

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

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Myrna Driedger  
Speaker*

**Vol. LXXII No. 60A - 10 a.m., Thursday, May 30, 2019**

ISSN 0542-5492

**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	Man.
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	Ind.
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
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
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, Hon.	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	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, May 30, 2019**

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**Madam Speaker:** O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Please be seated. Good morning, everybody.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (Second Opposition House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I would like to call Bill 244.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced that the House will consider second reading of Bill 244 this morning.

**SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 244—The Waste Reduction and Prevention  
Amendment Act  
(Reducing Single-Use Plastics)**

**Madam Speaker:** I will now call Bill 244, The Waste Reduction and Prevention Amendment Act (Reducing Single-Use Plastics).

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** I move, seconded by the MLA for Burrows, that bill number 44, The Waste Reduction and Prevention Amendment Act (Reducing Single-Use Plastics); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réduction du volume et de la production des déchets (réduction des produits en plastique à usage unique), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House. *[interjection]* Okay, that Bill 244, sorry.

I move, seconded by the MLA for Burrows, that Bill 244, The Waste Reduction and Prevention Amendment Act (Reducing Single-Use Plastics); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réduction du volume et de la production des déchets (réduction des produits en plastique à usage unique), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, this bill addresses the current widespread use of single-use plastics. It—the bill requires the minister to create a plan to reduce the use of such single-use plastics. The bill specifies that after January 1st, 2021, no retailer may supply single-use plastic checkout bags or single-use plastic drinking straws, and that after January 2025, a retailer may not supply single-use disposable coffee cups and single-use plastic water bottles.

This is an important measure which follows along what is happening in many other jurisdictions around the world. I think it is important to note that more than 60 countries now have bans or taxes on single-use plastics, and that by July 2018 some 127 countries have implemented some type of policy regulating plastic bags. So this is happening globally.

This is an effort which I have been involved with for some years. A number of years ago, after visiting in Leaf Rapids and see how—seeing how quickly a ban on plastic bags was accepted in that community in 2007, I advocated for banning single-use plastic bags and introduced a bill in this Legislature which was not supported by the other political parties at that date, but now, I hope, some years later, that there will be the support that is needed to address this issue of plastics.

It is clearly a global problem because the plastics are ending up in waste dumps; the plastics are ending up in the oceans. Most of us have likely seen pictures of the gyres in the ocean where these huge amounts of plastic bottles and plastic containers accumulate in the middle of the ocean.

The cities like the city of New Delhi, with over 20 million people, banned all forms of single-use plastics in 2017. The first country to ban plastic bags was actually Bangladesh, which was in 2002. Kenya's ban in April 2017 is said to be the world's toughest law aimed at reducing plastic pollutions. Kenyans producing, selling or even using plastic bags risk imprisonment and fines.

So it is time, Madam Speaker, that we act here in Manitoba. I hope there will be the support to do that. We have talked to many people in the process of drafting and putting together this law. I think that it is time that we get all parties' support and we make

this change here in Manitoba. I look forward to questions and I look forward to comments from other members of the Chamber.

Thank you, merci, miigwech.

### Questions

**Madam Speaker:** A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: First question to be asked by a member from another party. This is to be followed by a rotation between the parties. Each independent member may ask one question, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development):** Can the member assure the House that he has his full caucus support on this, considering the most recent example where the member for River Heights had passionately advocated for government action on addressing sustainability issues on Lake Winnipeg and now here we have a member of his own caucus vehemently opposed to those very measures?

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** As is typical, the Tory MLA who stands up, tries to be divisive, when in fact our caucus is all working together. We are all solidly behind this initiative, and I hope that the whole Chamber, including all MLAs, will be solidly behind this initiative to decrease single-use plastics.

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** I would echo the comments of my honourable colleague from River Heights. The minister's opening foray into this does not bode well that she isn't even on topic this morning, same as usual.

My question, more simply: Would the member from River Heights kindly inform the House who he had time to consult with in crafting this legislation, and was anyone from the disability community included amongst those consultations? Thank you.

\* (10:10)

**Mr. Gerrard:** I have had, actually, over about the last 10 years the chance to meet with and consult with a wide range of groups, people who are both climate activists, people who are in the disability community, people who are students. I want to acknowledge that the support of students has been tremendously important. They're very keen on moving forward from this. Most recently, I had the chance to meet with and talk to a group of students in

a park in River Heights and we were talking about climate change, and they said, well, we want—as well as climate change, we want action on reducing plastics.

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** Just wonder if the member has done any research as to whether any additional costs associated with this bill would be simply passed on to the Manitoban consumers?

**Mr. Gerrard:** There are a variety of ways that people can operate, as it were. There are single-use or multiple-use reusable cloth bags. There are a variety of paper, other options. Personally, I use a colourful bag with an indigenous design, and it's very attractive and it fits nicely in my pocket and I can use it very comfortably. And because I use it many times over, probably I have used it hundreds and hundreds of times, the net cost of doing this is—

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

**Mr. Altemeyer:** I wonder if the honourable member for River Heights could share with the House how extensive the proposed ban on single-use plastics is under this proposed legislation. What items would be included and which ones would be excluded from it?

**Mr. Gerrard:** The bill specifies some specific areas and specific single use. So items—so single-use plastic bags, single-use plastic straws; in January 1, 2021, single-use disposable coffee cups and single-use plastic water bottles and oxo-degradable fragments or plastics which tend to fragment and give you microplastics.

So those are the starting point. We don't want necessarily to limit it at that, and that is why we're putting in this bill that the minister must develop an even broader plan.

**Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona):** I was wondering if the honourable member—thank you for bringing this forward for discussion—if you could talk about the problem when it comes to plastic and different types of plastic, but talk about a little bit the prevalence of increased food-borne illnesses that are occurring in some of the areas where they have banned this. Some bags that are reusable are not being sanitized properly and thus are creating food-borne illnesses.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I think one must compare the impact of the plastics. We know that these plastics have a major impact on wildlife, for example, that the micro plastics get into the fish, into birds and into a wide

variety of animals and wildlife species so that there are impacts there.

The other thing is that we now know that some of the chemicals in plastics, phthalates, for example, may have adverse health effects, and so there is obviously a trade-off. But the fact of the matter is that there's no evidence that it is worse with disposable bags and it may be much better for health.

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** I would like to know if the member had consulted with the business community or any businesses that might be affected by such a ban.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Yes, I have talked to members of the business community. There are some who are in the business of producing or selling plastic bags, and, yes, they are not on board with this change. But, quite frankly, there are certain things that we have to do for environment and as much as it will, perhaps, be of a negative impact on a small number of business people who I would imagine would be able to adapt, they could get into producing and selling multiple-use bags. I think that this will create alternative business opportunities, will replace those which are lost.

**Mr. Yakimoski:** So the member has just referenced a thicker bag. So, under this, we're looking at thin polyethylene bags that will be banned. Some companies have come out with thicker multi-use polyethylene bags, but studies show that those don't get reused nearly as much as you might like. So does this just apply to thinner ones or the thicker ones which actually are a bigger strain on the environment?

**Mr. Gerrard:** This is, in fact, why we are clearly banning those single-use plastics, but we are also requiring that the government bring forward a policy which would deal with some of the specifics of how this would be applied so that it works optimally for all Manitobans.

**Ms. Squires:** Yes, I'm just wondering if the member opposite has bothered to read the mandate letters that our government has recently issued to the industry stewardship program plans for beverage containers for their Canadian Beverage Container Recycling Program and the other extended producer responsibility letters that we've sent out to engage with all of our stakeholders on reducing plastics.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I think that the effort to reduce plastics is not just from one party, and I'm glad that the government is doing some bits and pieces in

terms of the overall puzzle. But, clearly, what we want is a—and need—is a broad impact, and the fact that so many countries have moved in the direction of banning single-use plastic bags and, for instance, Vancouver banning single-use plastic straws, that it's pretty clear that this is a sensible way to move. And in Leaf Rapids and Thompson in northern Manitoba, this was very quickly accepted and is now the common practice.

**Mr. Wowchuk:** How can the member see a single-use plastic ban is effective solution when there has been successful challenges to similar bans—BC, Toronto and many other jurisdictions?

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, I mean the answer here is that there have been many jurisdictions where this has been introduced very successfully. We want to be able to learn from what's happened elsewhere.

But, you know, I've got to tell you that it was remarkable how quickly people in Leaf Rapids, more than a decade ago, accepted this change. It is remarkable how quickly it was accepted in Thompson. Northern Manitoba has led the way, Madam Speaker. We should be now including all of Manitoba.

**Madam Speaker:** Are there any—the honourable member for Southdale.

**Mr. Smith:** I know this—a similar question was just asked not too long ago, but does the member from River Heights know what's the cost is going to be borne by the consumer? Often, if business incur a cost, they will pass that on to their consumers and their customers. Has the member calculated or estimated the cost that will be passed down to consumers?

**Mr. Gerrard:** Well, you know, because businesses will no longer have to provide plastic bags, then businesses should be better off at lower cost of businesses, and, hopefully, they will pass that on to consumers. And, as I've already said, that reusing a cloth bag many times is actually remarkably cheap in terms of the overall cost.

