

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

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

Vol. LXXVI No. 51B - 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 17, 2022

ISSN 0542-5492

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

An Honourable Member: Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a point of order.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I raise this at the first opportunity, as I needed to review Hansard to be sure of exactly what was said.

I raise this with respect to rule 54(2), which deals with disrespectful or offensive language. Rule 54(2) says no member shall speak disrespectfully of the reigning monarch, or any other member of the royal family, or of the Governor General, or of the Lieutenant Governor, or the person administering the government of Manitoba, or use offensive words against the House, or against any member thereof.

Yesterday, in response to the question from the MLA for St. Boniface, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure (Mr. Piwniuk) said the MLA for St. Boniface was cowardly and gaslighting. In checking sources, I find that calling someone a coward is unparliamentary in the parliament of the United Kingdom.

Madam Speaker, the MLA for St. Boniface may be many things, but he is not a coward. He was not a coward when he gave up his former life to run to become the Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party. The MLA for St. Boniface was not a coward when he ran to be the MLA in St. Boniface, a constituency which had been represented for many years by Greg Selinger of the NDP and who was premier for the previous seven years. The MLA was not a coward when he decided to take the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) to court over conflict of interest concerns.

Madam Speaker, we don't want to make too big a deal of this, as we know the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure is currently under a lot of stress, as he's involved in the effort to protect Manitobans from the flood.

But the MLA for St. Boniface would like an apology from the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, and we all deserve a ruling from the Speaker to confirm that here, like in the UK, the use of the phrase cowardly and gaslighting, and most particularly the word coward, when applied to another member of our Chamber, is unparliamentary.

Thank you.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): I walked in a little bit late. I was saying hello to some folks outside.

I don't think it's my place in this Chamber as the official House–Opposition House Leader to get up and debate or put facts on the record in respect of two men in this Chamber, two men elected to represent their constituents in the best way that they can, in the best way that they should; a disagreement between the two men in this Chamber.

So, Madam Speaker, I don't think it's a point of order, and perhaps we can get on with doing the business of the House today.

Madam Speaker: I would ask if the honourable Government House Leader has a—*[interjection]*

Okay, the honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Yes, thank you very much, Madam Speaker and members of the Assembly. I don't believe it's a point of order and, certainly, Madam Speaker, you'll make a determination on language that's used.

However, I would say this. This is a difficult time for the province, as it often is when the province is facing flooding. And Manitobans have faced floods before, of course, in 1950 and 1997, 2011 and beyond, I believe. And so we're facing that again this year. And whenever that happens, the best of Manitobans and the best of us as MLAs comes to bear when we come together, put aside partisan ideology, as was done with the flood tour last week—and be mindful of the fact that there are those in our community and our province who are suffering, who are dealing with difficult situations, and in many places have been—times have been displaced from their homes.

And so I think the Minister of Infrastructure has said and was saying that we need to be thankful of

those who are working on the flood fight, grateful for the work that they do, keep in consideration those who are suffering because of the flood, and in all of our language, be careful and mindful of those who are dealing with this on the front lines or being affected because of the water.

So I think that there's an appropriate place, Madam Speaker, for you to caution all of us just to be mindful of the fact that we are setting an example of being together and helping those who are otherwise suffering today, and I think that that 'admomition' from your office and your Chair would probably serve all of us as legislators well.

Madam Speaker: And I thank the members for their contributions to this. I am going to take this one under advisement, as the minister is not here to contribute to the point of order—[interjection]—or he's not available to contribute to the point of order. So I think it would be good to hear from him before I would rule on this. So I will take this under advisement.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Justice Fourth Report

Mr. Len Isleifson (Chairperson): I wish to present the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Justice.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Justice presents the following—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Justice presents the following as its Fourth Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on the following occasions:

- May 16, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. (4th Session, 42nd Legislature)
- May 17, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. (4th Session, 42nd Legislature)

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 2)** – *The Public Services Sustainability Repeal Act / Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la viabilité des services publics*

- **Bill (No. 8)** – *The Court of Appeal Amendment and Provincial Court Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour d'appel et la Loi sur la Cour provinciale*
- **Bill (No. 15)** – *The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules et le Code de la route*
- **Bill (No. 17)** – *The Family Law Act, The Family Support Enforcement Act and The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act / Loi édictant la Loi sur le droit de la famille et la Loi sur l'exécution des obligations alimentaires et modifiant la Loi sur l'établissement et l'exécution réciproque des ordonnances alimentaires*
- **Bill (No. 21)** – *The Highway Traffic Amendment and Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act / Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba*

Committee Membership

As per the Sessional Order passed by the House on October 7, 2020 and subsequently amended, Rule 82(2) was waived for the May 16, 2022 and May 17, 2022 meetings, reducing the membership to six Members (4 Government and 2 Official Opposition).

Committee Membership for the May 16, 2022 meeting:

- Ms. FONTAINE
- Hon. Mr. GOERTZEN
- Mr. GUENTER
- Hon. Mr. HELWER
- Mr. ISLEIFSON
- Mr. WIEBE

Your Committee elected Mr. ISLEIFSON as the Chairperson at the May 16, 2022 meeting.

Your Committee elected Mr. GUENTER as the Vice-Chairperson at the May 16, 2022 meeting.

Committee Membership for the May 17, 2022 meeting:

- Ms. FONTAINE
- Hon. Mr. GOERTZEN
- Mr. ISLEIFSON
- Mr. LAGASSÉ
- Mr. NESBITT
- Mr. WIEBE

Your Committee elected Mr. LAGASSÉ as the Vice-Chairperson at the May 17, 2022 meeting.

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record

Non-Committee Members speaking on the record at the May 16, 2021 meeting:

- Hon. Mr. GERRARD
- Hon. Mr. PIWNIUK

Public Presentations

Your Committee heard the following nine presentations on **Bill (No. 2)** – The Public Services Sustainability Repeal Act / Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la viabilité des services publics:

May 16, 2022 meeting

Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of Labour
 Kyle Ross, Manitoba Government and General Employees Union
 Darlene Jackson, Manitoba Nurses Union
 Jennifer Carr, Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada
 Paul McKie, UNIFOR
 Jeff Traeger, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 832
 Jason Hawkins, Private citizen
 Erik Thomson, University of Manitoba Faculty Association
 Gina McKay, CUPE Manitoba

Your Committee heard the following three presentations on **Bill (No. 8)** – The Court of Appeal Amendment and Provincial Court Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour d'appel et la Loi sur la Cour provinciale:

May 16, 2022 meeting

Susan Dawes, Professional Judges Association of Manitoba
 Ian Scarth, Manitoba Bar Association
 Lisa LaBossiere, Criminal Defence Lawyers Association of Manitoba

Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 17)** – The Family Law Act, The Family Support Enforcement Act and The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act / Loi édictant la Loi sur le droit de la famille et la Loi sur l'exécution des obligations alimentaires et modifiant la Loi sur l'établissement et l'exécution réciproque des ordonnances alimentaires:

May 16, 2022 meeting

Lawrence Pinsky, Family Arbitration and Mediation Institute

Written Submissions

Your Committee received the following two written submissions on **Bill (No. 2)** – The Public Services Sustainability Repeal Act / Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la viabilité des services publics:

James Bedford, Manitoba Teachers' Society
 Bob Moroz, Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals

Your Committee received the following written submission on **Bill (No. 8)** – The Court of Appeal Amendment and Provincial Court Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour d'appel et la Loi sur la Cour provinciale:

Monique St. Germain, Canadian Centre for Child Protection

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 2)** – The Public Services Sustainability Repeal Act / Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la viabilité des services publics

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 8)** – The Court of Appeal Amendment and Provincial Court Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour d'appel et la Loi sur la Cour provinciale

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 15)** – The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules et le Code de la route

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 17)** – The Family Law Act, The Family Support Enforcement Act and The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act / Loi édictant la Loi sur le droit de la famille et la Loi sur l'exécution des obligations alimentaires et modifiant la Loi sur l'établissement et l'exécution réciproque des ordonnances alimentaires

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 21) – The Highway Traffic Amendment and Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act / Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

Mr. Isleifson: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member of Borderland, that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Public Accounts Third Report

Mr. Jim Maloway (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the third report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts presents the following as its Third Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on May 16, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Chamber of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations, May 2015**
- Section 9 - Taxation Division, Audit Branch
- Section 18 - Senior Management Expense Policies
- **Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations, May 2016**
- Food Safety
- Taxation Division, Audit Branch
- Senior Management Expense Policies
- **Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations, March 2017:**
- Office of the Fire Commissioner
- Senior Management Expense Policies
- **Auditor General's Report – Management of MRI Services – dated April 2017**

- **Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations, March 2018:**

- Rural Municipality of Lac du Bonnet-

- **Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2019**

- Management of MRI Services

- **Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2020**

- Management of MRI Services

- **Auditor General's Report – Follow-Up of Previously Issued Audit Recommendations – dated March 2021**

- Management of MRI Services

Committee Membership

- Mr. LAMONT
- MLA LINDSEY
- Mr. MALOWAY (Chairperson)
- Mr. MARTIN
- Mr. MICHALESKI
- Ms. NAYLOR
- Mr. NESBITT (Vice-Chairperson)
- Mr. SMOOK
- Mr. TEITSMA
- Mr. WASYLIW
- Mr. WISHART

Officials Speaking on Record:

- Mr. Tyson Shtykalo, Auditor General of Manitoba
- Ms. Karen Herd, Deputy Minister of Health
- Ms. Janice Grift, Diagnostic Imaging Program, Shared Health
- Mr. John French, Head of Shared Health Diagnostic Imaging
- Dr. Marco Essig, Provincial Clinical Specialty Lead for Diagnostic Imaging

Agreements:

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Section 9 – Taxation Division, Audit Branch of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations – dated May 2015.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Section 18 – Senior Management Expense Policies of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations – dated May 2015.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Food Safety of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated May 2016.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Taxation Division, Audit Branch of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated May 2016.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Senior Management Expense Policies of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated May 2016.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Office of the Fire Commissioner of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2017.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Senior Management Expense Policies of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2017.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Rural Municipality of Lac du Bonnet of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2018.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Management of MRI Services of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2019.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Management of MRI Services of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2020.

Your Committee agreed to conclude consideration of Management of MRI Services of the Auditor General's Report – Follow-Up of Previously Issued Audit Recommendations – dated March 2021.

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following reports as presented:

- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Previously Issued Recommendations – dated May 2015*
- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated May 2016*
- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2017*

- *Auditor General's Report – Management of MRI Services – dated April 2017*
- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2018*

Reports Considered but not Passed

Your Committee considered the following reports but did not pass them:

- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2019 (Management of MRI Services – concluded consideration of)*
- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-up of Recommendations – dated March 2020 (Management of MRI Services – concluded consideration of)*
- *Auditor General's Report – Follow-Up of Previously Issued Audit Recommendations – dated March 2021 (Management of MRI Services – concluded consideration of)*

Mr. Maloway: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Flin Flon (MLA Lindsey), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: Tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Mental Health and Community Wellness—and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

Mental Health Week

Hon. Sarah Guillemard (Minister of Mental Health and Community Wellness): I rise today to reflect on the importance of Mental Health Week each year. May 2nd to the 8th was a week filled with reminders that there is no real health without mental health.

