their experience. And that's a \$30,000 program.

The Mothering Project, that's a single-site access program through the Mount Carmel Clinic for women who are pregnant or have young children and other—and are substance abusers. And this is an outreach program with one-on-one support. That's a \$70,000 program.

FASD Family Support, Education and Counselling, consultation both short- and long-term for children and youth, and that's with children age six to 14. That's a \$99,000 program.

Consultation and professional development—consultative support and professional online training, workshops and—for educators and school administrators. So that's usually part of the existing budgets. So the total for that, for which is the Healthy Child office, is \$2.4 million.

Low Incidence funding, that's funding provided on per-student basis to support students in classrooms with special needs that have by identified

as part of the diagnosis of FASD, that is \$5.4 million. So the total that is part of Manitoba Education and Training, then, is \$7.8 million.

*Mr. Chairperson in the Chair*

Spectrum Connections, that specialize in providing supports for transitional youth and adults to live an independently as possible, and that is part of—I think these come out of Families, don't they? Yes. The programs—

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Can the minister explain why he cut MERN?

**An Honourable Member:** I'm sorry.

**An Honourable Member:** MERN.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The member for Concordia.

**Mr. Wiebe:** MERN.

**Mr. Wishart:** Thank you very much to the member for the question. Manitoba Education Resource Network—it's been in place for a number of years. And we certainly are very focused, as a department, on the outcomes of particular programs, and it was very hard to measure outcomes for that—from that particular program.

We had certainly been—had a few questions raised about whether that was the best way to use those dollars, so we—we're very focused on making sure that we can get good measurable outcomes within the K-to-12 system.

We've been using, or sharing a lot more information, in terms of evaluations, with various school divisions on an ongoing basis. They found that information to be much more relevant and more useful to them, so we are putting more emphasis in areas like that, and accordingly, we chose to put our focus in areas where—that give us the best response, in terms of dollars spent.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is there any other questions? No?

Okay, I guess, resolutions now. Concludes questions.

Okay, we'll go pass—from resolutions, 16.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$75,748,000 for Education and Training, K-12 Education and Healthy Child Programs, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

\* (16:30)

Resolution 16.3 now: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$345,011,000 for Education and Training, Education and School Tax Credits, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 16.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,247,000–\$3,274,000 for Education and Training, Policy, Planning and Performance, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 16.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,386,448,000–\$1,386,748,000 for Education and Training, Support to Schools, for fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 16.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$887,985,000 for Education and Training, Post-Secondary Education and Workforce Development, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019–[interjection] Okay–\$887,985,000 for Education and Training, Post-Secondary Education and Workforce Development, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 16.7: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,483,000 for the Education and Training, Immigration and Economic Opportunities, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 16.8: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$88,442,000 for Education and Training, Capital Funding, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

Resolution 16.9: RESOLVED there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,122,000 for the Education and Training, Costs Related to Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

**Resolution agreed to.**

That last item considered for the Estimates for the department is item no. 16.1(a), the minister's salary contained in resolution 16.1.

At this point, I request that the ministerial and opposition staff leave the Chamber for the consideration for this last item.

The floor is open for questions.

**Mr. Wiebe:** I move that line item—sorry; I move, seconded by—sorry; let's try that again, Mr. Chair.

I move that line item 16.1.(a) be amended so that the Minister of Education and Training's salary be reduced to \$33,600.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Chairperson:** The motion is in order. The floor is open for debate.

**Mr. Wiebe:** And I do want to thank the minister for taking the time, spending the time this afternoon as well as the previous days, bringing in staff, and I know staff's time is so very valuable, so it is appreciated they make the time to come here to answer the questions. And I think there was some periods of time there where we were getting into some of the more technical aspects of the Estimates book that I certainly appreciated having their insight and, as a new critic for Education, it is appreciated. It's my first time to the process with the minister. It's always appreciated when the minister is forthcoming with the information he provides and the staff can give some context for the information that's contained in the books.

It's—you know, I do want to say, though, Mr. Chair, that throughout this process, it's become increasingly clear or even more evident than it was before this process that this government's focus on austerity, which extends into the education department, is moving along unabated by this minister. And it's unfortunate, because I talk to parents. This is part of the—the great part of being the education critic is I get an opportunity not only speak to educators and administrators and a whole bunch of people who are professionally committed to the education of our children, but I also get to talk to the students. And I get to talk to those young people who are in the midst of getting an education in our province, who see a promise in our province and want to be a part of the good news story, going forward, of this province.