**Madam Speaker:** The time for this question period has expired.

### Debate

**Madam Speaker:** Debate is open.

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development):** So I do want to—I am pleased to put

a few words on the record this morning about the scourge that plastics have become on our society.

We know that here in Manitoba at one point we were on the trajectory to have about 260 million single-use plastic bags every year go into Brady landfill. We have bent that curve down. We're at about 100—we've bent it down by about 100 million and currently there are still about 160 or 155 million single-use plastic bags every year going into Brady landfill, and we do agree that that is unacceptable.

\*(10:20)

I do want to take a moment to congratulate some people who have made tremendous impacts on our community. I think about some of the work that Take Pride Winnipeg! has done at promoting the reduce, the reuse and the recycle theme, and now we're really moving more into a reduce and a reuse phase and, really, with a focus on reducing. The more that we can reduce reliance on these single-use plastic bags, the better off we will be because, ultimately, the recycling of these single-use plastic bags is very, very problematic.

And while I know—I recently did tour the MER facility where we do all of the recycling, all of Winnipeg's recycling goes to. The existing facility is being shut down and a new one will be opened up very shortly and—where all of our recycling products will be going to for sorting and putting into bales and selling elsewhere. And, even if we do have the capacity to recycle the single-use plastic bags—which they have a component in their facility that could expand to that product if we deem it to be a recycled product—the problem is that there's no customer for that bale of plastic bags at the end. And so without having an end use for it, it's really hard to keep it in that circular economy and have it being repackaged or recycled in the truest sense of the word. So recycling of these single-use plastic bags is very problematic. There are many challenges, and so the focus is on reduction.

Plastic straws is another scourge our society. We've seen the effects of what can happen to these plastic straws when they get into the environment, when they get into fish and wildlife habitat and the destruction that they cause. The other one is fishing line. Fishing line has created so much destruction of our wildlife and our fish species through the—through lack of recycling initiatives. And so now what we did last year is we set up recycling depots in every—on the—every major tributary where there's a large fishing population and they can recycle their fish line

and put it in there, and it gets shipped elsewhere so that we can keep it out of the trees, out of the water, keep the birds and the fish away from this deadly substance when it is in their habitat.

So we are working on many initiatives to reduce this—the amount of single plastics in our environment. Manitoba was also pleased to work together with all federal, territorial and provincial ministers and we signed at the federal level—through the Canadian Council for Ministers of the Environment we had signed the zero—the strategy on zero plastic waste, and we recently did just sign that. We're working together with all municipalities and all jurisdictions across the nation to reduce the amount of single plastics that come into the environment.

One of the things that we are working on very, very closely with and very collaboratively with are the people who are actually packaging products in the first place. When you go to buy a—whether it be a toy for your child, or you go to buy your groceries, there is so much plastic packaging in all of those materials. We don't need that much plastic packaging for the goods that we're buying at Walmart and at Safeway and Sobeys. There's ways to work around that. And so one of the main strategies that we're focused on right now is getting reduced packaging plastics so that we don't have to have this dilemma of how to recycle and reuse the product once we've bought it, once we've purchased it and brought it into the home.

We've also signed new agreements, five-year plans, with all of our, you know, our stewardship programs in the province of Manitoba and all of them have new targets. We want to do better when it comes to the collection of our plastic beverage containers, for example. We have a lot of the Recycle Everywhere containers throughout the province of Manitoba. If you book a yurt in Tulabi Falls, on the deck of your yurt you will see a Recycle Everywhere bin. When you go our provincial parks, when you go to—on a picnic in a federal park, when you go anywhere there is an opportunity for you to recycle your beverage containers.

We need to make sure that we make that those—make sure that those products are recycled when they do come into the facility, and the municipalities are all working towards a greater collaboration on enhancing their recycling initiatives so that we can make sure that when someone takes the time to put a recycling—a recyclable beverage container in a blue

bin, that it actually gets into a stream where it is recycled. In fact—and we know that there are many uses for some of this plastic that can be recycled and reused. In fact, my eyeglasses—the frames are made out of plastic, recycled plastic bottles. There's so much of what we see in our natural environment, now, that are the products of recycled plastic bottles. So we can do a lot better in the recycling initiatives for them.

And I'm very pleased to be working with the Canadian beverage recycling association as well as the multi-material stewardship association to enhance their—the number of—the tons of recycling that they achieve, every year, and be working towards greater recycling initiatives.

We know that more can be done. We absolutely know that more can be done in terms of getting the plastics out of our landfill and ensuring that we don't have our landfills filled and littered with plastics. And more importantly, keeping them out of streams and other waterways and the natural environment, where they can become a real detriment to our fish and wildlife.

So I do want to assure the member that while his bill certainly does leave a lot to—a lot of questions, in terms of who he's spoken with—I know I've spent a good deal of the last year consulting with a lot of stakeholders, coming up with a solid plan for how we can reduce the amount of single plastics coming into our community. And I don't see the efforts of the work that a good consultative initiative would do, in this bill. So I am concerned about the lack of consultation that he has done when it comes to waste reduction and prevention. And I certainly am looking for a collaborative partner when it comes to reducing and reusing the amounts of plastics in the province of Manitoba. And it would be great if the member would be a full partner in supporting our initiatives to get better outcomes for our environment, better outcomes for reducing the plastics that go into Brady landfill and other landfills throughout the province.

One of the programs that's really successful that I do want to give a little shout-out to is we are now collaborating with a beverage container company. When they take beverages up to northern communities, when they truck them up, they are now filling their trucks. Instead of running the trucks back empty, which is what they used to do, they are now filling the trucks up with recyclable goods, mainly beverage containers, and bringing those recyclable beverage containers back from northern communities

that don't have the luxury of having recyclable transfer stations and the infrastructure to recycle in their own community.

So we know that the Canadian beverage recycling association as well as a private industry stakeholder is working towards this recycling effort. And they're getting tremendous results at getting some of the plastics out of the northern communities.

But I do just want to, in closing, just talk about the nature of collaboration. And how, you know, with the Liberal caucus, we have seen there being a great deal of discourse. And, you know, with the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), he's brought forward initiatives and he's asked the government to do certain things. He asked the government to address the sustainability of Lake Winnipeg and to reduce the mesh sizes so that the spawning walleye and sauger could spawn at least two or three seasons. And then, of course—and even as late as—in October of this year, he put out a report and—calling for these very measures that now we see members of his caucus opposed to.

And just so that my member for—my friend from Wolseley doesn't feel, you know, cut out of the conversation, he's also of the same ilk where he's opposing projects that his own government—I mean, in October of 2014 it was his own colleague, Minister Stan Struthers, who issued the very, very first permit to what is now Canadian Premium Sand. And today he opposes that project. And yet we know in October of 2014 he was not opposing that plan whatsoever. He was busy writing solidarity pledges while Minister Stan Struthers was issuing an exploratory permit for Canadian Premium Sand, as well as staging his rebellion. So, that's what that—

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

\* (10:30)

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Pleased to rise and offer some supportive comments for this initiative.

Unlike the minister, who is completely incapable of doing anything for the environment, and equally incapable of understanding or listening to anyone who isn't thoroughly indoctrinated into the Kool-Aid blue of her own particular partisan perspective, there are some good intentions in this legislation. And a minister that actually understood what her job was—namely, to protect the environment—and a minister who was actually committed to making the changes that current and future generations essentially require us to make, would have made a very different speech

just now. I was not at all surprised to be disappointed by the excessively partisan, the off-topic rant that is par for the course, even on a Thursday morning where the public gallery is empty, the press gallery is empty and we just have an opportunity as MLAs have a conversation about an important issue.

She could not find the on-ramp to the moral high ground if she tried.

So allow me to offer what are, hopefully, some substantive and supportive comments for this initiative from a different political party, from the Liberal Party and the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) who has brought this forward. I do agree with the member from River Heights and—watch this—I'll actually agree with the earlier comments of the minister where she acknowledged that—*[interjection]* This is called, you know, multi-partisan co-operation and conversation, Madam Speaker; just trying to lead by example.

The plastics crisis is accurately described as a plastics crisis. We are learning every single day more and more in Canada that items we might even put in the blue box which we—where we think as individual citizens we're doing a good job. We're diverting material from the landfill. Well, we are diverting it from the landfill, but it turns out it's ending up in the ocean, or it's ending up in shipping containers that some private-sector firm has decided to ship to the Philippines or Malaysia and dump our garbage on them. And that is just not acceptable, should not be acceptable to anyone.

And, quite clearly, there is an additional role for the federal government to be playing here. We do not have jurisdiction over the federal government. We can only do what we can do here in Manitoba, and this initiative does identify some of the low-hanging fruit, if you will, in—when it comes to taking some positive steps forward on reducing single-use plastics.

The question that I asked the honourable member when we were at the Q & A session just a little while ago about the disability community, there are, of course, persons with disabilities who are having a difficult time figuring out how they would still be able to access the nourishment, the medications perhaps that they require in the—if there is, for instance, a ban on single-use plastic straws. But, you know, perhaps a friendly amendment should this bill move forward could be contemplated to properly profile that and indicate that, you know,

that type of single-use plastic, an exception can be made for it.