For 71 years, the Canadian Mental Health Association has been co-ordinating and championing this awareness week. Their objective is to promote understanding about mental health, encourage behaviours and attitudes that foster well-being and create a culture of empathy and acceptance.

I was able to present Marion Cooper, the CEO of Canadian Mental Health Association, with a proclamation in honour of Mental Health Week earlier this month. Ms. Cooper and her team have been a positive advocate for many living with mental illness, and I thank them all for their efforts.

Joining us today in the gallery from CMHA are Lynn Russell, Stephen Sutherland, Leanne Wilton, Levi Belle [*phonetic*] and Cynthia Thoroski.

This year's theme was empathy. Being empathetic strengthens relationships at home, at the workplace and in the community.

An example of empathy in motion was clear when I participated in the launch of the Huddle youth hubs in Brandon on May 4th. Along with partners at the United Way Winnipeg and the youth peer support workers, we officially opened Huddle Brandon and revealed the new brand sign out front.

Shaun Funk, the director of this Huddle, shared a story about one particular 'louth'-youth who sought help with an addictions counsellor. Before they left, they were able to connect with a peer supporter who helped sign them up for a skill-based anxiety group happening at their location the very next day.

Another highlight of Mental Health Week was a reception at the Legislature, organized by my office, along with the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma), in order to recognize youth mental health day, which is on May 7th. A proclamation was presented to Kidthink, which is a mental health treatment centre for youth and children.

* (13:40)

Thank you to Rossanna Astacio-Morice, Carmyn Aleshka and your entire team for the amazing work that you are doing for our youth.

The Rotunda was filled with an exhibition of art that was created by students from Argyle Alternative High School here in Winnipeg. Each painting, work of poetry, short story and film was inspired by addiction journeys. Some reflected personal experience with substance abuse.

By sharing these pieces publicly, the students played a part in reducing the stigma of discussing mental health challenges. I am so very grateful for their courage and compassion in sharing.

The importance of good mental health must be acknowledged year-round, and my department is committed to investing in substantial improvements to

our mental health and wellness services here in Manitoba.

In February, I announced our department's new five-year roadmap, the Pathway to Mental Health and Community Wellness. As part of this work, we are committed to developing an anti-stigma strategy, bolstering family supports and school-based programming and building a co-ordinated provincial response for the prevention of suicide in partnership with at-risk communities.

Madam Speaker, another special day this month is just around the corner: May 20th, we will mark the fifth Service and Therapy Animal Day in Manitoba. I was thrilled to pass my very first bill in 2017 as a private member to recognize the important role that animals play in our protection, healing and mental health.

It was a very special treat today to invite some four-legged friends and their trainers to join us here at the Legislative Building for a little therapy and demonstration of skills.

A huge thank you goes out to Kathy and Beth Asseiro, who were able to bring therapy horses Kiwi, Sawyer and Spartacus today to the Legislature. As well, thank you to Winnipeg Police Constable Walkof and K-9 officer Kai for the demonstration today and for your service to us all.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to recognize all Manitobans who struggle with their mental health, as well as the family members and their friends who support them. Know that you are valued, you matter and Manitoba's future is brighter with you in it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Mental health is a growing issue in our province. Every year, we see hundreds of Manitobans—we lose hundreds of Manitobans to suicide, and many more to depression, anxiety and a host of other mental health issues. We all have a responsibility to support all of those struggling, and this House stands united in fighting the stigma and—associated with mental health issues.

But, of course, we need to do more than just address the stigma, we need to invest in mental health services across our province. Sadly, we note that the PC record on health—mental health investments is not very good in this province. In 2018, the child's advocate put on a—put out a three-page letter addressing their concerns about the PC's lack of response on services and supports for children and youth dealing

with mental health and addictions; and, more recently, that she could republish that statement today, Madam Speaker.

Thankfully, there are so many people and organizations who are stepping up to help those in need, like psychiatric nurses in hospitals around the province and organizations who are training and empowering young leaders to revolutionize mental health in Manitoba and around the country. I want to thank all of those who are making a real difference in the mental health landscape in our province.

In as early as 2014, Canadian researchers have been sounding the alarm over the rising volume of children and youth seeking mental health support services and the lack of adequate resources available to support them. As children now transition to in-person learning, many children are struggling with anxiety and depression, among other mental health struggles. The PC government needs to invest in our children, in our schools, to ensure that the mental health needs of our future leaders are prioritized.

With the impact of the pandemic still being acutely felt by so many Manitobans, this week is a time for us all, in this House and across Manitoba, to recommit to addressing mental health issues. The Manitoba NDP is committed to working with community advocates and health-care professionals to ensure that all those struggling can access the help they need.

I want to encourage anyone who is struggling with their mental health to reach out and seek support. You are not alone. You don't have to suffer in silence. It's okay to have mental health struggles. We stand with you and we'll continue to advocate for robust mental health supports in our province.

And I want to thank those who are on the front lines supporting all of those struggling. We lift you up and we thank you for the service that you do for our community in Manitoba.

Miigwech.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I ask leave to respond to the minister's statement.

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

Mr. Gerrard: This week, Mental Health Week, let us recognize all those in Manitoba who are suffering from brain or mental health. Let us also recognize that issues of mental and/or brain health and wellness are an integral part of the well-being of every Manitoban.

It's important that we acknowledge that mental and brain health are as important as physical health and that the two can be closely linked. A person with a mental health issue may develop physical health issues. A person with physical health issues may develop a mental health issue.

My mother suffered, at times, from depression. It may have been linked in part to the fact that she lost an eye as a result of cancer early in her life. But in spite of her depression, she was an incredibly strong woman. In England during the war, she read and told stories to children to keep their attention and to drive away their fears as German bombers flew overhead—one night, 500 at a time.

She taught her passion: history. She wrote books. She played excellent golf and she contributed to the life in the communities where she lived in England and in Saskatoon, where my family moved when I was very young.

We must recognize the strengths of those who have had mental health issues. We need to recognize the need to ensure that help is available to all who need it. We need to recognize and to act to prevent tragedies like suicide, which can be associated with brain and mental health issues. We need to recognize that out of trauma—as in the war in Ukraine—mental health concerns may start, particularly with respect to PTSD.

We need to better understand the reasons for the prevention and treatment for PTSD and that PTSD may be particularly likely in individuals whose brain is wired so they're less likely to forget traumas. We need to recognize the anguish and the trauma which happened in residential schools and the need for understanding, for empathy and for reconciliation.

Thank you. Merci. Miigwech.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Vivek Bhagria

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): Hard work, dream big is the motto Vivek Bhagria lives by.

The 27-year-old Seine River resident is an inspiration to everyone he meets. He manages to work 80 hours a week at his two full-time jobs, and when he is not at work, he can be found either on the soccer field, in the community centre or in his basement honing his soccer skills.

At the age of four, Vivek discovered his love of sports—most importantly, his love of soccer. Since that

time, he has competed in many sports and earned many medals. He credits his high school coach Mr. Johnson for encouraging and inspiring him to join varsity sports. Mr. Johnson encouraged Vivek to enrol in the sports programs, and, as they say, the rest is history. Vivek has earned awards for his athletic ability in ultimate Frisbee and soccer.

Vivek began playing soccer competitively when he was 18. He has represented Canada in San Francisco, Argentina, Guelph and this year in Peru, earning more than 10 medals in total for Canada. This year, he has been chosen as one of only four Canadians to play on a team with eight Americans in Peru at the Copa America de Talla Baja games.

* (13:50)

At four foot one, Vivek joins more than 200 athletes who are also competing in the Paralympic event in Peru. The copa America talla baja event is a five-day tournament held between May 20th and 24th of 2022 and hosts 11 teams from 12 countries. The tournament is endorsed by the international federation of low-size football, and has Peruvians saying, today, we have the challenge of embracing greatness and being the best venue for inclusion; it is more than football.

We wish Vivek and his team success as they represent Canada in Peru. And, in his own words: work hard, dream big.

Clarita Nazario

MLA Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): Madam Speaker, it is my honour today to recognize an integral member in our Notre Dame community: Clarita Nazario.

Many politicians past and present, even in this Chamber, might already know Nanay Clarita if they've ever needed to be outfitted with a barong or a filipiniana dress for various Filipino community events. Indeed, she has designed and sewed traditional Filipino clothing using elegant, handwoven fabric such as jusi, piña and abaca for the likes of prime ministers, MPs, premiers, ministers, mayors and city councillors.

But, more importantly, Nanay Clarita has used her design skills and shared her resources for the least among us. For over 30 years, she has supported projects that benefit women inmates at the Bulacan Provincial Jail in the Philippines.

Nanay Clarita donates high-speed sewing machines and volunteers her vacation time once a year

teaching inmates to sew. The women sew clothing and accessories that Nanay Clarita then sells at Folklorama and other community events. All proceeds go back to provide machines and supplies for the women to use so they can learn new, employable skills that they can take with them after they leave jail.

Born in 1942 in Bulacan, she married at the age of 16. Despite her busy days as a young wife and mother, Nanay Clarita was able to pursue her dream of becoming a designer with the support of her husband, Romeo.

In 1995, the couple moved to Winnipeg where Nanay Clarita continued to serve her community like she had done in the Philippines. She has been an instrumental leader of the Bulacan Association of Winnipeg, an organization that supports people in need both in Winnipeg and in the Philippines, organizing various food and clothing relief drives.

At the age of 80, Nanay Clarita is not slowing down in her tireless efforts serving others. Currently, she is collecting children's clothes for orphans in the Philippines. As a way to relax, you can still order a filipiniana dress for yourself at the coming Filipino ball.

Please join me in recognizing Nanay Clarita Nazario for her many achievements and outstanding service to our community.

Thank you, Nanay.

Five-Pin Bowling Champions

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): In 1909, a young man in Toronto by the name of Tommy Ryan invented the Canadian game of five-pin bowling. Since that time many years ago, thousands of Canadians have excelled at the sport on both a regional and national stage. If we now skip ahead in time to the year 2022, we continue to celebrate those who excel in this sport.

From a grassroots perspective, the Manitoba 5 Pin Bowlers' Association recently crowned their own champions at a provincial championship in Carman, Manitoba, on February 22nd. Teams from across Manitoba competed not only for the provincial title but also for an opportunity to represent Manitoba at the Canadian five-pin bowling association's national championship. At the conclusion of the provincial championship, the Manitoba champions and the silver medal winners both qualified for nationals.