And I get a chance to talk to post-secondary students who are also committed in that way to

furthering their education and staying here in Manitoba and making a life for themselves. And what they're telling me, over and over again—and I believe they've told the same thing to the minister, so I don't think this is coming as a surprise—but they've said that they want to see more investment. They want to see a government that not only talks about the importance of education, but, in fact, puts the money and the resources towards enhancing education in our province.

And whether it's at the K-to-12 level, where we've seen first, a freeze and now overall cuts to some school divisions. We've seen pressures on teachers. We've seen an elimination of the class-size initiative. And we're just seeing more and more divisions having to make difficult choices on how they can meet the minister's arbitrary targets while still trying to provide the education that parents and students count on. And they're making those tough decisions, and it's based on this minister's direction and the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) direction. And I think that's a shame. I think that the minister knows very well, and certainly, the great staff that he had here in front of him, they know the importance of investing in education. They have some great ideas on ways we can expand and improve programs, but they're being forced instead, to cut. And I think that's a shame.

On the post-secondary education side, again, there's been a clear link now, made by the minister between the cuts made at the institutional level in operation grants—operational grants that are now filtering down to students who do have to pay higher tuition because this minister has refused to protect them and keep tuition affordable in Manitoba, as the previous government did throughout its term.

So it's coming from all sides in education. I should also mention capital, which is an important area. And you know, the minister's quite rightly excited that there's new schools being built in Manitoba, and I think that's a good step in the right direction, absolutely. And to that I'll only say, it's about time that this government realized the importance of getting those projects moving forward. When this opposition called for that, as a continuation of the previous government's prioritization of capital and new school construction, it was this government that balked at that, that said, no, wait, stop. Put on the brakes. The member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) knew that there needed to be a school, an additional school in Brandon, and

he said, stop. He said, stop; stop moving forward on it.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order.

**Mr. Wiebe:** And that's a real shame, Mr. Chair, because he knew that there was a need in his community. He knew that there were students that needed to have those facilities built. And he was the one that stood up and said, no. He said, stop construction. Wait. Let's see if we can get the private sector involved. Let's see if our ideology can, instead, drive the process, and how can we make a P3 work. Well, at the end of the day, we know that what happened—it turns out that if you give Manitoba, if you give our public service a chance to step up, to show how we can build new facilities, we can fund programs, they know how to do the work and they are certainly happy to do that.

So, again, it's coming in from all sides in education, for parents and students in this province. And we will continue to stand up for Manitoba's students and for education in this province. We will continue to stand against this austerity that's come forward from the Premier. And that's the reason why, this afternoon, we are suggesting that the minister's salary should be reduced.

\* (16:40)

**Mr. Chairperson:** Does the minister have any comments that he wants to share?

**Mr. Wishart:** I appreciate the member's point of view. We think that we have—making some very quick reference to the review that we did on P3s, as to funding the schools, I think I can very quickly justify taking the time to do that process, and find out that there were some of the techniques that were used there that we can put into play here in Manitoba that actually saved us enough dollars to build an additional school. So these are very positive things.

I do not accept his premise in some of the other areas, of course. We believe that we're putting in place a sustainable long-term program for post-secondaries in the province of Manitoba, and we will continue on that road.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Minister.

Is the committee ready for the question?

Shall the motion pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** Pass.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I hear a no.

### Voice Vote

**Mr. Chairperson:** All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Chairperson:** All those opposed to the motion, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Chairperson:** In my opinion, the Nays have it.

**Mr. Wiebe:** On division.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The motion is accordingly defeated on division.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** So now we'll go on to resolution 16.1: RESOLVED that be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,684,000 for Education and Training, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2019.

### *Resolution agreed to.*

This completes the Estimates for the Department of Education and Training.

The next set of Estimates to be considered in this section of the Committee of Supply for the Department of Sustainable Development.

Shall we briefly recess the—to allow the minister and the critic to—the opportunity to prepare for comments or the next department?

I guess you're all ready? Okay, great.

We're going to have a little recess between the Clerk's office.

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Chairperson (Doyle Pivniuk):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will now consider the Estimates of the Department of Sustainable Development.

Does the honourable minister have an opening statement?

The honourable—order. There's too much noise in here right now.

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development):** It is my pleasure to be here today and to put a few words on the record about the Department of Sustainable Development, and to open up the debate here, the Estimates proceedings.