And let's not overlook the potential for new products, new services, new technologies to emerge, same as they have already. Wasn't very many years ago when all of the single-use cutlery and plates and cups that we might see at a community picnic or even here at the Legislature was all single-use plastics and ends up in the landfill. In fact, I can see it looks like the cups from the Conservative caucus still fit that billing, given what's on their desks this morning, and our caucus, all of those items are compostable. We made the effort many years ago to go out a source a local supplier who can actually make compostable cutlery and compostable cups and compostable plates, and we took the further step of making sure that all of those materials, once used, don't go into the garbage but they go into a compost bin which is picked up to make sure that the material is actually composted.

And we do have to be a little bit cautious when an existing product is used. We also, I think, need to be steering consumers and citizens and businesses into an alternative that will lead to the benefits that we want rather than shifting one problem to another. For instance, in the absence of a composting program, when we use compostable products, they can end up in the landfill and, of course, they will create methane as they decompose there, which is a very potent greenhouse gas. And I believe we'll get to discuss climate change in a few short minutes this morning.

So we need to make sure that whatever alternatives, if we are banning something like a single-use plastic bag, that there are environmentally friendly, socially appropriate alternatives that we are directly steering society to move towards and use, instead—rather than accidentally trading one problem off for another. But I think those things can be easily remedied. It is very unfortunate that in this government's three years in office there has not, to my knowledge, been a single waste-reduction initiative that has been brought forward. And I was puzzled about this because there's lots of things that could be done.

We had managed to move the yardsticks quite significantly, on a number of fronts, while we were in office. And then I went and put myself through the torture of reading their very deceptive green plan document. And lo and behold, they don't even have solid waste identified as a priority area. They have



other things listed in there, but that one's not there. They have their four key pillars of areas where they were going to take action where they haven't, and solid waste was completely missing.

So that did explain to me why we haven't seen any progress on this front. If the minister can wrap her head around the concept of supporting a good idea, even if it doesn't come from someone within her own party, with her own blue Kool-Aid part of the political perspective involved spectrum, I really hope that we manage to see this bill move forward. And perhaps we can have a further conversation about strengthening it in different ways at the committee stage.

With those few comments, Madam Speaker, I'll cede the floor. Thank you.

**Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona):** Thank you to the member for bringing this forward. This is a great topic that I regularly talk to with constituents and people on a regular basis, because this topic is something that affected my previous life when I was grocer. Single-use plastics, or plastics and packaging, as part of my previous business, impacted everything I do.

The ban that we're talking about today is a very complex one. And I've been meeting and talking with people regularly about it, ranging from grocers to distributors. What is single use and is it necessary?

In our society, nowadays, food safety and single-use plastics kind of go together. We want the food that we purchase at a grocery store, at a restaurant, we want to know that it's safe and it's not going to make us ill. I know when I had my store, some of my staff in my deli would say, well, you know what, we put that salad out and that salad didn't sell, why can't we use the package, nobody touched it? No, it's been contaminated; it's got to go in the garbage, unfortunately. And much of it was black plastic—black plastic, which very few places can even recycle. I know there's an area in Toronto, they're trying to recycle black plastic exclusively.

So I said no, that's—unfortunately, it's waste. It's waste. It can't—because in the business, people have to trust that the food they're purchasing from you, whether you're in a grocery store or you're a restaurant, it's safe. So this is a great discussion. Our culture of convenience today is unfortunate. I see the member from River Heights—that is a recyclable cup, I assume. I know we talked to—he talked to students.

And I've been to the Tim Hortons at the University of Manitoba when there's a huge lineup. And some of the kids have recyclable cups, but many of them don't. And I'd like to know, what would we recommend at a place like a Tim Hortons or a Starbucks? Do you have to bring your own? What if I haven't brought my own and I've just decided I want a coffee? Coffee cups are not recyclable, so it is a concern. Most of the kids in that line, I remember noticing, didn't have a cup. They were buying it. And, unfortunately, most of those kids—and when I talked to them, I see them toss that coffee cup into the recycling bin. And it's not recyclable. They don't know about that. And education is an important part of this.

\* (10:40)

You know, when it comes to recycling and single use, does this ban—he talks about single-use plastics. But a paper bag at a grocery store is much more harmful environmentally than a plastic bag. Some people will ask the question, paper or plastic? And people go, what? Paper, because I can compost it or it breaks down. But, unfortunately, in a landfill for it to break down it needs FAT TOM. Not a guy, but for the bacteria to break down that paper it needs food, the proper acidity. It needs time. It needs the proper temperature. It needs oxygen and it needs the moisture, and quite often in a landfill it gets none of that oxygen. So the bacteria can't break down that paper bag, that newspaper, so it stays in the landfill and it consumes a whole lot more room than that thin polyethylene bag.

Today—I have to make a note here—today, I would be remiss—today is my wife Amy's birthday. Today my wife officially turns 29, and so, perhaps, I head to Kildonan Place last night and I buy her a lovely gift. Perhaps I didn't. But perhaps I did. And she gets—we get, you know, a lovely dress or something like that in a very nice, shiny, sparkly, single-use paper-plastic bag. Is that covered? You've seen the bags. They look great and they are great advertising for those stores; it's part of what they do. That consumes a whole lot of energy to produce in the first place and it also consumes a whole lot of waste because it's not recyclable.

Thicker polyethylene bags—as I had mentioned in my question—consume more energy to produce, but studies show that the thicker polyethylene bags tend not to get reused more than the thin ones. The thin ones, many people say, I do reuse it. I use it to pick up after my dog or I use it to use to line my

trash can. That's an important thing. The thicker ones which some people are advocating for tend not to get reused. So I do know that as part of my business back in the day, Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers committed—I think it was in around 2010 somewhere, I may be wrong on that date—to commit to reducing the amount of single-use plastics and within three to four years they had reduced it by I believe over 50 per cent by changing how they do things in the stores.

Within the grocery business, I do know in the United States there's a new company out there—well, not a—Kroger is not a new company—but what they are trying to do is they are trying to change. They're going back in time to try and create what they call more sustainable packaging or a different system. We all remember the time when milk men would come and deliver, so Kroger is working with a company called Loop to provide home delivery with reusable containers, waste-free, exclusively available through Loop. I sound like an advertisement for this, but it's an interesting process: delivering and replenishing your products you enjoy. You order it online. They deliver it to you in a container that might be stainless steel, might be glass, and when you are finished and you reorder again, you put it on your front step and they will come and get it, refill it, replace it—interesting concept.

What if some of the companies that are working with—I know that you can get Häagen-Dazs, that's not bad. You can get Pantene through it. They're working with Proctor & Gamble for some soaps and things like that.

So this is a new, innovative way of looking at reducing waste, as you were saying. Will it gain traction and will people want to do it? That remains to be seen, but within that whole thing the discussion becomes: what is the environmental impact of the drivers, of the delivering, of the carbon footprint of—*[interjection]* Yes, you have to clean that package. You have to sanitize that package, and you have to ship it one way and then you have to ship it back another way.

Yesterday was a wonderful day. You saw me walking around with a lovely trophy because—Transcona. I'll just put it on the record again: Transcona is the best neighbourhood in Winnipeg. But I met with a group of students from Radisson and I'll quickly mention this. Radisson School were here on a tour. And, when I go and talk to the kids, I talk to things what we do here in the Legislature and

what we debate, and the banning of plastic bags and plastic straws is a great one that young kids can understand. Should we or shouldn't we? And I asked them, who thinks we should? And when it comes to plastic bags, I tell them to really encourage mom and dad to bring a container from home, to not just—to remember the bags that they forgot in their—the trunk of their car. I know Superstore, by implementing a 5-cent charge on bags, are getting more people to bring their own bags or containers.

But then I asked the kids, I said: Should we ban plastic straws? And the children often will, you know, many of them go—they raise their hands and they say yes.

And then I start to put out there. I said I have a friend of mine who had a stroke and he has trouble drinking because it'll dribble so he needs a straw. Well, he can bring his own recycling straw. I said yes, but what if he didn't plan to go to a restaurant? So he might need a straw in that case. And they can always ask for the straws. So, you know, then I say some people really need them, and children will raise their hands and say yes, my grandma, my grandma can't use her hands too well; she can't lift things up so she needs a straw. And I said, so, that's great, kids. So I tell them all the time, make sure when you go to a restaurant, if they offer it to you, decline it if you don't need it. That's an important thing.

I will quickly finish and thank again for bringing this forward for discussion. Kids bring forth some really interesting things, so when I say, what are some other reasons that we might really need a straw? And I remember one child raised his hand and said, well, if we don't have straws, how are we going to drink a Slurpee? Good point. How are we?

Thank you very much for the time to speak a bit about this and thank you to the member for bringing this forward.

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** It's a great pleasure to bring some words onto the record regarding the member from River Heights on his bill.

I think it falls really short of where we need to go, and I just want to make one comment about the member from Wolseley. He said that our government has done very little in the line of reduction. Well, one of the things that we take pride in is we've greatly reduced the NDP caucus and there is more to come. There is more to come. That's one of the things here.

But, anyway, our Province has done a number of extended producer responsibility programs in place

that are working well to manage and end-of-life products in a responsible manner. In my previous life as a educator, I watched our youth endorse a lot of the things, and it takes leadership like our government is doing right now to bring some of these initiatives and have them endorsed by our young.