Madam Speaker, both these teams participated in the nationals with skill and enthusiasm at the national Inter Provincial Championship in Kelowna and Vernon, BC, from April 22nd to 23rd, 2022. To say they created excitement for Manitoba would be an understatement, as both Manitoba teams performed so well in the round robin that they met each other in the semi-finals.

Lisa Dobbin Walters [*phonetic*], Jodi Thomas, Mark Rogers, Matt Tolton and Coach Victor Lavich fought a tough match against their fellow Manitobans but, unfortunately, came up short. They then faced northern Ontario in the bronze medal match and again, just came up short in a close game, with northern Ontario winning the match 4-3.

While this match was under way, Manitoba's second team of Christy Wilson, Vivian Cullen, Darryl Leblanc, Dave Giesbrecht and Coach Scott Adamson became Canadian five-pin bowling champions by defeating the host team from British Columbia with a match of 6-1.

I ask all my colleagues to join me in acknowledging and congratulating the manager of team Manitoba, Sylvia Swaenepoel; the president of Manitoba, Marilyn McMullan who, along with our new Canadian champions and the fourth place winners, are joining us in the gallery today.

Fort Garry Community Centre

Mr. Mark Wasyliw (Fort Garry): Last week, I had the pleasure to attend the Fort Garry Community Centre's annual general meeting, where the organization was formally handed back to a community volunteer board, making it fully community-run organization once again.

The centre ran into financial difficulties in 2019 and didn't have enough volunteers to sustain the board, so the City of Winnipeg had to take over control of the operations. City's steering committee and the centre's management worked hard to get the centre back on solid financial ground, and it's now fully operational to serve the residents of Fort Garry.

Our community is growing rapidly, with three new apartment buildings being built in north Fort Garry and new developments in the west Fort Garry along the rapid transit line. The centre serves people in many unique ways as our community is changing and becoming more diverse, and it's a hub for young families and seniors to meet and stay connected. Besides offering numerous sports programs for youth, the centre also maintains a skating rink, an off-leash

dog park and organizes community cleanup initiatives, to name just a few ways they enrich our community.

It is imperative that this government increase their funding for local community clubs and support centres in their community, so—allow them to outreach and their continued efforts to create inclusive environments for all members of the community. There are currently plans to renovate and modernize the centre so it can meet the needs of today, and the Province should do everything possible to support the Fort Garry Community Centre and other community centres like it.

I'm proud to welcome the new board, including President Marshall Kirton, Vice President Melvin Toews, treasurers Scott Smith and Jeff Crumb. I wish you well and look forward to working with all of you as you continue your hard work of serving the residents of Fort Garry.

Thank you.

Valerie Allan

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I rise today for two reasons.

Firstly, we have some special guests with us here today from Tyndall Park school: 44 grade 5 students who are very passionate about the environment and about infrastructure, and I will be asking a question that they wrote later today in question period.

The second reason I rise today, Madam Speaker, is to acknowledge Ms. Valerie Allan. Ms. Allan has been teaching for 37 years in school division 1 and is retiring next month. She has worked at Stanley Knowles, Mulvey and, for the last 18 years, Tyndall Park school.

Now, Ms. Allan had no idea about this, but on Friday, the principal and office clerks helped sneak me into the school and actually allowed for me to hide out in the office when all the teachers and colleagues came and signed a Manitoba-made plaque for her. And this afternoon, the students helped me present this plaque to Ms. Allan.

Madam Speaker, I asked one of Ms. Allan's colleagues, Ms. Lidia Kurek, who's also her friend, gym partner and carpool buddy, to share a few words about Ms. Allan, and she said that Valerie is so humble, easy-going and passionate about teaching and literature. She wears so many hats through teaching different grades, helping coach sports, working after school and lunch programs and going out of her way

to always motivate and encourage our students and their families.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Allan actually taught my brother in grade 2 and she was my track coach back when I was in grade school, as well.

We know that teaching is an incredibly noble career and profession, and I want to ask my colleagues to join me here in recognizing Ms. Allan's 37 years of dedication to our education system as we congratulate her on her retirement next month.

* (14:00)

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: There are some guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from Bath, England, Ronald and Catherine Mould, who are the guests of the honourable member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan).

Also in the public gallery we have with us today Clarita Nazario, Romer Nazario, Romeo Nazario Jr., Violeta Nazario Odulio, Azel Santos, Gladys Martin and Rolando Nazario, who are the guests of the honourable member for Notre Dame (MLA Marcelino).

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

* * *

Madam Speaker: And it is also that time of year where we say goodbye to our pages.

So we will start that process today with a 'farell'-farewell remarks to Michaela Callender, who is leaving us further for her education. So I'm going to tell you a little bit about our page, Michaela, as it—she is closing in on her last day in the Chamber.

And I wanted to share her comments with the House: My experience at the Legislature has been very enlightening. Despite being my first job, I know this will be one of my favourites. I learned so many things, from how the provincial government passes bills and they become law, to how to memorize tea, coffee and hot water orders. I am thankful for this opportunity and I hope to attend post-secondary school in Toronto after graduating from St. John's High School next year.

So, Michaela, on behalf of all members here, we wish you the very best in your future endeavours.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Emergency Room Wait Times Bed Availability and Staffing

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): I want to begin by acknowledging all our guests here today from overseas, from the Nazario family and, of course, from Tyndall Park, and to take this opportunity to thank Michaela for your wonderful service. Please take only the good things from the Chamber and nothing else.

Madam Speaker, we know that the situation at emergency rooms in Winnipeg is on the verge of disaster. Wait times are longer than they've ever been. Patients report waiting at some of our most important hospitals' emergency rooms: 10 hours, that's at Health Sciences; eight and a half hours, that's at St. Boniface—and that's just the first wait. Once you get to that stage, it can be another 12 hours to several days before you actually get a bed. In the meantime, seniors are waiting in hallways.

Will the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) stop hallway medicine at Winnipeg hospitals?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Deputy Premier): We've heard loud and clear from Manitobans that health care is a priority for them, indeed, it's a priority for our government.

That's why we're making investments in health care: this year's budget, \$7.2 billion—that the opposition voted against—to improve and strengthen health care here in Manitoba. We are committed to reducing the diagnostic and surgery backlog. We've committed \$110 million in this budget to deal with that.

We've heard what Manitobans said. Their priority is on health care and our government's priority is health care, as well.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, as the Deputy Premier speaks, patients in our emergency rooms wait.

Madam Speaker, I invite you to consider elderly patients reaching for passersby for food, for water, for a chance to use the washroom. And the nurses in the ER are too busy looking after dozens of patients who are still in the waiting room to be able to attend to those needs.

I invite you and the members of the government to think, what does that impact the patient, in terms of; how does that impact the nurse who was put in such

an impossible situation? This is the reality of hallway medicine in Manitoba. The Premier needs to make a clear statement about it.

Will she do so today and commit to ending hallway medicine in Manitoba?

Mr. Cullen: Madam Speaker, again, our priority is health care. We recognize the challenges the pandemic has provided to those in health-'cafe' field. We realize the challenges that the public is facing in terms of acquiring health care.

That's why we're making historic investments in health care to the tune of \$7.2 billion. We have committed in this year's budget \$9 million for additional beds to increase capacity in our intensive-care units. We've also announced \$100 million for the St. Boniface Hospital emergency room redevelopment. This will triple the size of the emergency room at St. Boniface.

Madam Speaker, we are making historic investments to make sure that patient safety and care is No. 1.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, there is a bed crisis at hospitals in Winnipeg.

And when we talk about a bed crisis—again, that's a term that senior management from those hospitals use themselves. When we talk about a bed crisis in hospitals, it's really a staffing crisis. We don't have the nurses available in the public system to be able to care for the patients when they arrive at an emergency room.

And we see that the situation, already a crisis, continues to get worse and worse. Who's left bearing the impact? It's the patient, Madam Speaker. It's the patient waiting in the waiting room, and the patient waiting in the bed to be admitted, to receive the care that they deserve.

Will the Premier acknowledge that there is an issue with hallway medicine in Manitoba, and will she commit to fixing it?

Mr. Cullen: Well, Madam Speaker, patient care is priority for our government. Certainly, it's a priority for Manitobans. That's why we're making the record investments in health care.

Madam Speaker, we've committed to 400 additional beds for training nurses here in Manitoba. We have a significant recruitment effort, retraining effort

where required. And also, we want to retain nurses here in Manitoba.

So, we understand the challenges the pandemic has brought forward. We're addressing those challenges. And we recognize that it's a priority for Manitobans. It is a priority for our government.

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

St. Pierre Jolys Library Les P'tits Loups Daycare

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madame la Présidente, le futur de la bibliothèque régionale de Saint-Pierre-Jolys a été mis en question par les décisions de ce gouvernement. Cette bibliothèque joue un rôle important dans la communauté francophone. Elle est le cœur du village.

La situation est simple : la division scolaire a essayé d'obtenir du financement de la Province pour agrandir l'école, mais le gouvernement a dit non. Si le gouvernement Stefanson ne renverse pas cette décision, la communauté va perdre un lieu culturel important pour toute la région.

Est-ce que le premier ministre va offrir des financements pour sauver la bibliothèque régionale de St-Pierre-Jolys aujourd'hui?

Translation

Madam Speaker, this government's decisions have cast doubt upon the future of the St. Pierre Jolys library. This library is important for the francophone community. It's the heart of the village.

The situation is simple: the school division tried to obtain funding from the province to expand the school, but the government said no. If the Stefanson government does not reverse this decision, the community is going to lose a significant cultural site for the whole region.

Will the Premier provide funding to save the St. Pierre Jolys regional library today?

Hon. Wayne Ewasko (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): I appreciate the question coming from the Leader of the Opposition.

We know, on this side of the House, and the member opposite—the Leader of the Opposition—knows, that we work quite closely with our education partners all across this great province of ours.

Madam Speaker, just recently, a few weeks ago we were down there in St. Malo announcing

\$16 million to the expansion of the Saint-Malo School. We know that resources for French language and students all across this great province of ours absolutely is a necessity.

We're working with our education partners. We're working with the school division, and watching and seeing how they're working with the municipalities to better serve their community members, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Kinew: La question était sur Saint-Pierre-Jolys, Madame la Présidente.

Il y a quelque jour qu'on a appris que Les P'tits Loups, une garderie francophone à Saint-Georges, va fermer ses portes le 31 mai. Cette fermeture imminente a été déclenchée à cause d'une pénurie d'éducateurs en jeune enfance. C'est clair que le gel de financement ordonné par le gouvernement ces dernières années a empiré la situation.

On a besoin de plus d'appuis pour la garderie, pour les éducateurs et pour les programmes de jeune enfance en français.

Est-ce que le gouvernement va aider la garderie Les P'tits Loups, à rouvrir ses portes?

Translation

The question was about St. Pierre Jolys, Madam Speaker.