And this really just gives me an opportunity to say how excited I am to take on this portfolio. As members of the House know, it was August of 2017 that I was appointed to the minister of this very diverse portfolio that serves Manitobans in a—in numerous ways. And I certainly do want to acknowledge all the people in my department who help me do this work. And I've said to them many times that it is a real honour for me to represent the work that they do, whether I'm in this Chamber debating about some of the ideas and policies and programs that we're administering, or whether I'm out in community anywhere throughout this great diverse province of ours.

I always do so with an integrity and honour, because the department that I am so lucky to serve, is some of the finest people I've met. They are a group of hard-working individuals that are definitely committed to this province, protecting our ecosystem and our precious habitat and all of our species, whether the iconic caribou and moose or our polar bears or any of our wildlife. And so it is a real honour to represent this department each and every day. And they are the ones that make getting up every day and coming to work such a joy and an honour. And so I look forward to continuing on in my role as the Minister of Sustainable Development.

I also really am excited about the passionate debate. I know my critic—and he'll have an opportunity in a short while to make a few statements—but I know we both take our jobs very seriously. We're both passionate about the environment, and it is truly a delight of mine to debate the issues.

And, while we may disagree on ideology, there is no shortage of passion, and so I really appreciate this opportunity that I've had in this role to debate with my critic for Sustainable Development and certainly look forward to the next few hours or few days or however long he would like to—or maybe just a few minutes, as it were, whatever the case may be, talking about these issues that we're both incredibly passionate about.



The other thing that I'm really excited to do is to meet with a variety of stakeholders and industry representatives and Manitobans in general, including our wonderful indigenous communities, who—so many of their issues interface with the department, and they certainly have an incredible passion for—whether it be land, protecting our land, protecting our environment, our air quality, our atmosphere and of course our iconic species. And I have to say that some of the highlights of my job has been working with indigenous leaders in our community and learning from them about the traditional knowledge in which we can be good stewards of the land.

And I was very pleased that our climate and green plan certainly did make mention and commitment to working with indigenous leaders who have so much to teach us about the—their knowledge and how to be good stewards of the land, good stewards of the resources and good stewards of the environment.

And I also really want to thank all the good folks at Turtle Lodge at Sagkeeng First Nation for that wonderful visit that they had co-ordinated a few months back and when they had brought me out there to learn more about their teachings on how to protect the environment. And that was definitely one of the highlights of my past year.

As people know, this Department of Sustainable Development is responsible for managing and protecting the environment as well as ensuring the rich biodiversity of our natural resources. We are charged with protecting Manitoba's environment and an environment that supports quality water, abundant wildlife, fish, forests and health humans. This is a most important responsibility and one that I and all staff in my department take very seriously.

Allow me to outline and briefly describe for you some of the department's targeted goals which fall from the mandates set by the Premier (Mr. Pallister). My work—my department is working with the Department of Agriculture to develop a unique made-in-Manitoba approach to an ALUS-type program.

And I do want to commend my friend, the Minister of Education, who has certainly taken a real keen interest in ALUS and helping the ALUS-type program evolve into what we now call Growing Outcomes in Watersheds here in Manitoba and implementing that. And so, he's done so much work in the background and for years has been promoting this.

And it's really exciting for me to be able to now implement GROW in Manitoba. And that, of course, is part of our government's commitment to restoring wetlands and preserving our habitat. That is why our government made that historic commitment of \$102-million conservation trust. That is the single largest commitment to a conservation trust in the province's history, and we're very pleased that budget '18 had provided for that so that we can continue with this community-driven program called Growing Outcomes in Watersheds.

We are embarking on implementing watershed-based planning for drainage and water resources with the goal of no net loss of water retention capacity and a real holistic approach to watershed management to enhance our existing approaches to water management planning, supports reconciliation with indigenous people, enables a no-net-loss-of-water-retention approach to water management and to help reduce flooding and provide resilience in times of drought.

My department also remains committed to curtailing unsafe hunting practices such as night hunting, which has gone virtually unchecked for many, many years. And we continue to focus our enforcement efforts on illegal night hunting and will continue to do so again this year.

The department is undertaking an comprehensive consultation process with indigenous peoples and communities and to date have directly and indirectly engaged in several First Nation communities to discuss a wide variety of initiatives. Safe hunting practice is part of it, but of course harvesting shared management strategies is something that we're incredibly excited about.

\* (16:50)

In the past, Manitoba's big game populations have been subject to increased hunting pressures and other Canadian provinces are facing these challenges regarding the sustainability of big game populations, and our department is implementing greater implementation of more effective programs and also surveys. I would also like to highlight that we are the first—for the first time in Manitoba, our government has made a commitment to be very transparent with the data. So we released all the moose survey data. We made that a very transparent process, and we've put that out there—available for all stakeholders to access. And that's part of our commitment to greater transparency, more information.