I see a lot of times—you know, I recall one time when we took, through a whole day, we took about eight busloads of students out to the refuse ground in Swan River because the farmer could not even plow his field and put his crop in because of the number of plastic bags that parachuted out into his canola field and got tangled on the stems. The number of bags that were caught up along the municipal road, there were just thousands.

And so these students took this on as a project, and we went out there for an entire day for an hour, hour and a half; students picked up bags and bags of garbage. I see these same students now going into the co-op with the recyclable, you know, the bags to get their groceries so they do not have to take plastic. I see people now, they go ahead and they say, you know what? That's okay. I can carry this when asked if—do you want a plastic bag.

I know myself last weekend, I had the opportunity to get out and pick some smorzhi which is morels—mushrooms and I used to—I remember carrying, years ago, I would take two or three plastic bags in my pocket and I took my recyclable bag there and got it half full and went home happy and that was—

\* (10:50)

**An Honourable Member:** Find any pidpenky?

**Mr. Wowchuk:** No.

**An Honourable Member:** Mushrooms.

**Mr. Wowchuk:** No, morels; smorzhi—[interjection] September. Okay. Anyway.

So, you know, you see students—I'm getting back to the, you know, to the educational component and the way our culture changes. And, you know, we, as the minister mentioned, you know, up at Lockport we seen some pretty catastrophic incidents with pelicans getting spools of fishing line around their, you know, their wings et cetera. It had to be removed in a way, you know, and it creates a great hardship. We see birds, you know, that go to the refuse grounds on our, you know, Pepsi cans or our Pepsi plastic tops that hold the six cans together that could

possibly get their neck caught in it, some animal. And these things, you know, you watch people now, they rip them apart; they don't want them to go there. So we are changing, and I thank our government for putting forth a lot of initiatives of awareness. It all starts, you know, with this.

Even our—every spring, when we run the threat of forest fire hazards out there and our fire fighters get out in the landscape, they no longer have those plastic bottles that they take in carts out there, you know, by the ton for the fire fighters to be able to have water. They have recyclable plastic—I mean, they have recyclable juice boxes which can be recycled. They have containers which are refillable for water. So there's a very, very conscientious effort going in to making the changes that we need and to carry through for generations.

Current extended producer responsibility in the province has been very effective and has led to Manitoba being recognized as a leading jurisdiction in Canada when it comes to adopting and implementing extended producer responsibility programs. We're working directly within industry through Multi-Material Stewardship Manitoba to reduce, reuse and to recycle. The industry-funded stewardship organizations that Manitoba—that manage Manitoba's extended producer responsibility programs enhance product diversion and material recycling for a variety of products and materials.

We used to take a day a week to go out and just pick up some of the plastics in the school yard and, you know, the students would go to Qwik Stop in Swan River. On their way back, you know, you'd see some of that irresponsible actions of throwing that can or that plastic drink bottle, and over time there would be another student with that student who threw it and said, hey, we're just going to have to come up—or come out here and pick them up anyway, so let's take them to the recycling bin. So those are things that are happen. We're working directly with that industry.

Manitoba has 12 stewardship programs for recycling and safe disposal of end-of-life materials including: blue box materials, beverage containers, electronic waste, household hazardous waste, tires, used oil and anti-freeze. And it's gratifying now to go to these recycling depots and watch the people picking through their recycling—this goes here, this goes in the plastic, this goes in the aluminum. So those are—you know, this one goes across. I got this oil can, goes to the recycling and the oil. So there's

automotive household batteries, pesticide, fertilizer containers, mercury-containing thermostats and pharmaceuticals.

We're leading the way in green by eliminating coal-fired electricity production. We're leading the way in green by invest in billions of dollars in the production of hydroelectricity. Our Climate and Green Plan is the best greenhouse gas reduction plan in the country. Our plan respects Manitoba's record of green investments without federal support. Instead, the Liberals in Ottawa have imposed the one-size-fits-all carbon tax in one of the world's most diverse countries. They insist on double taxing Manitoban, and giving no credit to us for Manitoba's record of green investments, especially in hydroelectricity.

The member from River Heights, I would encourage him to reach out to his federal cousins and have them get on board with our initiatives. You know, as the minister had mentioned and, you know, I watched and, you know, he was very concerned about the fishery in Lake Winnipeg and then he took a one-eighty and now is not supporting on our initiatives for sustainability in that lake.

The Liberal Party could have their way, they put Ottawa and Justin Trudeau first and Manitoba families last. Our climate plan puts Manitobans and our environment first. Ottawa and Justin Trudeau don't know best. We in Manitoba know best. We put forth a plan. We feel it's the best plan and it entails a lot of the initiatives that we're talking about here this morning. Manitoba's plan will make a significant and lasting positive impact on the environment.

We must each do our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensuring that, you know, those plastics do not get out there in the environment and do not cause a lot of damage to our wildlife which we're working toward this green plan. We're leading the way by eliminating the coal-fired electricity production, we're leading the way by investing billions of dollars in production of hydroelectricity, we're leading the way with a Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan that widely acknowledges the best in Canada. It's a plan that'll clean up contaminated sites, increase recycling and build new schools to the highest standards of energy efficiency and environmental design. It's a plan that established \$102-million Conservation Trust to preserve and protect our wetlands.

We ask the members opposite to join our initiatives and let's together make Manitoba one of the greenest provinces—

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

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** I'd like to rise and put a few words on the record regarding this proposed legislation.

You know, Madam Speaker, I know that a few times it's been discussed here in the House but the question regarding and surrounding people with disabilities, if there's a plastic-straw ban that does impact a number of people who have disabilities and, as far as how they need to drink from a, you know, drink a beverage while at a restaurant, and I know that's something that is an important and very, I think, limiting issue for people with disabilities. So I do think that's, if the member opposite is to bring something like this forward, that is something that should be dealt with in the proposed legislation itself. So I do hope that he has had some conversations with disability groups and figure out a way that that would not impact people and their quality and standard of life.

I think my friend and colleague from Transcona said that, you know, it's easy enough to say that someone should bring a recyclable straw with them wherever they go but, I mean, if you're not planning on going to a restaurant necessarily that particular day and it's more of a spur-of-the-moment plan, you don't—it may not be fair to expect someone to be carrying a straw all the time.

There's a number of things that we—people, including our phones and other types of things that—items that we do carry on a daily basis, a straw just seems like an impractical thing to carry around. So I do like to see if there's some more consultation and certainly concern with respect to the quality of life for people with disabilities and how a plastic straw ban would indeed impact them.

I know that the member from—the member opposite had referenced New Delhi and said the folks in New Delhi had indeed put a plastics ban in effect. And I've been to New Delhi and I do know that they have quite an issue with plastic and all kinds of other waste products that end up not in waste bins but on the streets and I think I've seen that. And it's unfortunate that New Delhi, with such a rich history, ends up with such a garbage problem.

And it's certainly not the only city in the world to do that and have that kind of issue, but I don't

know in Manitoba that we're quite at that level and certainly not that point. I can see—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member will have eight minutes remaining.

\* (11:00)

## RESOLUTIONS

### Res. 15—Declaring an Environment and Climate Emergency

**Madam Speaker:** The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is the resolution Declaring an Environment and Climate Emergency, being brought forward by the honourable Leader of the Second Opposition.

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** I move, seconded by the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard),

*WHEREAS the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that if humans don't take immediate and collective action to limit global warming, the consequences will be irreversible; and*

*WHEREAS Canada's Changing Climate Report (CCCR) commissioned by Environment and Climate Change Canada stated that Canada, on average, is experiencing warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world; and*

*WHEREAS Manitoba's abundance of clean hydro electric energy if kept public and affordable, can be used to reduce use of fossil fuel use across Canada; and*

*WHEREAS according to Ducks Unlimited Canada, even with the current Manitoba Wetland Restoration Incentive Program, the province is still losing 10 hectares of wetlands for every one hectare that is restored; and*

*WHEREAS according to Keystone Agricultural Producers, Manitoba has not had an updated land use policy in over 50 years; and*

*WHEREAS no Manitoba government has ever developed or implemented a substantial and effective plan to reduce emissions across Manitoba; and*

*WHEREAS Manitoba has the capacity to take back control of its environment and become carbon*

*neutral by storing as much carbon as the province would emit in ten years; and*

*WHEREAS growing the economy does not depend on degrading the environment, and environmental renewal and growth is essential to life and to a better economy; and*

*WHEREAS action to support clean growth and meaningfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all parts of the economy are necessary to ensure a safer, healthier, cleaner and more prosperous future for Manitoba children and grandchildren.*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to declare that Manitoba is in a climate emergency which requires, as a response, that the provincial government commit to meeting emissions reductions targets under the Paris Agreement, take back control of its environment to make it easy for every Manitoban to go green by: negotiating a made-in-Manitoba green plan with the federal government; investing in wilderness restoration; and electrifying provincial transportation and the power grid.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Lamont:** It is my honour today to bring forward this resolution that would call for the Province of Manitoba to declare a climate emergency. We've been talking about climate change for a long time. Here is a headline and a story: coal consumption affecting climate. The furnaces of the world are now burning about 2 billion tons of coal a year. When this is burned, uniting with oxygen, it adds about 7 billion tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere yearly. This tends to make the air a more effective blanket for the Earth and to raise its temperature.