A few days ago, we learned that Les P'tits Loups, a francophone daycare in St-Georges, will shut down on May 31st. This impending closure was triggered by a shortage of early-learning educators. It is clear that the funding freeze ordered by the government these past few years has made the situation worse.

We need more supports for French-language daycares, educators and early childhood programs.

Will the government help the Les P'tits Loups daycare to reopen?

Mr. Ewasko: Again, it's—I'm hearing a little bit of a disingenuous type of question there, Madam Speaker, but I'm going to speak about our—the great advancements that Education and Early Childhood Learning has done and the great—moving forward on committing to our 23,000 new child-care spaces.

* (14:10)

What we're also doing, which unfortunately the member—the Leader of the Opposition fails to give credit where credit is due, Madam Speaker, is we're also working quite closely, not only with our post-secondary institutions, but our early-learning child-care sector to make sure that we're able to recruit, train and retain people within the industry.

It's something that, unfortunately, the members opposite failed to do when they were in government. We're cleaning up their mess, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madame la Présidente, à Saint-Georges, ils vont perdre leur garderie le 31 mai. Ça, c'est la réalité.

Ils vont perdre la bibliothèque à Saint-Pierre-Jolys. Ça, c'est la réalité. Et puis, tout le monde dans le Manitoba connaît qu'on a besoin des livres et des services dans la langue française à cause du patrimoine de notre province, de la vision de Louis Riel. C'est la réalité qu'on appuie encore aujourd'hui.

Alors, je demande encore, pour les peuples de Saint-Georges, pour les peuples de Saint-Pierre-Jolys : est-ce que le gouvernement va renverser ces décisions et faire en sorte que la bibliothèque régionale de St-Pierre-Jolys et la garderie Les P'tits Loups restent ouvertes?

Translation

Madam Speaker, in St-Georges they're going to lose their daycare on May the 31st. This is the reality.

They are going to lose the library in St. Pierre Jolys. This is the reality. And everyone in Manitoba knows that we need French-language books and services because of our province's heritage and of Louis Riel's vision. It is the reality that we still support today.

So I will ask again for the people of St-Georges and for the people of St. Pierre Jolys: Will the government reverse these decisions and make sure that the St. Pierre Jolys regional library and the daycare Les P'tits Loups will stay open?

Mr. Ewasko: Again, it's unfortunate that the member is going down this line of questioning, Madam Speaker, and not giving the fact that—and not standing up and apologizing to the fact that we, on this side of the House, have been working diligently, not only in encouraging and increasing our front—French-language spaces, whether that's in education or early childhood education.

We do, we've got a lot of work to do, but unfortunately, Madam Speaker, we're cleaning up the mess that was left by the former NDP government. We're working diligently. We're making sure that the funding is adequate, and not only adequate, we're making sure that we're spending far more dollars in these services than—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Election Finance Rules Budget 2022 Advertising

MLA Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): Madam Speaker, the PC government is spending a quarter of a million dollars to promote its budget on billboards, social media and print advertising across the province. Advertising is happening in the midst of a by-election.

This government is making a mockery of election finance rules. A government should not use taxpayer money in the midst of an election to promote its partisan agenda in a way that is meant to influence voters.

Will the minister stop this practice and remove this advertising today?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Acting Minister of Finance): The option's, of course, for the NDP to support the budget. We know that there's thousands of dollars, supports for individuals. We've got an education property tax rebate that could provide up to \$500 for the average taxpayer here in Manitoba. We know that affordability is a main issue for Manitobans.

Our government has a plan. That plan is a part of the budget. We want to encourage the NDP to get with the plan to make life more affordable for individuals, and that's exactly what this budget does. We want to make sure that Manitobans are informed about that.

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

MLA Marcelino: We are deeply troubled by the PC government's erosion of election finance rules. The NDP has written the election commissioner to express our deep concern and to request an investigation.

Taxpayer-funded advertising should not be used to influence Manitobans during the course of an election. Bans on advertising were put in place to level the playing field and to ensure a governing party does not use government resources to tip the scales of democracy.

Will the minister stop undermining fair elections and remove this advertising today?

Mr. Fielding: We're going to take no lessons from the NDP—their spirited energy that they have, Madam Speaker—in terms of a campaign.

What I can tell you is our budget does a number of things. Number 1, it makes life more affordable for individuals. If the NDP had a plan to support this, they would support it. It provides tax relief to over 450,000 Manitobans, Madam Speaker. There's a residential rebate program that over 45,000—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: —more people will get support, Madam Speaker. We have supports in place for people—young children. More people are going to apply for a subsidy to make sure that working parents are supported. That's part of our budget. That's part of our plan to make life more affordable.

We want to make sure that Manitobans know about this. We encourage the NDP to support this to make life more affordable for individuals.

Madam Speaker: The—*[interjection]* I have not recognized the member yet. I was waiting it for—waiting for everything to quieten down so that our students can hear what is being asked and answered.

The honourable member for Notre Dame, on a final supplementary.

MLA Marcelino: Madam Speaker, the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) was just found in breach of The Election Financing Act. She and those around her are willing to take any step, including bending and breaking the rules that help make our democracy fair.

That's the case now as hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars are being spent to promote this government's partisan agenda in the midst of a by-election.

Will the minister stop undermining democracy and remove these ads today?

Mr. Fielding: The hypocrisy of those questions is really something that Manitobans need to take a look at.

We know what the NDP did when they were in government. They produced signs across the province talking about steady growth, Madam Speaker. The only thing that we're doing is making sure that Manitobans are aware of the support that they have, to make sure that, No. 1, that the issues that Manitobans—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding:—support, of having affordability measures like education property tax—we—having 450,000 property owners get a tax break is something that's there.

That's something we're promoting. That's something that's there that we know—we need to make sure that all Manitobans know about, Madam Speaker.

Silica Sand Mine Extraction Project Status of Environment Licence

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): In 2019, Canadian Premium Sand received an Environment Act licence for a silica sand development project in Seymourville, near Hollow Water First Nation. The licence is dated May 16th, 2019, and I will table a copy.

On the last page, it says: If the licensee has not commenced construction of the development within three years of the date of this licence, the licence is revoked.

I ask the minister: As three years have passed, has the licence for Canadian Premium Sand been revoked?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Environment, Climate and Parks): Certainly, we know that—and I thank the member for the letter; certainly, we'll have a look at it.

Sio Silica, ma'am, we know—Madam Speaker, we know is, again, economic development within the province. We're working with stakeholders throughout the region where this business wants to settle into Manitoba. Certainly we're—we know we're a province that's open for business.

We'll continue to be open for business, but to ensure that we protect the 'virement' when—the environment as we move forward.

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

Ms. Naylor: Madam Speaker, citizens have raised a number of concerns with the proposed development near Hollow Water First Nation, and there are several licence conditions that appear to have not been met. Most significantly, three years has passed since the environment licence was issued, and there are no indications that the applicant has started construction. This was a condition of the licence.

So I ask the minister again: Has the licence for Canadian Premium Sand project been revoked?

Mr. Wharton: Certainly we—and again, I appreciate the letter, dating May 16th, 2019, Madam Speaker.

But in the letter, it doesn't necessarily point to the industry actually opening up, Madam Speaker. We know that this is a process. We know that we need to ensure that the environment is safe and protected for generations to come, and—including First Nations, Indigenous folks in the area.

* (14:20)

We've been in contact with stakeholders throughout the entire region, including municipalities, Madam Speaker. We'll continue that collaborative approach as we move forward to better Manitoba.

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

Ms. Naylor: It is really important that conditions of environmental licences are followed, regardless of the project and the economic development opportunities for our province.

The licence says that if construction has not commenced within three years, the licence is revoked, and three years have passed. I have also been in consultation with folks throughout the region, and I know that this is really important to people that the terms of the licence are being followed.

So I ask the minister: Has he revoked the licence for the Canadian Premium Sand project, and if not, will he tell us what is the status, including of construction, on this project?

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources and Northern Development (Mr. Fielding). [*interjection*] Sorry, wrong minister.

Mr. Wharton: Certainly, that's exactly why we come to this House every day, is to update this House and Manitobans on a number of issues, Madam Speaker. So, certainly, we will have—when we have that information, we'll certainly be more than happy to provide it.

But I can tell you though, Madam Speaker, where this member may want to check the history books: when the NDP government at the time plowed through over 500 kilometres of forest without even a consideration for the environment or any of the stakeholders throughout the area. That is shameful.

Madam Speaker, we will make sure that we get it right as we move forward with any development coming to Manitoba.

Deputy Premier's Comments Apology Request

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): In 1942, Winston Churchill said, and I quote, a good speech should be like a woman's skirt, long enough to cover the subject and short enough to create interest. End quote, Madam Speaker.

Eighty years later, you know who else said those very sexist words? The Deputy Premier. We see that misogyny is alive and well in 2022, and this is a part of a pattern of inappropriate behaviours from the members opposite.

The Deputy Premier needs to apologize for his sexist comments in this House to all Manitobans.

Will he do so today?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Deputy Premier): I certainly have acknowledged the error in my judgment. I have reached out and apologized to the members of the Business Council, both verbally, in text and in writing.

And, Madam Speaker, I humbly regret my comments I made last week.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Sexism, misogyny and the objectification of women have no place in this Legislature or no place in society, Madam Speaker.

Research supports that phrases such as the one uttered by the Deputy Premier are extremely harmful to women. This individual is a leader in our province, and this kind of leadership is not what we want to show young men moving forward, Madam Speaker. Brian Pallister made similar comments about women in his time as premier.

Will the minister stand in his place, apologize and share what actions he will take to undo the harm that he has caused by those sexist words?

Mr. Cullen: Well, Madam Speaker, I have apologized to the Business Council. I want to apologize as well to all members of the Chamber and certainly all members of government for my comments that I did make.

Certainly, I do want to apologize as well to all Manitobans for my comments. I recognize they were very regrettable. I appreciate the error in judgment, and I will learn from my mistakes.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Words matter. Words form our thoughts and our thoughts form our actions, Madam Speaker. The words uttered by the Deputy Premier embolden others to think that this is acceptable and okay. Words uttered by the Deputy Premier contribute to a dangerous environment where sexual harassment and violence against women thrive.

We need to—*[interjection]* We—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Fontaine: As I said, Madam Speaker, previously, this is a pattern of inappropriate behaviours from men—opposite here. *[interjection]*

I'm sorry that—if they don't like the truth, but will the Deputy—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I'll ask the table to stop the clock.

And this is what I always urge about heckling. It does—from both sides—it does tend to cause chaos on the floor of this House, and it does interfere with questions and answers.

I will—and I'm hearing it all the time from both sides, and it is time to stop.

I'm going to give the member—because her time is over, but I will give her five extra seconds because of the heckling that was heard.