We're going to do that with our nutrient reports. We're going to provide the data for stakeholders and Manitobans to see on a regular basis, you know, so that they can make informed decisions and help us make informed decisions that are science-based. Everything that this department does, everything that our government is focused on is certainly science-based, taking an evidence-based approach.

In my later—my time is running short, but I did want to touch upon protected areas. That is a huge focus for our government, is to work on reconciling the needs of industry along with rural and northern communities, while working to enhance the network of protected areas and work is ongoing in that regard is how—and how we're supporting nationwide initiatives to ensure that we have great protected areas so that our species can thrive and that our habitat can be free from development and that they can be a good place for either people's enjoyment or for our habitat to—our species to grow and thrive.

One of the major focuses of my department is climate change. And I know members opposite and I, we may—we have some disagreement on some points, but we also have a lot of commitment to mitigating climate change. And I look forward to having a very robust discussion this afternoon on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

So, with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll conclude my opening remarks, and I look forward to this healthy debate as it evolves.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I want to thank the minister for those comments.

Does the official opposition critic have any opening comments?

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Yes, very briefly, Mr. Chair. I don't usually say a whole lot in the opening remarks. I would just say, for now, that having announced that I'm not going to seek re-election, who knows if this will be the last Estimates that I do. But we'll cross that bridge when we come to it. Could be two weeks, could be two years; you never know in this building what's going to happen to you next.

But, I think the minister has said a number of things that I agree with. And I start with her description of our rather interesting working relationship. We have our—as we've agreed, previously—we have our different roles in question period, passionate beliefs on what should be done on both sides, and yet we also have, I

believe, a measure—a considerable measure of mutual self-respect for one another's roles and views. And Estimates has been in the past a good forum, I think, for us to exchange ideas and to listen to the substance without having the intense political pressures of other parts of our job.

So that's certainly the spirit that I'll be approaching this Estimates process with. And since this may be the last time I do this—who knows?—there's no shortage of—I'm cursed with a wide range of interests and ideas, so there may be times where I'll share a few thoughts or ideas that the minister can consider in her future work as minister. Perhaps some of those will land on fertile ground, and they'll work out well for the people of Manitoba and the little piece of the planet that we call home. So I'll close off there, Mr. Chair, and thanks for the opportunity.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the critic for the—from the official opposition for those remarks.

Under the Manitoba practice, debate of the minister's salary is the last item considered in the department of Committee of Supply. Accordingly, we shall now defer to consideration for item 13.1.(a), contained in resolution 13.1.

At this time we invite the ministerial and opposition staff to enter the Chamber.

I'll get the minister to introduce her staff as they are taking their seats.

**Ms. Squires:** I'm very delighted to introduce to you my very talented and loyal, hard-working staff. Of course, we have Rob Olson, the deputy minister. And we have Lori Stevenson, who is new to the role. She's acting assistant deputy minister of Water Stewardship and biodiversity. And, of course, it's a delight for me to have Lori on the team. She's a strong, hard-working individual who brings plenty of experience and knowledge, and she's also a woman, and so I'm very pleased to have female leadership rising to the top.

And we have Matt Wiebe, who is the assistant deputy minister of Finance and Crown Lands. He's been here for a long time. He's probably done—helped numerous ministers through Estimates process, and I know he's going to serve us well in helping us provide answers today. And, of course, Thomas Williams, who is a policy analyst with the climate change division and has been an integral part of the climate change program that we've been implementing.

And so that is who I have with me for now.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Minister.

Does the committee wish to proceed with an Estimates of this department chronologically or a global discussion?

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Well, let's just think about this—yes, no, global.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Global, okay.

Agree, Minister?

**Ms. Squires:** Agree.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Okay, we're going to—everybody agree to go globally? *[Agreed]*

Thank you, and again, the questions of this department will be on a global manner and the resolution will be passed once the questioning is concluded.

The floor is now open for questions.

The honourable member for Concordia—for Wolseley.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** With the extensive 120 seconds that we have left for today's deliberations, maybe we'll just start off with some broad parameters.

Can the minister and her staff perhaps outline any staffing changes between the different divisions within the department in terms of just FTEs and that type of thing?

**Ms. Squires:** I appreciate the question from members opposite. So—

**Mr. Chairperson:** The hour being 5 p.m., I'm interrupting the proceedings.

The Committee of Supply will resume sitting tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, May 10, 2018**

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