*Mr. Doyle Piwniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

This is from 1912. Over a hundred years ago. When we face such threats to humanity and to our own children, we have the moral obligation to act. And I want to say, for a moment, why we haven't acted. Because we've been hearing about this for so long, for so many decades and many of the reasons are anchored in false beliefs.

The first false belief is that this is not happening. We hear denial all the time. The second false belief is that humans have nothing to do with it. Human beings have sent a trillion tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere over the last 150 years, while cutting forests and reducing nature's ability to reabsorb CO<sub>2</sub>.

The third false belief is that acting on climate change will hurt the economy, especially Manitoba's economy.

The costs of doing nothing on climate change far outweigh the cost of doing something. Manitobans all know that droughts, floods, fires, new insects and new crop diseases aren't good for business, they're not good for agriculture, and they will all get worse with climate change. And there is an idea, both on the far right and the far left, that the only way to grow the economy is by making the environment worse. A healthy economy depends on a healthy environment because both depend on reinvestment and renewal.

And the fourth false belief is that we can't or shouldn't do anything about this because the problem is too big or because someone else is making a bigger mess. The reality is climate change is real, it is being caused by human beings, and we can take bold action to prevent it and grow the economy while restoring and renewing the environment. Because one of the most important implications of recognizing that humans are shaping the climate is that we can choose to shape it differently, and that we have the possibility and the potential, especially in Manitoba, to prove that it can be done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, so far, 562 governments around the world have declared climate emergencies in their jurisdictions. Most notably, the Welsh government, the First Minister of Scotland, and the Irish government have all made climate emergency declarations. On the 1st of May, 2019, the UK Labour Party received unanimous support for a motion in favour of a climate emergency declaration in the House of Commons, making Britain the first country in the world where a multi-partisan Parliament has declared a climate emergency.

At the federal level, there are currently two resolutions before the House to declare a Canada-wide emergency, and there's a website that gives a list of jurisdictions that have made such declarations at [climateemergencydeclarations.org](http://climateemergencydeclarations.org). And the reason we are calling for this is that the evidence is unavoidable, even for Conservative governments, that our climate is in crisis, and that we need to take immediate, collective action to stop this from becoming irreversible.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, concluded that if humans don't take immediate and collective action to limit global warming, the consequences will be irreversible.

Extreme droughts, devastating wildfires, massive floods, deadly hurricanes and widespread famine will become the norm. Canada's Changing Climate Report, the CCCR, commissioned by Environment and Climate Change Canada, stated that Canada on average is experiencing warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world.

For Manitoba, this is an opportunity to lead, to grow and to turn Manitoba's strengths to our advantage for the benefits of every community in our province on one of the defining issues of our time. Manitoba Liberals have put forward a comprehensive climate plan that will make us carbon neutral by 2030, and we hope that all members can come together this morning and recognize how critical this issue is, and that all of us together can save the world. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

### Questions

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held and in questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question might be asked by a member of another party; any subsequent question may follow rotation between parties; each independent member may ask one question and no questions or answers shall exceed 45 seconds.

**Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson):** Does the member for St. Boniface agree with his federal Liberal cousins that providing exemptions for the vast majority of carbon emitters while cutting side deals with other provinces with high carbon emissions is the best way to combat climate change?

**Mr. Dougald Lamont (Leader of the Second Opposition):** We made it clear in our climate plan that we want to renegotiate so that Manitoba can set its own terms for climate in Manitoba. It's too bad that the Premier (Mr. Pallister) is suing the federal government and that the Premier had decided to hand over control of our climate environment policy to the federal government.

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** I want to thank the Leader of the Liberal Party for bringing forward this motion today. One of the first questions I have is that in the plan they have released, they cite reductions of 570,000 tons as of 2025 under the federal hybrid carbon pricing plan.

What is the price per ton expected to be in that year to produce that result?

**Mr. Lamont:** If I'm not mistaken, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would be—I believe it's 50—it caps out at \$50 per ton.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Just note that at \$50 per ton, the annual emissions are not expected to be that high, so maybe we can dive into that a little later, but another question I have—also in the Liberal document, they indicate a heavy reliance on creating new wilderness areas—50,000 hectares.

I'm wondering if the Liberal Leader could explain how humans will create new wilderness.

**Mr. Lamont:** The simple answer is that there are some areas that are not defined currently as wilderness. There are parks, for example, the—one of the examples is that we have—there's a plan in which we mentioned to return the Red River Floodway to native grasslands. Currently, it's grass that's mowed for hay, and some of it is being able to return areas that are currently not forested to forests and to the natural—and their natural state.

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** The Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project, once operational, will export clean energy and displace about 7 per cent of Manitoba's annual omission—or emissions.

How can the member opposite demonstrate concern for the environment when it is his party in Ottawa, his cousins, that continue to play politics and delay this important project?

**Mr. Lamont:** I—this is kind of an extraordinary question, but the Prime Minister is—does not actually—is not a resident of Manitoba, nor is he a member of my party. As for that, it—this is a—the Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission plan has been—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order

**Mr. Lamont:** —line has been completely bungled by the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) decision to pick fights with the Manitoba Metis Federation. It's an—in an attempt to dog whistle and distract from the fact that Manitoba Hydro's board quit en masse. This was never an issue until the Premier made it one, and, frankly, he's the one who is at fault.

\* (11:10)

**Mr. Altemeyer:** I appreciate the answer the Liberal leader gave me to my previous question. I thank him for that.

In their document they also note, correctly, that forests, for instance, in Canada have in recent years actually been net sources of emissions due to excessive pest infestations and forest fires. So given that that is our current reality, how would his plan reverse that and then go further to achieve the 8 and a half million tons of reductions he's proposing?

**Mr. Lamont:** Well, I thank the member from Wolseley for that question.

One is actually that if we could do a better job of managing the boreal forest. There are many ways in which we could reduce forest fires and limit forest fires not just to protect communities, but this is one of the issues that simply better management of the boreal forest would reduce forest fires and thus reduce carbon emissions from forest fires. The second is that by actively adding new forests, new wilderness, new grasslands, we would create much larger carbon sinks. There are examples of grasslands, for example, that actually are better at banking carbon in the soil than—even than new forests can.

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** I know the member from St. Boniface is used to standing up for the Trudeau government, but I guess this is appropriate to ask him a question then. That why does he believe that, given Manitoba's clean record on energy use with Manitoba Hydro, that he can justify the federal Liberal carbon tax, a one-size-fits-all Liberal carbon tax that will hurt Manitobans?

**Mr. Lamont:** Again, the member from Southdale seems to be sadly misinformed in several issues here. One is that the first we proposed in our climate plan was to take back control and renegotiate with the federal government instead of suing them, instead of picking fights with them. The fact is that it—Manitoba had an opportunity under the PC government to set its own course, to set its own policies, and we want to take that back.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Let me step back a bit, in what I consider a very productive dialogue we're having here, and let me ask this broader question. For the chart in the Liberal plan, on page 23—and, again, I commend them for bringing this effort forward—are the numbers provided for reductions, are those annual reductions or some form of total reductions they are predicting in the two time frames they've identified, 2025 and 2030?

**Mr. Lamont:** I thank the member for that question. Those would be the reductions we would be

achieving by '25, so the—by those years. So that by 2025 the percentage decrease in—would—combining emissions and storage would be 43 per cent, and that by 2030 we would be at 101 per cent which would effectively make Manitoba carbon—not just carbon neutral, but carbon negative in that in the balance between emissions and actually reabsorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, we would actually be absorbing and reabsorbing more carbon dioxide than—and greenhouse gases than we are emitting.

**Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona):** Is the member aware of our government has invested \$102 million in the Conservation Trust which Ducks Unlimited Canada has called a visionary and enduring approach that is setting a positive example of other provinces to follow?

So I want to know, does the member disagree with a environmental leader such as Ducks Unlimited, which he's referenced in his resolution?

**Mr. Lamont:** Not at all, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Conservation Trust—the problem with the Conservation Trust, as one of the expert witnesses at committee mentioned, is that it's too small by an order of magnitude. It—that it was \$100 million, but not only that, that it's only relying on the interest from that, which means that's it's only about \$2 million a year, which is, frankly, completely inadequate. I mean, it's a step in the right direction, but it's a baby step of a baby step of a baby step in terms of what we actually need to achieve in this province.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Just to follow up on my previous question, I understand from the chart what the Liberal leader responded with, that when you add up the combination of reductions and sequestration initiatives that he is proposing you do end up with 43 per cent and 101. I'm wondering, though, are those numbers next to each of these initiatives, would those be annual reductions in greenhouse gas emissions or are they cumulative from some starting point previous?

**Mr. Lamont:** I thank the member from Wolseley.

I apologize for not being more clear, I—or not answering adequately. Those would be annual so that the—roughly speaking, the actual total count of emissions is around 23 million, the actual—and by 2030 in that year, 2030, the reduction would be more than that. And the same thing would be by 2025 so that we would be cutting emissions by 43 per cent in the year 2025.

And it would not be cumulative. It would be in that year. And by 2030 we would be—we would have 101 per cent. We would be at—we would be carbon neutral—or, carbon negative.