Ms. Fontaine: Will the Deputy Premier stand up in the House and agree to take sensitivity and sexual harassment training, Madam Speaker?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I can assure the House and I can assure all Manitobans that the Deputy Premier has issued a sincere, unconditional and unequivocal apology. And I can also assure the House that, on this side, we accept that sincere, unequivocal and unconditional apology.

And I agree with members opposite that this is a perfect opportunity, especially on the day—the international day for awareness against transphobia and homophobia and biphobia—that we use this as a teachable moment to look at our unconscious bias and how that unconscious bias can sometimes filter into language and shape opinions and attitudes, and use this as a teachable moment so that we can all rise above and check our language and use better discourse from here on end.

Flood in Mafeking, Manitoba Access to Health Services

MLA Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, flooding continues to have devastating impacts on Manitoba communities.

Communities like Mafeking and several surrounding communities have been cut off from road access due to flooding that has eroded embankments around bridges and washed out the Highway 10 both north and south of the community. Community members are worried that they can't access health-care services that they may need.

Can the minister provide us with information on the emergency response plans that are in place for areas impacted?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Environment, Climate and Parks): I certainly thank the member for posing that question, and I know my colleague has been working hard, along with his team, on a daily basis as we continue to go through this unusual wet cycle and moisture coming from all ends.

But I can tell you, Madam Speaker, that Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure provides, again, flooding forecast updates on a regular basis. We're also working with Indigenous Services Canada and EMO here locally to ensure that communities are protected going forward and also services are provided as they are required.

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

MLA Lindsey: Without road access, Mafeking residents are stranded. They need to know what the plan is to ensure they have emergency access to health-care services. They also need to know that people who need non-emergent but essential health-care services have a way to get to the services they need for things like dialysis.

So, can the minister provide us with what the plan is to ensure that those residents have access to health care?

Mr. Wharton: Again, I'd just take the opportunity to, again, thank the staff that are working tirelessly, day in and day out, Madam Speaker, 24-7 to ensure Manitobans are safe.

Madam Speaker, we also understand, too, as well, that municipalities and First Nations also have plans for these types of scenarios. We know that we're reviewing them currently now with our partners from

the federal government at ISC. We're going to continue that collaborative effort to ensure Manitobans continue to be safe.

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

* (14:30)

MLA Lindsey: Without road access, Mafeking residents are stranded without services they rely on. That's health-care services, but it also comes down to the fact that the grocery store may soon be running out of food.

The chief of Sapotaweyak Cree Nation fears that a bridge near their community may soon give out, which could cut those residents off from vital services as well.

So can the minister provide us with information on whether the issue is being addressed to prevent the washout of that bridge and whether communities other than the ones we've mentioned so far are in the same predicament and what the plan is for them?

Thank you.

Mr. Wharton: As I mentioned in my second answer, Madam Speaker, we're working collaboratively with not only First Nations but all municipalities.

We know that there's not one corner of the province that's not currently going through these challenges when it comes to high water levels, Madam Speaker. Communities are being cut off; we know that. We're working—the team is working 24-7 to ensure Manitobans are remaining safe. We'll continue to work with ISC—Indigenous Services Canada—to ensure that the plans that are implemented at the grass-roots level are put forward to protect Manitobans.

Health-Care Reform MRI Wait Times

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): Last night at the Public Accounts Committee, we were following up the Auditor General's 2017 report into why Manitoba MRI wait times are so bad. Now, of course, this month CIHI reported that Manitoba's wait times for MRIs are now the second worst in Canada.

We were told when we asked that staff turnover and unexpected early retirements meant there aren't enough clerks to process MRI requests. They are quitting, we were told, because the combined pressure of the PC's so-called health transformation during the pandemic was just too much. These reforms have hurt patients and made our system worse.

Why is the government still going ahead with them?

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Health): I thank the member for St. Boniface for the question. It gives me an opportunity to once again share with Manitobans what our government is, in fact, going ahead with, and that is \$7.2-billion, record investment in the history of the province, Madam Speaker.

I'm so pleased that the task force has, for diagnostic and surgical recovery, has also shared that we're adding more CT scans, we're adding more MRIs to the system. Madam Speaker, that is what the \$7.2-billion investment will do.

We need members on the other side of the House to approve the budget that will add more diagnostic tests to our system.

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

Surgical and Diagnostic Services Wait Time for Procedures

Mr. Dougald Lamont (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, this government has only promised to reduce the surgical and diagnostic backlog to pre-pandemic levels, when, before the pandemic, Manitoba's wait times for procedures was getting worse for five years straight. The PCs have driven system-wide shortages in health care. Nurses, health-care aides, physiotherapists, clerks and doctors have all quit the system, and even the province, for better wages or just to be treated with respect.

The waits seven years ago were too long and they got worse in the lead up to the pandemic.

Why is the PC government's Diagnostic and Surgical Recovery Task Force setting the bar so low when wait-lists were already bad and getting worse in March 2020?

Hon. Audrey Gordon (Minister of Health): I want to thank all the members of our Diagnostic and Surgical Recovery Task Force for the incredible work that they are doing, for the proposals they are reviewing that are coming forward not just from the health system, but from our service delivery organizations. It is around that table of solutions that we will be able to meet the needs of Manitobans.

And I also want to report to the House that since December we have completed 2,947 CT scans, 3,538 ultrasounds, 1,240 MRIs, for a total of 7,725 scans and diagnostics.

We're not setting the bar low. The member for St. Boniface wants us to, but we will not do that. We will continue to set the—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Tyndall Park School Student Questions Infrastructure and Environment Concerns

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): The 44 students up in the gallery from Tyndall Park school are very concerned about our infrastructure and environment. They have raised concerns including potholes on our streets and bike lanes, litter all around the community and in our lakes, concerns around chemical plants and single-use plastics, and the need to plant more trees.

Madam Speaker, what is the government doing to provide incentive to and encourage people to take environmental issues more seriously?

Hon. Jeff Wharton (Minister of Environment, Climate and Parks): I certainly appreciate the question from the member opposite.

And, again, I would like to welcome and thank the students from Tyndall Park school for being here today, and also congratulate and thank teacher Ms. Allan, too, for over 30 years of service and your retirement—well-deserved. And thank you so much for your leadership.

And certainly, Madam Speaker, as we move forward, we know that there's work to do with the environment. We know that climate change is a real thing. We know that the younger generations want to ensure that we, as elected officials, have the ability to make change to ensure that these young folks, and our kids and our grandkids will have a future for the long-term.

Thank you so much.

Addiction and Mental Health Services Huddle Youth Hub Initiative

Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere): Madam Speaker, earlier it was announced that our government has contributed \$2 million to specific youth services.

Can the Minister of Mental Health and Community Wellness explain the significance of the Huddle youth sites, and what is different about this service delivery model?

Hon. Sarah Guillemard (Minister of Mental Health and Community Wellness): I appreciate the great question coming from my colleague from

Rossmere. It gives me the opportunity to talk in this House about the Huddle youth hubs.

I want to also thank our partners, led by the United Way, for their contributions. It was my pleasure to tour Huddle Broadway in April and be at the Huddle Brandon earlier this month to officially launch it, marking a new chapter in access to mental health, addictions and social service supports for Manitoban youth.

I have met with Manitobans of all walks of life who are committed to improving their communities, and it was all in—thanks to the staff I met at the Huddle program. The more integrated services that we provide, the more opportunities there are for people in need to get the help. This is the core objective of these Huddle youth hubs.

Thank you.

Education Property Tax Corporate Rebates

Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry): Madam Speaker, budgets are about choices, and this government is showing its priorities. Tax measures brought forward by this government are giving millions of dollars to out-of-province corporate landlords. Meanwhile, 'turts' in their—sorry—meanwhile, nurses and teachers need more support today. They—need has never been greater.

Why is this government giving millions of dollars to out-of-province corporate landlords instead of to our schools and hospitals?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Acting Minister of Finance): The NDP are just wrong on this issue, Madam Speaker, and their delay tactics—the stunt to—is really taking money out of the pockets of residents of Manitoba.

But don't listen to me. Let's listen to some experts, what they think of the education property—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: —tax. In the Free Press today—and I'll table this for the record, Madam Speaker—NDP leader was wrong yet again. Under the terms of commercial leases, the tenants pay all of the property taxes, and rebates must go to provide it to the tenants.

While Cadillac Fairview or any other commercial landlord may receive large property tax rebate cheques, they do not get to keep the money, Madam

Speaker, as it's given back to the tenants under the terms.

So, if the NDP can't do the research, Madam Speaker, how can they form government and how can they govern Manitobans?

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

Mr. Wasyliv: Madam Speaker, while the government stands up for Toronto landlords, we're going to continue to stand up for Manitobans.

Now, again, they're debating this measure rather than increase the minimum wage. We could do that today. Manitoba will have the lowest minimum wage in the entire country in the fall, and there's no defending this government's approach: millions of dollars for out-of-province corporate landlords while working people are falling further and further behind.

Why are they giving millions to out-of-province companies who don't need it when working Manitobans are falling further into poverty?

* (14:40)

Mr. Fielding: It's no surprise the member from Fort Garry wants to jack up taxes on Manitobans.

What—our side of this aisle wants to ensure that Manitobans get a tax break, Madam Speaker; 92 per cent of the education property taxes are going to residents.

And the corporate entities of Cadillac Fairview, let's see who's going to benefit from that: Fergies Fish'n Chips—they don't sound like a international player; Subway's franchise; mobile—WOW! mobile boutique—these are—all benefit. These are all tenants—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: —that will benefit from this.

Not only businesses will benefit, Madam Speaker, over 400,000 individuals will get a education property tax to make life more affordable.

The NDP needs to get on the plan, as well as—instead of having these stall tactics—in terms of providing some support for Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member—*[interjection]* Order.

The honourable member for Fort Garry on a final supplementary.

Mr. Wasyliw: If you had any doubt how out of touch this government was, I think the minister just cleared that up for everybody.

Now, day after day, they are debating legislation giving millions of dollars to the out-of-province companies like Cadillac Fairview, a company with \$20 billion in assets. That just doesn't make any sense. This government is taking the wrong approach. Cadillac Fairview received \$1 million last year just for Polo Park.

I ask the minister: How many millions of dollars does he intend to give to out-of-province corporations like Cadillac Fairview in this year's budget?
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order. [interjection] I'm going to call members to order.

Mr. Fielding: And what is the NDP? They're a bunch of talk, Madam Speaker.

We know the member individually jacked up taxes, the Winnipeg School Division, each and every time. We need—and if we're going to compare parties, let's compare our plan. Our plan will reduce taxes—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Fielding: —for over 400,000 people.

We've got a renters tax credit. The renters—residential renter tax credit. Over 45,000 people will benefit from this, Madam Speaker.

We've got lower rates, \$10-a-day day care, Madam Speaker. Working families are going to benefit of it. This is part of our plan to reduce taxes, to make life more affordable for Manitobans.