**Mr. Bindle:** Why does the member for St. Boniface believe that making life harder for Manitobans by increasing taxes on them is the right way to combat climate change?

**Mr. Lamont:** I would note that every single member of the government voted for a carbon tax that's higher than the one that is currently being implemented, including the member for Thompson.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Time for question period has expired.

### Debate

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The debate is open. Any speakers?

**Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson):** Our government—Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government is fighting climate change by eliminating coal-fired electricity production, and we are leading the way.

We are leading the way with the Manitoba—Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan, that is widely acknowledged as the best in Canada. Our plan focuses on four pillars: cleaner water, conservation of natural areas, effective steps to address climate change, while strengthening the economy.

It is a plan that will continue our investments in renewable energy while encouraging Manitobans to reduce their energy consumption. It is a plan that will assist local communities in their efforts to 'protect'—to protect our watersheds. It is a plan that will clean up contaminated sites, increase recycling and build new schools to the highest standards of energy efficiency and environmental design. It is a plan that will establish a \$100-million Conservation Trust to preserve and protect our wetlands, forests, waterways, grasslands and wildlife habitat. It is a plan without an escalating carbon tax and it is a plan without a tax on an escalating carbon tax.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member for St. Boniface, the Leader of the Second Opposition (Mr. Lamont), is stuck between a rock and a hard place. He has to sell a federal Liberal carbon tax to Manitobans that he knows is unfair to Manitobans and he knows Manitobans know it's unfair to Manitobans.



He's trying to do it anyway because he knows what happens to Liberals who try to buck the will of the federal leader Justin Trudeau; they get personally and publicly chastised in the media and punted from their party for standing up for their principles. Not just for frivolous principles either, Mr. Deputy Speaker. No, no, no, principles of trying to stop the Liberal government from meddling in the courts and influencing the outcome of a public prosecution.

In order to stay in the Liberal good books, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont) has to try to justify Justin's unfair escalating carbon tax imposed on Manitobans by bringing forward this resolution today, declaring an emergency just to justify a carbon tax with a GST on top of it.

The federal government is using every tool in its toolbox to convince Manitobans a carbon tax will save the planet and that the Liberals taking your money is the way to do it. They're using the member for St. Boniface as a tool to sell it. Unfortunately it's a Fisher Price tool, not a DEWALT.

Somehow, the Liberal leader of Manitoba's official second opposition has to support a federal government that is blocking the Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project that has National Energy Board approval, has been through the gold standard of consultations with all stakeholders and has provincial licensing approval to be constructed. And these delays cost Manitoba taxpayers penalties of \$200 million or more.

This is unprecedented in Canada and unacceptable. It is also indefensible, because as the federal Liberals block this clean energy project that will help Manitoba pay off debt, they are preventing Manitoba from supplying clean energy to help other jurisdictions reduce the dependence on fossil fuels for energy, and this is unprecedented in Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

\* (11:20)

Allowing the Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project to proceed is a no-brainer, yet the Liberals are stopping it. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs support the Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project, even wrote a news release saying it could mean significant employment and economic opportunities for Manitobans and First Nations. The assembly is encouraged by the joint economic opportunities and the prospect of human right—and the prospect of respecting human rights.

First Nation leaders in Manitoba have no interest in selling the rights of future generations, but rather prefer to live by the spirit and intent of the treaties. All told, the land is expected to cost roughly \$453 million and increase the province's electricity export capacity to 3,185 megawatts from 2,300 megawatts.

Delays by the federal Liberal government could cost an additional \$200 million a year in damages, penalties and increased costs. The \$453-million line aims to export some of Manitoba's over capacity of hydroelectricity by June 2020 to offset Hydro's debt and to lower carbon emissions.

Why is there over capacity? Why so much debt? Why do we need to offset environmental impacts from Bipole III? Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's over capacity because the NDP ignored advice from experts and went full speed ahead building a dam, spending billions of dollars over budget on a dam that the province didn't need at the time. Why such massive debt? Because they built a bipole line hundreds of kilometres longer than it needed to be, again against the advice of experts, and both the dam and the Bipole III projects were billions of dollars over budget.

Why the environmental impacts? Because the NDP went ahead building the Bipole III line hundreds of kilometres longer than it needed to be, destroying thousands of acres of boreal forest, precious wetlands and agricultural land, and they did this without holding hearings with the Public Utilities Board so they didn't have to hear what Manitoba's view of the environmental destruction would be. The NDP also used the bipole line construction contracts as a tool to buy votes by promising—awarding contracts to those who supported the NDP.

Canadians are being duped. For years, carbon tax cheerleaders in BC continue to laud the fee that's being tacked onto carbon emitting goods and services, urging the rest of the country to follow suit. It was touted as a magical formula that would somehow protect the environment and lower taxes all at once. Visions of the hydro powered—visions of hydro powered buses, solar cars, danced in the heads of the green beans count—the green bean counters and revenue neutral they all sang. The BC government has now dropped the term revenue neutral altogether and now call the carbon tax a tool.

Before the charade was abandoned entirely this was what revenue neutral meant for the BC carbon

tax: in 2016-17 the BC provincial government raked in \$1.2 billion in the carbon tax from taxpayers. It listed it in their budget document framed as revenue neutral carbon tax plan. Then the government scraped together 17 sundry tax credits and stuffed them into a carbon tax frame, making the tax sum balance out to zero—abracadabra, revenue neutral.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, it was a crass puppet show. Every province of federal budget includes tax credits for things like home renovations, children's fitness programs, film incentives and business training credits. In BC however, it was an uncommon carbon tax taken from people so these very common credits were just repackaged to make the tax appear neutral on paper. As a senior BC government official admitted during last year's budget lock-up, this was always just an exercise in accounting.

Madam Speaker, our government is taking real action on climate change without imposing a provincial carbon tax and without imposing a PST on the carbon tax, not like the federal government who's imposing an escalating carbon tax on Manitobans and charging PST on top of that—

**An Honourable Member:** GST.

**Mr. Bindle:** Is charging GST on top of that.

The carbon tax hurts Manitobans; it hurts low-income people; it hurts our economy and it stifles growth.

In contrast, our government is taking real action on climate change without damaging the economy. We are establishing a Conservation Trust. This trust is to ensure that Manitoba remains Canada's cleanest, greenest and most climate resilient province. Our government has recently announced the Conservation Trust to preserve and enhance the environment while supporting our Climate and Green Plan. The initial 41 projects across the province are part of our \$102-million Conservation Trust, a fund permanently endowed to support important endeavours for generations to come.

Announced in our provincial budget in 2018, the fund will generate about \$5 million per year to support initiatives that improve and protect natural infrastructure and its environment—and its environmental benefits for Manitobans.

The Conservation Trust invests in projects that restore and enhance natural areas, to reduce flooding,

improve water quality, sequester carbon, protect habitat and safeguard soils.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to urge the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Lamont) to be—a DEWALT, instead of a Fisher-Price, and use his position as a tool for change, to stand with Manitobans and oppose federal carbon tax, and get—and let Manitoba continue down a green path and stop blocking the Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project.

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** And I think it would be great if members from the Conservative government were behaving in a leadership capacity rather than behaving like tools of the fossil fuel industry, which is what we just heard from the previous speaker from Flin Flon.

I want to thank very much the Liberal Party and the leader, for bringing—

**An Honourable Member:** Thompson, Thompson.

**Mr. Altemeyer:**—Thompson, yes—for bringing this important debate forward. I have brought forward similar motions on this very same topic, the topic which is widely recognized as the defining issue of our time—not that you would know it, based on the behaviour and track record now of the Pallister government.

I do have some good things to say about the resolution and, more specifically, about the plan that the Liberals have brought forward. I do also have some concerns, having been working on climate change policy for, oh, the better part of 30 years now. There's a few areas that I would like to highlight where I think more accurate numbers can be obtained.

But, overall, let me be perfectly clear. The planet needs as many allies as it can get, and I am fully prepared to work with anyone who is serious about trying to address the enormous catastrophe that is climate change. And the Pallister government's track record has been horrible, and this is actually one of the assumptions that many plans like this can get caught out on. And that is when we try to project what are the emissions going to be in the future.

The Liberals have put forward that by 2030, Manitoba's emissions will be a little over 23 million tons annually—per year. The problem with that is the Pallister government, because in their single year—the only year that we have data on, so far, their first full year in office—greenhouse gas emissions in Manitoba

went up by 700,000 metric tons after having flatlined for four years in a row.

And for all the times members from the government want to talk about the Conservation Trust, you may be interested to know that the Conservation Trust explicitly does not have in its mandate any jurisdiction to do climate-change-related projects.

Why do I know this? Because I noticed that was a pretty big gap, and I brought in a proposed amendment and government members voted it down. So the Conservation Trust is going to do what it's doing and it is not going to be related to climate change—just FYI. They probably didn't tell you that in caucus—I don't know if you even meet as a caucus—but that's where the truth lies on that one.

So, if we were to project forward a 3.3 per cent annual increase in emissions in Manitoba, rather than only ending up at 23 million tons, we're at 28 million tons. And that extra 5 million tons has to be made up for somehow. If, instead, the Conservatives only increase our emissions, on average, by 700,000 metric tons a year, to take the hard number rather than the percentage number, well, we still end up at 27 million tons of emissions per year, rather than 23.

So, unfortunately, and this is absolutely no fault of the Liberal plan whatsoever, the path that the Pallister government is taking us on will lead us to a very dire situation, where far more effort is going to be needed in order to correct the mistakes that they have already made.

\* (11:30)

Now, if I may continue to proceed through the chart on page 23 of the Liberal plan—as I said, a few—let me talk about some of the good stuff in here. The east-west power sharing—it's a great idea. I mentioned that in question period myself. It's wonderful if multiple parties are seeing this opportunity for what it is. The Conservative Party has not yet wrapped its head around the true scale of this opportunity, and it's ironic that on the one hand, they will want credit for hydro projects which they have opposed and continue to oppose, even while they are going to use those same hydro projects for any small-power deal that they might be able to broker with Saskatchewan. But the Liberals have captured this idea, as we have as well in our previous statements, and it's good to see, at least amongst the

opposition parties, recognition of the mutual benefits that could happen there.

However, the federal hybrid carbon pricing plan does call for emissions reductions of 1,730,000 tons by 2030, and the Liberal leader, when I was asking questions just now, indicated the carbon price would still be at \$50 per ton. At \$50 per ton, that is expected to reduce emissions by only 330,000 tons per year versus 1.73 million, so there's a discrepancy there. And what can often happen in these documents is the numbers can get mixed up between cumulative reductions and annual, so that might be what has occurred here. This is also a problem with what the Conservatives brought forward, and it's a method of counting that isn't followed by anybody else in the world. Under the United Nations protocols, all of the numbers involved are annual total emissions.

We also run into perhaps a similar challenge when it comes to the wilderness question, and I really do like the idea of—that the Liberals have brought forward of the Red River Floodway, which, of course, our government expanded—you know, using that as an opportunity to increase tall grass prairie habitat. I think that'd be a lot of fun to walk or cycle along that way. But the potential of wilderness to actually end up as a carbon sink rather than a carbon source I think is suspect, especially if the numbers cited here. The Liberal document does to its credit acknowledge that forests have been net sources of emissions in recent years. They also hope that warmer temperatures will lead to more growth of forests. Unfortunately, those same warmer temperatures are what is actually largely responsible for driving increased forest fires.

There's also a question of just how much carbon can a hectare of forest, let's say, sequester. Most of the data that I've seen has suggested about six to six and a half tons per year per hectare. The Liberals have a number of 170, and I suspect what that represents more closely is how much carbon a mature forest, after about 30 years of growth, will have contained in it. But once a forest matures, the trees of course continue to do their thing, but they're not actively sequestering as much carbon as they are earlier in their growth stage, so this is not accurate to use 170 tons per hectare multiplied by the 50,000 hectares that the Liberals propose because it's a—we're looking for annual numbers here rather than totals.

A similar challenge with the organics diversion: when you add—according to the United Nations

protocols that Manitoba follows, all of our waste emissions come out to about 700,000 metric tons. The Liberals have identified that composting—very good idea—would produce over 2 million tons of reductions when only 700,000 is annually produced. I think what's happened there is they have multiplied and confused an annual amount with a cumulative amount.

And then the road to electric vehicle transportation—I did—I will admit I found it puzzling that there was a lot of talk about biofuels. At most, I would see that as a continuing transition given the enormous effort and direction going into electrifying all forms of transportation. But, that said, the one specific area the Liberals do mention is the installation of high-speed charging stations across the province. This should've happened already. Manitoba Electric Vehicle Association has made it very clear to the government that this can be done for only \$2 million of their own money and that the federal government has typically been covering the remaining cost.

But by setting up a high-speed charging station infrastructure across the province, that by itself is probably not going to be enough to get a half a million vehicles converted over to electricity in a decade, which is what they are proposing here, assuming an average emissions of about four tons per year, per vehicle.

So if I may just sum up briefly, I love the intentions behind this. I want to thank them for the time and effort that's put into it. I do think these numbers are off, and given where Pallister government is taking us—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member's time is up.

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** It's a pleasure to put a few words on the record here today regarding the member from St. Boniface, his resolution put forth.

But I just want to take a second here to refresh the member from St. Boniface on a 2017 CBC article in which he was involved in—and the Liberals. In a 2017 CBC article, when asked about the made-in-Manitoba climate change plan, the Liberal leader said: We are going to develop our own made-in-Manitoba carbon plan which will deal with all those things. And he added that a climate change plan should be about emissions and not necessarily taxes. Well, unfortunately, he has failed in supporting our

climate plan because he has sided with Ottawa, his cousins across to the east there, in trying to see that our climate plan isn't brought to the forefront.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the danger posed by climate change is real. Our government recognizes this. We see the evidence all around us in warmer temperatures both in the air and in the oceans; in the form of dangerous storms which happen more frequently; forest fires of unprecedented intensity—and we see a lot of these raging fires in Alberta right now and Alberta has seen its fair share over the last decade; and in severe flooding that happens far more often.

Every evening when you watch the news, we see these things, and climate change is a serious problem. It threatens our safety and it threatens our economy, as well. It threatens our future, especially the future generations that will follow us.

In response to danger, the world's nations must each do their part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect our fragile environment. We're leading the way by eliminating coal-fired electricity production. We are leading the way by investing billions of dollars in the production of hydro-electricity. We're leading the way with a made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan that is widely acknowledged as one of the—or the best in Canada.

Our plan focuses on the four pillars: cleaner water, conservation of natural areas, effective steps to address climate change while strengthening our economy. It's a plan we'll continue our investments in renewable energy while encouraging Manitobans to reduce their energy consumption, one that'll assist local communities in their efforts to protect our watersheds. And we see that a lot with our conservation districts who participated greatly in the trust fund that was put forth—Ducks Unlimited, a great organization that works on restoring wetlands.

It's a plan that'll clean up contaminated sites and increase recycling and building new schools to the highest standards of energy efficiency and environmental design. It's a plan that will establish a \$100-million Conservation Trust to preserve and protect our wetlands, forests, waterways, grasslands and wildlife habitats.

\* (11:40)

When we involve stakeholders, when we involve partnerships, we see projects that benefit all of these pillars. Ensuring Manitoba remains Canada's greenest, cleanest and most climate-resilient

province. Our government has announced this. And we had 41 projects across the province as part of this \$102-million Conservation Trust, and this amount was amplified through these partnerships. A fund permanently endowed to support important endeavours for the generations to come.

We announced, in our provincial budget in 2018, the fund will generate about \$5 million per year to support initiatives that improve and protect natural infrastructure and its environmental benefits for Manitobans.

This Conservation Trust invests in projects that restore and enhance natural areas to reduce flooding, improve water quality, sequester carbon, protect habitat and safeguard soils. We had the opportunity, when the Conservation Trust fund was announced, and all the stakeholders and the groups that were involved and were awarded monies on their projects to attend at the Assiniboine Park.

And there was such a wide diversity of these groups there. That is was—there was a project for everything. The organizations that are being supported by this first round of funning—funding included conservation districts, grassroots groups, wildlife conservation and agricultural conservation organizations. All with a proven track record of delivering conservation projects efficiently. And we seen that—or—we seen that day when those projects were announced, and the commitment by the various groups there. And taking on that ownership, and making a difference and contributing to Manitoba's Climate and Green Plan.

This is only the first instalment of these kinds of initiatives. And, unlike a lot of members opposite, this Conservation Trust is a sustainable, long-term agreement. And over the years, it'll benefit all Manitobans while reducing our carbon footprint. The Conservation Trust is innovative and forward-thinking, and investing in sustainable, long-term solutions for improving our natural infrastructure.

As well, the fund plays a significant role in the implementation of our Manitoba Climate and Green Plan. Our government's working toward building an environmental legacy, unlike the members opposite over the 17 years we seen failure after failure after failure, over and over again. And there were really no results. And we—and—[interjection] Yes, and at a great expense to the people of this province. And we look forward to seeing the profound impact of this investment on our province's landscape for many decades to come.

As we look at the Conservation Trust, this is a visionary and enduring approach that is setting a positive example for other provinces to follow. Ducks Unlimited chief of—or, executive officer quoted that, Karla Guyn. We know conserving our working landscape requires sustainable, long-term solutions, and that's why we have taken the unique step of establishing the trust.

In December 2018, our Province went further by announcing the selection of Efficiency Manitoba's first CEO. And this was an important step to getting a Crown corporation up and running. As CEO, Miss Kuruluk—or, Ms. Kuruluk, will help Efficiency Manitoba's chief legislative electrical energy savings of up to 1.5 per cent annually, a natural grass—or, gas savings of 0.75 per cent annually in Manitoba.

Energy efficiency programming offered by Efficiency Manitoba will help industry retain a competitive advantage in our province, while helping—[interjection]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wowchuk:** —home owner afford—[interjection]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wowchuk:** —rising hydroelectricity bills.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wowchuk:** Creating Efficiency Manitoba as a stand-alone entity separate from Manitoba Hydro was a 2016 PC election commitment.

As a separate entity, Efficiency Manitoba will be free of competing corporate objectives and can be focused specifically on reducing emissions and offering both energy and money saving programming to Manitoba. Through this new Crown corporation, Manitoba aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2.7 million tons over 15 years.