The NDP need to stop their stunts in terms of holding back, in terms of education property taxes so we can make life more affordable for Manitobans. The NDP need to get with it and address this issue with us.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Foot-Care Services

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba:

The background to this petition is as follows:

The population of those aged 55-plus has grown to approximately 2,500 in the city of Thompson.

A large percentage of people in this age group require necessary medical foot care and treatment.

A large percentage of those who are elderly and/or diabetic are also living on low incomes.

The northern regional health authority previously provided essential medical foot-care services to seniors and those living with diabetes until 2019, then subsequently cut the program after the last two nurses filling those positions retired.

The number of seniors and those with diabetes has only continued to grow in Thompson and surrounding areas.

There is no adequate medical care available in the city and region, whereas the city of Winnipeg has 14 medical foot-care centres.

The implications of inadequate or lack of podiatric care can lead to amputations.

The city of Thompson also serves as a regional health-care service provider, and the need for foot care extends beyond just those served in the capital city of the province.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to provide the services of two nurses to restore essential medical foot-care treatment to the city of Thompson effective April 1st, 2022.

This petition has been signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Nello Altomare (Transcona): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) Population of those aged 55-plus has grown to approximately 2,500 in the city of Thompson.

(2) A large percentage of people in this age group require necessary medical foot care and treatment.

(3) A large percentage of those who are elderly and/or diabetic are also living on low incomes.

(4) The northern regional health authority previously provided essential medical foot-care services to seniors and those living with diabetes until 2019, then subsequently cut the program after the last two nurses filling those positions retired.

(5) The number of seniors and those with diabetes has only continued to grow in Thompson and surrounding areas.

(6) There is no adequate medical care available in the city and region, whereas the city of Winnipeg has 14 medical foot-care centres.

(7) The implications of inadequate or lack of podiatric care can lead to amputations.

(8) The city of Thompson also serves as a regional health-care service provider, and the need for foot care extends beyond just those served in the capital city of the province.

Therefore, we petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to provide the services of two nurses to restore essential medical foot-care treatment to the city of Thompson effective April 1, 2022.

And this petition is signed by many Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background of this petition is as follows:

The population of those aged 55-plus has grown to approximately 2,500 in the city of Thompson.

A large percentage of people in this age group require necessary medical foot care and treatment.

A large percentage of those who are elderly and/or diabetic are also living on low incomes.

The northern regional health authority previously provided essential medical foot-care services for seniors and those living with diabetes until 2019, and then subsequently cut the program after the last two nurses filling those positions retired.

The number of seniors and those with diabetes has only continued to grow in Thompson and surrounding areas.

There is no adequate medical care available in the city and region, whereas the city of Winnipeg has 14 medical foot-care centres.

The implications of inadequate or lack of podiatric care can lead to amputations.

The city of Thompson also serves as a regional health-care service provider, and the need for foot care extends beyond just those served in the capital city of the province.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to provide the services of two nurses to restore essential medical foot-care treatment in the city of Thompson effective April 1, 2022.

This has been signed by Rose Ross, J. Evelyn Wood and Lonnie *[phonetic]* Wood.

Speed Reduction on PR 392

MLA Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background for this petition is as follows:

(1) On October 26, 2020, a 51-year-old driver was killed when a cement truck overturned on provincial road PR 392 just outside of the town of Snow Lake, Manitoba.

(2) The HudBay company will be trucking gold ore in 40-ton B-trains from its Lalor deposit into the town of Snow Lake for processing starting next year; this—

(3) This large truck traffic will be competing with local vehicle traffic between the turnoff to the Lalor mine road on PR 395 and the town of Snow Lake on PR 392.

(4) Similar vehicular traffic already competes with these 40-ton trucks between the turnoff to Lalor at PR 395 and the turnoff to the Stall Lake mill at PR 393.

* (14:50)

(5) Residents of Snow Lake have suggested the speed limit on PR 392 between Snow Lake and the intersection of provincial road PR 393 be lowered from 90 kilometres an hour to 70 kilometres per hour.

(6) Residents also propose that on PR 392, from the Berry Bay-Taylor Bay entrance to the Wekusko Falls park north entrance, speeds be reduced to 70 kilometres an hour; Wekusko Falls park north entrance to the helitac entrance, speeds be reduced to 50 kilometres an hour; from the helitac base to the

entrance of the fish dump, speeds be reduced to 70 kilometres per hour.

(7) Reducing speed limits on dangerous stretches of highways is a simple and effective measure to protect the safety of all drivers.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Infrastructure to adopt the proposed speed reductions on Provincial Road 392 set forth above.

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

Right to Repair

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

The background for this petition is as follows:

(1) Manitoba consumers believe the products should last longer, be repaired when broken, and that planned obsolescence has environmental consequences that threaten a sustainable future.

(2) In 2021, the European Union set minimum design requirements for many electronic devices with new right to repair legislation.

(3) The right to repair enables consumers access to the resources needed to fix and modify their products, appliances, including cellphones, washing machines and refrigerators.

(4) The right to repair also allows consumers and electronic repair businesses access to the most recent versions of repair manuals, replacement parts, software and other tools that the manufacturer uses for diagnosing, maintaining or repairing its branded electronic products.

(5) The right to repair further allows consumers to reset an electronic security function of its branded electronic products if the function is disabled during diagnosis, maintenance or repair.

(6) In addition, the right to repair ensures manufacturers replace electronic products at no cost, or refund the amount paid by the consumer to purchase the electronic product where they refuse or are unable to provide manuals or replacement parts.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to adopt right-to-repair legislation requiring manufacturers of

electronic devices and appliances, including washing machines and fridges, to make information, parts and tools necessary for repairs available to consumers and independent repair shops.

And this petition is signed by many, many Manitobans.

Bibliothèque Régionale Jolys Regional Library

Mr. Jamie Moses (St. Vital): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, the background of this petition is as follows:

(1) The Bibliothèque Régionale Jolys Regional Library, JRL, has been served notice by the Red River Valley School Division, RRVSD, to vacate the premises currently situated in the auditorium for École Héritage school, ÉHS, by March 31st, 2023.

(2) The auditorium was originally built in the 1960s by renowned Manitoba architect Étienne Gaboury, and it has been home to JRL for 48 years.

(3) A photo of the auditorium captioned the regional library is published in a 2008 document titled heritage buildings in RM De Salisbury [*phonetic*] and St. Pierre Jolys. It is marked as an important modern building that could attain the status of a heritage site.

(4) The JRL and RRVSD have flourished from a mutually beneficial memorandum of 'understanding' for 54 years.

(5) Their shared collection boasts over 50,000 books and has the fourth largest collection of French-language literature in rural Manitoba.

(6) Students that are bused in from the neighbouring municipalities that do not have a public library, such as Niverville, Grunthal and Kleefeld, are provided with free access to the public library and its fourth largest collection of French books in rural Manitoba during the school year.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To request the Minister of Labour, Consumer Protection and Government Services to consider granting the auditorium to the JRL by March 1st, 2023.

(2) To request the Minister of Education to recognize the value that JRL provides to the student population of ÉHS, as well as the communities of Village de St. Pierre Jolys and the RM De Salaberry.

(3) To request the Minister of Education and the Minister of Francophone Affairs to recognize that an MOU between the RRVSD and JRL is mutually, financially and culturally beneficial.

(4) To request the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage to recognize the heritage potential of this important building and its status in the community.

(5) To request the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage to prevent any renovations to the auditorium that would destroy and devalue the architectural integrity of the building.

This petition has been signed by Bridget Chartier, Pat Croteau and Jonathan [*phonetic*] Traa and many Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Adrien Sala (St. James): Je désire présenter la pétition suivante à l'Assemblée législative.

Le contexte de cette pétition est le suivant :

(1) La Bibliothèque Régionale Jolys Regional Library, G-B-R-G, a été avisée par la division scolaire vallée de la rivière Rouge de libérer les locaux actuellement situés dans l'auditorium de l'École Héritage school d'ici le 31 mars 2023.

(2) L'auditorium a été construit dans les années 1960 par le célèbre architecte manitobain Étienne Gaboury et B-R-G y est installé depuis 48 ans.

(3) Une photo de l'auditorium intitulée la bibliothèque régionale est publiée dans le document de 2008 intitulé « Bâtiments patrimoniaux des MR De-Salaberry et Saint-Pierre-Jolys ». Il est indiqué qu'il s'agit d'un bâtiment moderne important qui pourrait atteindre le statut du site patrimonial.

(4) B-R-G et DSVRR ont prospéré grâce à un protocole d'entente mutuellement bénéfique pendant 54 ans.

(5) Leur collection commune compte plus de 50 000 livres et possède la quatrième plus grande collection de littérature de langue française dans les régions rurales du Manitoba; et

(6) Les élèves qui sont transportés à l'autobus des municipalités voisines qui n'ont pas de bibliothèque publique, comme Niverville, Grunthal et Kleefeld, ont accès gratuitement à la bibliothèque publique et à sa quatrième plus grande collection de livres en français dans les régions rurales du Manitoba pendant l'année scolaire.

Nous présentons à l'Assemblée législative du Manitoba la pétition suivante :

* (15:00)

(1) De demander au ministre du Travail, de la protection des consommateurs et des Services gouvernementaux d'envisager de concéder l'auditorium à la B-R-G d'ici le 1er mars 2023.

(2) Demander au ministre de l'Éducation de reconnaître la valeur que la B-R-G apporte à la population étudiante de l'ÉHS ainsi qu'aux communautés du village de Saint-Pierre-Jolys et de la MR De Salaberry.

(3) Demander au ministre de l'Éducation et au ministre des affaires francophones de reconnaître qu'un protocole d'entente entre le RRVSD et G-R-L est mutuellement bénéfique, financièrement et culturellement.

(4) Demander au ministre des Sport, de la Culture et du Patrimoine de reconnaître le potentiel patrimonial de cet important bâtiment et son statut au sein de la communauté, et

(5) Demander au ministre des Sport, de la Culture et du Patrimoine d'empêcher toute rénovation de l'auditorium qui détruirait et dévaloriserait l'intégrité architecturale du bâtiment.

Cette pétition a été signée par Kim Doerksen, Tiffany Doyle et Gerald Sydorko.

Merci.

Translation

Madam Speaker, I'd like to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The context for this petition is as follows:

(1) The Bibliothèque Régionale Jolys Regional Library was notified by the Red River Valley School Division to vacate premises currently located in the auditorium of the École Héritage School by March 31, 2023.

(2) The auditorium was built in the 1960s by famous Manitoban architect Étienne Gaboury, and it has been home to the JRL for 48 years.

(3) A photo of the auditorium captioned "The Regional Library" was published in a 2008 document titled "Significant Heritage Buildings of De Salaberry and St. Pierre Jolys". It is marked as an important modern building that could attain the status of Heritage Site.