If the Liberal Party could have their way, they would put Ottawa and Justin Trudeau first, and Manitoba families last. The words of their day would be tax, tax, tax. Our climate plan puts Manitobans and our environment first. Ottawa and Justin Trudeau do not know best; we as Manitobans know best.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member's time is up.

Any further speakers?

**Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale):** I'd like to rise today to put some words on the record with respect to this particular resolution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do know that the member from St. Boniface—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** —had risen in his spot to talk—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** —about his resolution here, and he made a few comments that I found quite interesting—*[interjection]*—and I can hear the NDP members heckling in the back there. So I'm not sure if they're heckling or they're just may be nothing better to do than to sit around and listen to the member of St. Boniface resolution this morning.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do appreciate the time, and the member from St. Boniface often rises in his spot to ask questions which seem to be on behalf of the federal Trudeau Liberal government. It almost seems like sometimes that the Prime Minister's office has written his questions rather than him asking for questions on behalf of Manitobans here in the province.

He tried to distance himself, though, this morning—which is interesting—from the Prime Minister. He said that the Prime Minister is not a Manitoban—which, well, of course, we do know that. But he also said he's not a member of his party, and unless I didn't hear him correctly. He said he's not a member of his party, so that makes—begs the question. I mean, as far as I know, the Prime Minister hasn't left the Liberal Party unless the member from St. Boniface has plans of switching party. Perhaps he could join the NDP caucus; I think they're always recruiting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, or perhaps the freedom caucus that typically is recruiting.

You know, I do question the motive of the member from St. Boniface to bring this resolution forward. It's his federal cousins who introduced a carbon tax, a one-size-fits-all carbon tax, an escalating carbon tax, by the way.

The member from St. Boniface has said that the carbon strategy that we had introduced initially was higher than the one that they did. Well, that's only a partial truth. They have an escalating price for carbon so it's not predictable. Year over year you see increase, increase, increase, and we know what's

going to happen with that federal carbon tax; that's going to pass the costs down from businesses down to the consumers. So hard-working Manitobans are going to have to pay more for their products; they're going to have to pay more for everything. It's a tax on everything, and it's unfortunate that the member from St. Boniface must not in any way, shape or form, support the Manitoban taxpayer. There's one taxpayer. We know when the NDP were in power, that they had a similar strategy. They just wanted to raise the PST, provincial sales tax increase. You know, the member from—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Smith:** —the former member from St. Boniface, Greg Selinger, who was quoted saying that we're never going to raise the PST, everyone knows that, that's just ridiculous. It's inconceivable, he said, and, of course, how many months later, they introduced and raised the provincial sales tax.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we on this side of the House are actually reducing the provincial sales tax back to 7 per cent on Canada Day, July the 1st.

We on this side of the House understand that government has a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayer and, unfortunately, the federal Liberals and the provincial Liberals—sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between the two—but, you know, the provincial Liberals want to see a carbon tax and, of course, their friends in the NDP caucus do as well.

\* (11:50)

I would think that the \$102-million trust fund that we're introducing here is great. We have a number of projects being funded. I know, in fact, Save Our Seine received \$100,000 from the Province of Manitoba. I know—and that's just one of the many projects that are going across the province with respect to this \$102 million trust.

Unfortunately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite do not give credit to that kind of work and they—I guess they're not showing much respect to the organizations that are receiving the funding. I know Ducks Unlimited have nothing but great things to say about the \$102-million trust and I'm not sure if members from the Liberal or the NDP caucus believe that they are greater experts when it comes to environmental stewardship than, say, Ducks Unlimited. I think that I would trust the scientific knowledge and know how from Ducks Unlimited over the members opposite.

There's two ways of looking at environmental stewardship: I guess the Liberal approach, which is to focus on one of two things—focus on the taxation portion and make it look like they're actually doing something when indeed they're not; or, on our side of the House, actually making substantial investments into environmental stewardship.

We're doing the work that the NDP government failed to do over 17 years of government, Madam—Mr. Deputy Speaker. It was 17 years. Members opposite stand in this House and make all kinds of wild accusations but remember when they were in power for 17 years, they did nothing, absolutely nothing. The Auditor General called them out on that. I guess their climate plan, written on the back of a napkin, wasn't producing the results that they thought it would and, course, you know, I guess that's the problem when you introduce legislation or you introduce policies that are aimed at looking good but doing nothing. And I think that's become apparent and that's why members opposite and the NDP caucus sit in opposition and not the governing seats right now.

And, of course, unfortunately, the Liberal caucus in Manitoba—it looks like it's doing the same thing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to—I know that the member from St. Boniface's colleague this morning tried to introduce a resolution as well about—they want to ban plastic items and, of course, plastic straws and I guess plastic—single-use plastic items.

And I know I was talking about—I know the member from—the member across the way had mentioned and talked about New Delhi having an issue and they were introducing a legislation and, in fact, they actually banned single-use plastic items. And I know that in New Delhi itself, there was quite a few environmental issues, and I think plastic is maybe just but one of the many issues. As I've said before, you don't necessarily see plastic items being thrown into waste bins; you see them on the streets and you see them everywhere. And it is unfortunate, it is a 'sissue'. And I know that both the New Delhi government and, of course, I imagine the government of India is working on, and it's not the only country to experience those types of problems, so I do understand that there is a need for some kind of action.

Unfortunately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the members opposite were serious about this, the Liberal caucus could in fact lobby their federal cousins to ensure that meaningful targets are met and

meaningful action is taken here, not in Manitoba but across the country.

We—when the carbon tax is introduced, we know it's based more on revenue generation and taxation rather than on actually reducing the carbon footprint. We know that the thresholds that they're going to meet—or, they're introducing, as far as the increase in taxation on a year-by-year basis will do very little to reduce the carbon output for Manitobans. All it's going to do is just going to cost them more to drive their vehicles, it's going to cost them more to purchase groceries, it's going to cost them more to do everything, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we know that Manitobans—and some Manitobans live—have maybe \$200 left at the end of a month for discretionary spending. I mean, that money cannot be consumed by government programs and spending, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We know that Manitobans have a very limited budget so then it stands to reason that government should have a limited budget and spend that money wisely but also be cognizant—be cognizant of the taxation rate that we're imposing on hard-working Manitobans.

I can only imagine—you know, we have members in this Chamber who have fairly large families, up to six children. And could you imagine Manitobans perhaps having maybe a single income, having to pay extra for groceries? We've seen a substantial increase in the price of groceries over a number of years, maybe three or four years; we've seen a substantial increase. This is just increasing more and year over year now, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So Manitobans can now expect, Canadians on a whole, can now expect every year that the price of their groceries are going to go up, and I think that's shameful.

I believe that if members opposite were serious about climate change, they would actually have lobbied the federal Liberals to introduce a mechanism that actually addresses climate change, that actually encourages people to use less carbon, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, I, of course, I can't speak for the Liberal caucus, much less the NDP caucus, but I do know that when I talk to constituents in my community, nobody's telling me, look, Andrew, I want more taxes, I want higher taxes. In fact, the carbon tax is actually very unpopular in my community, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I know that it's very unpopular among other communities. I have helped door-knock some of my colleagues' ridings

and I know that Manitobans are not asking for a carbon tax; they want lower taxes.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member's time is up.

**Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona):** It is an honour to get up and put a few words on the record and I concur with all the members in this House, including the leader of the other official opposition: climate change is real. It is serious. It is a problem. We have to find ways to make improvements, otherwise it will impact us, it'll impact the food chain, it'll impact our lives, it'll impact our children and grandchildren.

We see here in Manitoba the impacts of climate change with more adverse weather occurrences. Right now, because of it, we're having a bit of an issue when it comes to crops. I was talking to my colleague from Dauphin just yesterday about the dry conditions which can impact the—our growth of foods but also the economy.

I'm very proud of being part of this government that is looking to make improvements to Manitobans, to invest in the environment, to make policies which are good for everybody here. The Liberal leader really needs to speak, as we've mentioned on several occasions, with his cousins in Ottawa about the blocking of the Manitoba-Minnesota green power, hydroelectric power that we produce that will benefit all Manitobans.

But I really want to mention some of the investments that we've done, and the big thing was

the Conservation Trust: \$102 million to protect and enhance our natural infrastructure. It's a wonderful investment and this can generate, hopefully, up to \$5 million per year in investments to be a leader—and this is a leader thing. The Liberal leader, when asked about it, he made a comment that, well, why are you just using the interest to this? You're just using the interest. He doesn't seem to understand that when you do something about this, you want to provide support to groups, groups such as Delta Waterfowl foundation, who have a wetlands project. They're getting \$100,000. You want to provide support for them now, and you want to continue to be able to provide support for these groups in the future moving forward.

By spending more than what the trust has in the first place, you will miss your targets, you will run out of money and you'll have to continue to put money in. It's kind of like the federal Liberals and how they made promises to run modest deficits of \$10 billion and 'mished' the target. The Liberal government federally and the Liberals here in Manitoba never found revenue they didn't like to—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order.

When this matter is before the House, the honourable member for Transcona will have seven minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 p.m., the House is recessed and stands recessed 'til 1:30 p.m.



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, May 30, 2019**

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