(4) *The JRL and the RRVSD have flourished by means of a mutually beneficial memorandum of understanding for 54 years.*

(5) *Their shared collection boasts over 50,000 books and has the fourth-largest collection of French-language literature in rural Manitoba.*

(6) *Students that are bussed in from neighbouring municipalities that do not have a public library, such as Niverville, Grunthal and Kleefeld, are provided with free access to the public library and its fourth largest collection of French-language literature in rural Manitoba during the school year.*

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) *To request the Minister of Labour, Consumer Protection and Government Services to consider granting the auditorium to the JRL by March 1, 2023.*

(2) *To request the Minister of Education to recognize the value that JRL provides to the student population of ÉHS, as well as the communities of Village de St. Pierre Jolys and the RM De Salaberry.*

(3) *To request the Minister of Education and the Minister of Francophone Affairs to recognize that a memorandum of understanding between the RRVSD and the JRL is mutually, financially and culturally beneficial.*

(4) *To request the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage to recognize the heritage potential of this important building and its status in the community.*

(5) *To request the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage to prevent any renovations to the auditorium that would destroy and devalue the architectural integrity of the building.*

This petition was signed by Kim Doerksen, Tiffany Doyle and Gerald Sydorko.

Thank you.

MLA Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): Madame la Présidente, je désire présenter la pétition suivante à l'Assemblée législative.

Le contexte de cette pétition est le suivant :

(1) La Bibliothèque Régionale Jolys Regional Library, G-B-R-G, a été avisée par la division scolaire vallée de la rivière Rouge, DSVRR, de libérer les locaux actuellement situés dans l'auditorium de l'École Héritage school, ÉHS, d'ici le 31 mars 2023.

(2) L'auditorium a été construit dans les années 1960 par le célèbre architecte manitobain Étienne Gaboury et B-R-G y est installé depuis 48 ans.

(3) Une photo de l'auditorium intitulée la bibliothèque régionale est publiée dans un document de 2008 intitulé bâtiments patrimoniaux des M-A De-Salaberry et Saint-Pierre-Jolys. Il est indiqué qu'il s'agit d'un bâtiment moderne important qui pourrait atteindre le statut de site patrimonial.

(4) B-R-G et DSVRR ont prospéré grâce à un protocole d'entente mutuellement bénéfique pendant 54 ans.

(5) Leur collection commune compte plus de 50 000 livres et possède la quatrième plus grande collection de littérature de langue française dans les régions rurales du Manitoba.

(6) Les élèves qui sont transportés par autobus des municipalités voisines qui n'ont pas de bibliothèque publique, comme Niverville, Grunthal et Kleefeld, ont accès gratuitement à la bibliothèque publique et à sa quatrième plus grande collection de livres en français dans les régions rurales du Manitoba pendant l'année scolaire.

Nous présentons à l'Assemblée législative du Manitoba la pétition suivante :

(1) De demander au ministre du Travail, de la protection des consommateurs et des Services gouvernementaux d'envisager de concéder l'auditorium à la B-R-G d'ici le 1er mars 2023.

(2) Demander au ministre de l'Éducation de reconnaître la valeur que la B-R-G apporte à la population étudiant de l'ÉHS ainsi qu'aux communautés du village de Saint-Pierre-Jolys et de la MR De Salaberry.

(3) Demander au ministre de l'Éducation et au ministre des affaires francophones de reconnaître qu'un protocole d'entente entre la RRVSD et G-R-L est mutuellement bénéfique, financièrement et culturellement.

(4) Demander au ministre des Sport, de la Culture et du Patrimoine de reconnaître le potentiel patrimonial de cet important bâtiment et son statut au sein de la communauté.

(5) Demander au ministre des Sport, de la Culture et du Patrimoine d'empêcher toute rénovation de l'auditorium qui détruirait et dévaloriserait l'intégrité architecturale du bâtiment.

Cette pétition est signée par Doris Gosselin, Luc Catellier, Lorraine Lussier.

Merci.

Translation

Madam Speaker, I'd like to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The context for this petition is as follows:

(1) The Bibliothèque Régionale Jolys Regional Library was notified by the Red River Valley School Division to vacate premises currently located in the auditorium of the École Héritage School by March 31, 2023.

(2) The auditorium was built in the 1960s by famous Manitoban architect Étienne Gaboury, and it has been home to the JRL for 48 years.

(3) A photo of the auditorium captioned "The Regional Library" was published in a 2008 document titled "Significant Heritage Buildings of De Salaberry and St. Pierre Jolys". It is marked as an important modern building that could attain the status of Heritage Site.

(4) The JRL and the RRVSD have flourished by means of a mutually beneficial memorandum of understanding for 54 years.

(5) Their shared collection boasts over 50,000 books and has the fourth-largest collection of French-language literature in rural Manitoba.

(6) Students that are bussed in from neighbouring municipalities that do not have a public library, such as Niverville, Grunthal and Kleefeld, are provided with free access to the public library and its fourth largest collection of French-language literature in rural Manitoba during the school year.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To request the Minister of Labour, Consumer Protection and Government Services to consider granting the auditorium to the JRL by March 1, 2023.

(2) To request the Minister of Education to recognize the value that JRL provides to the student population of ÉHS, as well as the communities of Village de St. Pierre Jolys and the RM De Salaberry.

(3) To request the Minister of Education and the Minister of Francophone Affairs to recognize that a memorandum of understanding between the RRVSD

and the JRL is mutually, financially and culturally beneficial.

(4) To request the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage to recognize the heritage potential of this important building and its status in the community.

(5) To request the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage to prevent any renovations to the auditorium that would destroy and devalue the architectural integrity of the building.

This petition was signed by Doris Gosselin, Luc Catellier, Lorraine Lussier.

Thank you.

Foot-Care Services

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The population of those aged 55-plus has grown to approximately 2,500 in the city of Thompson.

(2) A large percentage of people in this age group require necessary medical foot care and treatment.

(3) A large percentage of those who are elderly and/or diabetic are also living on low incomes.

(4) The northern regional health authority previously provided essential medical foot-care services to seniors and those living with disabilities until 2019, then subsequently cut the program after the last two nurses filling those positions retired.

(5) The number of seniors and those living with diabetes has only continued to grow in Thompson and surrounding areas.

(6) There is no adequate medical care available in the city and region, whereas the city of Winnipeg has 14 medical foot-care centres.

(7) The implications of inadequate or lack of podiatric care can lead to amputations.

(8) The city of Thompson also serves as a regional health-care service provider, and the need for foot care extends beyond just those served in the capital city of the province.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to provide the services of two nurses to restore essential medical foot-care treatment to the city of Thompson, effective April 1st, 2020.

This has been signed by Wendy Lucas, Alexander Lucas, Jamie Luft [*phonetic*] and many other Manitobans.

South Perimeter Highway Noise Barrier

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Residents of the River Park South community here in Winnipeg are disturbed by the increasing noise levels caused by traffic on the South Perimeter Highway.

(2) The South Perimeter Highway functions as a transport route for semi-trucks travelling across Canada, making this stretch of the Perimeter especially loud.

(3) According to the South Perimeter Noise Study conducted in 2019, the traffic levels are expected to increase significantly over the next 20 years and backyard noise levels have already surpassed 65 decibels.

(4) Seniuk Road, which runs alongside the South Perimeter, contributes additional truck traffic, causing increased noise and air pollution.

(5) Residents face a decade of construction on the South Perimeter, making this an appropriate time to add noise mitigation for the South Perimeter to these projects.

(6) The current barriers between the South Perimeter Highway and the homes of the river bank—River Park South residents are a berm and a wooden fence, neither of which are effective at reducing the traffic noise.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to consult with noise specialists and other experts to help determine the most effective way to reduce traffic noise and to commit to meaningful action to address resident concerns; and

(2) To urge the Minister of Transportation to help address this issue with a noise barrier wall along the residential portions of the South Perimeter from

St. Anne's Road to St. Mary's Road and for River Park South residents.

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

Madam Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): On a couple of matters of House business, first, before we get to calling orders of the day.

I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts meeting on Tuesday, May 31st, 2022, will now be starting at 6 p.m. rather than 6:30 p.m. as previously scheduled. The reports to be considered, however, are unchanged.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts meeting on Tuesday, May 31st, 2022 will now be starting at 6 p.m. rather than 6:30 p.m. as previously scheduled. The reports to be considered are unchanged.

* (15:10)

Mr. Goertzen: Pursuant to rule 33(7), I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Swan River (Mr. Wowchuk). The title for the resolution is Recognizing the Efforts of Flood Volunteers and Workers.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Tuesday of private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for Swan River. The title of the resolution is Recognizing the Efforts of Flood Volunteers and Workers.

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Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, could you please call for debate this afternoon, Bill 39, The Appropriation Act, 2022 (School Tax Rebate), which I believe remains at second reading.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will consider debate on second reading of Bill 39 this afternoon.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS**Bill 39—The Appropriation Act, 2022
(School Tax Rebate)**

Madam Speaker: So I will, therefore, call debate on second reading, Bill 39, The Appropriation Act, 2022 (School Tax Rebate), standing in the name of the honourable member for Concordia, who has 17 minutes remaining.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): I appreciate the opportunity to continue my remarks.

And, you know, I think where I left off yesterday was trying to sort of explain this kind of a Frankenstein monster of politically-political ideologies that's been created by the power vacuum left when Brian Pallister walked out the door.

Because, of course, we know that everyone sitting across the aisle right now is—was a member of the caucus of Brian Pallister. The Cabinet remains virtually unchanged.

Mr. Dennis Smook, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

Some of the key players that were in place for—lieutenants for the former premier remain in place and are continuing to run the show.

But—so you have all of those elements that are producing the same results. As I said, cuts first; it's all about finding savings, as they call them, anywhere that they can find them, and that means the hits on our education, on our health care, on our municipalities, on our infrastructure.

So you still have that. But what you have now is you have the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) coming in and bringing in kind of these old institutional Tory, you know, operatives, bringing in kind of a whole 'nother element. We're layering on these new set of parameters and really doubling down on these, you know—tax cuts are the answer no matter what. What my friend from Transcona might call voodoo economics, right? Well, we can just cut our way to some kind of prosperity in this province.

But we know that the—this is a government that doesn't have the resources to do that. This is a government that is already running record deficits in this province—billion-dollar deficits. And so, on top of that, they're saying to Manitobans, we're going to borrow on your kids' futures; we're going to leverage your kids' futures by giving \$360 million to people now—and not just people in this province but corporations,

as we heard the minister so eloquently point out in his answer in question period today.

So you have all of these elements—and then, I guess you could say there's even another layer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's kind of the extreme right, the alt-right kind of elements that have infiltrated our province. And, you know, we see that when we see members of the Legislature supporting the protests, the freedom convoy—so-called freedom convoy. And you see you have those new kind of Trump elements that are also impacting this province.

It's kind of a Frankenstein monster of conservative, far-right ideas that are all kind of coalescing around the Premier, who seems okay with this idea now of running these deficits at the same time as cutting our services. It's absolutely unbelievable to most Manitobans, because I'm out on the doorstep. I'm hearing from them. You know, it's a lot different today as it—than it was even just a few years ago, where there was certainly a lot of discontent and anger out there, but what you're getting now when you're knocking on doors is people are being quite visceral and direct about it.

And the—and, you know, it's not hard to paint the picture for them. We don't have to say much. We don't spend much time at the doorstep explaining, you know, the nuances of our position because they understand very clearly that, you know, when you have an interim appropriation bill that's asking for another 300-plus-million dollars at the same time that we're cutting from education, they go, are you kidding me? Like, they understand the direct connection. They understand that.

And in the area that my friend from Transcona and I are from, the northeast part of the city, they see how The Concordia Foundation was asked to step up to try to deal with the surgical backlog, which, as we, you know, we pointed out many times and will continue to do so, that was created before the pandemic. It was certainly heightened and made worse by the pandemic, but started before the pandemic.

This government had the gall to come out to the foundation, The Concordia Foundation, and their many donors who step up year after year to support new projects and new initiatives in our province. And now people are saying, well, wait a minute, you had \$1 million to give to Cadillac Fairview—a billion-dollar corporation that has no connection to our province other than that they are a landlord here. You have a billion—or, \$1 million to give to that

billion-dollar corporation and you don't have enough to fully fund the projects at Concordia hip and knee.

And so, we don't need to make those connections. They understand that. They understand that their kids in school are waiting longer for clinicians and waiting longer to get connected to the resources that they need. They understand that we've lost teachers at many different school divisions across this province. They understand that. And so—they know that EAs, there's less EAs.

They understand these connections. We don't have to make it for them, and they say, well, wait a minute, why is it that 40 billion—sorry, \$40 million is leaving our province to corporate landlords at the same time that we're cutting our services that we count on?

But beyond that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the very core of this argument is one that we have made over and over again, and that is that folks are asking about how we can help as a provincial government with affordability in this province. Now, we have talked many times about ways that we think we can address the affordability challenge.

We've talked about, you know, not increasing Manitoba Hydro rates, as this government did during the height of the inflationary pressures that people are feeling at the gas pumps and at the grocery store. That would be a very straightforward, very simple way that they could do that. This government could have a better control of MPI and make sure that rates remain low. There are some tools—very straightforward tools—that this government has.

They could ask for an increase to the minimum wage. Now, that's an increase that will affect government to some degree, but ultimately, the—you know, the Walmarts and the Canadian Tires and the big corporations in our province—they have done well during the pandemic. You know, they are willing to do their part and they see that, in other provinces, in Ontario, you know, these, you know—not exactly left-wing governments in places like in Ontario—are raising their minimum wage and getting closer to that idea of a living wage. And they're not there yet, but that's where I think everyone is headed—certainly not to be the worst in the country.

So, people understand there are ways that we can be addressing affordability. And even if you were to say that we are going to change the tax structure to help those people who are facing these affordability issues, they could maybe understand that. But it

doesn't translate—what this government is doing doesn't translate to the actual people that need the help.

It's certainly helping the big corporations, it's helping Cadillac Fairview and you can go down the list and it's all big companies that, you know, I—as, I think, members on this side have said, you know, the companies didn't even ask for this. They didn't ask for a tax break. They didn't say, boy, times are really tough, we need help. They're just going to take it and throw it on the pile of profits that they're making throughout the pandemic. They're doing okay.

Now, you could say we want to support small businesses, we want to encourage this money to go to small businesses. But how is it that, you know, the fish-and-chip shop is getting a small rebate while these corporations are getting massive payouts? It doesn't make any sense. It's not targeted and it certainly doesn't translate to the people that need it.

And I know that for a fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because the timing of this particular debate could not be better. Because, as the member for Transcona (Mr. Altomare) mentioned today, you know, many of us got our municipal tax bill here in the city of Winnipeg in the mail. And many people, once again—I'm sure we're going to get calls in our office—once again are going to be left scratching their heads and say, wait a minute, my bill's higher this year. It's gone up this year.

And so now, we, as elected officials need to say, well, you're right. It has gone up because your rebate that you receive on your property tax has gone down. So you've gotten less of a rebate; your taxes have gone up, and don't worry; we're going to send you a cheque whenever the government gets around to it—you know, signed by the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson), says here you go, here's the money.

* (15:20)

It—first of all, I mean, just in terms of an organizational issue, it makes no sense. When we went through this process last year, and I spent, as I said, a lot of time explaining to constituents the complexity of how this scheme is going to work, I remember the government saying, well, this is just a one-time thing because we need to rush it through now. By next year, we'll have this whole thing figured out.

Here we are. I actually went back in Hansard and I looked at the—I could give—be giving the exact same speech I gave a year ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because the complexity of exactly how, you know,

how the rollout was going to go—a per cent—you know, a percentage versus the rebate, which is just a \$700 flat amount, it's not as simple as just saying, you know, we're taking off of this particular rebate and giving it to you in a cheque.

And, in fact, the argument that I made last year still holds true. For, you know, members like myself and for many of us in this Chamber, there's going to be an increase in the amount that we get when we get these cheques from the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson). There will be an increase.

However, that's not true across the board, and the example that I gave last time—and I said, well, you know, people that live in Valley Gardens or in Morse Place in my constituency, they're going to be getting a little bit more money. But the people that live in East Elmwood, that live on Herbert or on Riverton, for those folks they're actually going to not be getting any increase with this cheque because it's based on a percentage, as I said, and their housing values just aren't the same.

And so as you go up, I mean, it's just—it's simple math, you know. If—the member for Transcona (Mr. Altomare) called it voodoo math what the government is doing, you know, kind of a stepchild of voodoo economics, I guess. But it's like they're trying to convince you, don't worry, the average cheque is going to be this. But for somebody that lives in Tuxedo they're going to be getting a massive cheque. They're going to be getting a huge rebate. But for the person that lives in East Elmwood in my constituency, that lives in—on—in some of these areas where their housing values aren't as high, they're actually going to be getting less, or they're going to be flattened out this year.

And how does that make any sense? Who needs the help right now? I mean, just besides what we should be doing as legislators, looking out for those folks who need the help, but who needs the help most right now? If you just have to take a look at who's been impacted by their jobs, who's getting most impacted by the cost of living increases? It's low wage. It's low-income earners. It's hard-working people who are just trying to get ahead, and this government is completely leaving them behind.

So it's—and it's—again, they've lost the thread completely because, you know, that's definitely a Brian Pallister holdover. There you go, that's 100 per cent—that's a Brian Pallister move. That's what he did last year. In fact, he cooked this up on the back of a napkin, I think, in the dying days of the election

and saddled his successor with that. And we all said that at the time, like, you know, this is a problem now. It's going to be a bigger problem in year two, year three, year four, year five.

But instead of turning their back on it, this Premier—the current Premier—has doubled down on it and said we're going ahead with it, and at the same time we're going to go into further deficit to pay for it. So you—it's just kind of like the trifecta of bad policy, of bad right-wing policy where they're benefitting the corporations and leaving the average person in the dust. They're running up bigger and bigger deficits and saying, don't worry, we know how to manage money. Meanwhile, they're the ones running the billion-dollar deficits, the highest deficits this province has ever seen.

And at the same time, they've continued on with the cuts. At the very least they could have said we see that there's a world-wide pandemic. We see that there's broad political consensus around the idea of improving health care. We know we made a mess of it, right? And they didn't have to say that part out loud. That could have been, you know, just to themselves. We know we made a mess of it, but we know that this is something that everybody wants—right, left, doesn't matter—everybody wants better health care. Everybody knows our seniors in this province deserve better health care.

So, could they have changed course? Absolutely—absolutely—they could have changed course. You're borrowing \$360 million for a tax cut that's going to benefit the rich. It makes no sense to anybody at the same time you're cutting these services.

So my—I guess my—you know, to sum this up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really feel that, first of all, there's a level of disorganization that I think comes from, you know, a change in leadership. And, you know, I mean—well, you know, I don't mind saying, you know, I've seen this play out from both sides. I understand the dying days of a government and how members of the caucus and members of the Cabinet are starting to get very, very concerned about their own political futures. They see the writing on the wall. They're knocking on the same doors we are, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They're hearing the same messages over and over again.

So, I'm guessing that this disorganization comes from, you know, a little bit of that, that they're not a cohesive team right now and they're not—you know, they're not all rowing in the same direction, you could say. So, there's an element to that.

But it's also, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, important to remember that at the heart of this, at the core of this, is a political decision that will ultimately hurt Manitobans. And, you know, there was a time when we would have to go to the doorstep and we'd have to spend a lot of time sort of explaining the nuance and, you know, oh well, you know, they closed emergency rooms, they—you know, they defunded—or reduced funding for municipalities, that's why your roads are so bad. Like, I mean, there was a lot of explaining that we had to do.

I find myself more and more now when I knock on doors, introduce myself and I just listen, because every single person has a story about how this government has failed them. Every single person has a story about how this government has impacted their community. Every single person can talk about a health-care story, about a health-care worker that they know; you know, a whole bunch of different ways that this government's policies have actually impacted their lives.

And, quite frankly, they're over it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They are done with it. They are completely done with this idea that the government should be taking their money, their tax dollars, and not using it for their priorities.

So, you know, they want to play—paint this as, you know, simple, well, we're holding—you know, we're holding back the cheques. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we want to make sure the right people get the support that they need. And I can guarantee you, anybody on the opposite side wants to go and ask if they think—you know, ask the average Manitoban, do they think that Cadillac Fairview is the right person, or company or corporation to get the support from this government?

They're going to say no. They're going to say, we've got to invest in health care, education, we have to build good jobs and a strong economy. We need to support our municipalities and build our infrastructure, especially right now after such a difficult winter.

That's what we're asking for, that's what we're asking for this government to consider. I think there's still an opportunity to step back from this and to re-evaluate, maybe start listening to Manitobans, because soon enough they're going to get an earful when they get out on the doorsteps in 2023, or maybe sooner. If we had our way, it would be sooner.

So, thank you very much for the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MLA Malaya Marcelino (Notre Dame): So, today, we're discussing this supplemental appropriation bill. It's an act appropriating funds in addition to those already enacted in an annual appropriation act.

Supplemental appropriations provide additional budget authority, usually in cases where the needs for funds is too urgent to be postponed until enactment of the regular appropriation bill. In this case, the government is trying to provide the tax rebate to Manitobans by June, and the budget the PCs introduced will not go through until November. And the government right now is asking for legislative approval in order to borrow more money, borrow money that it doesn't have, to finance this tax rebate.

The NDP, we are here because we strongly oppose the way that this rebate was set up. From the beginning, when it was introduced as bill 71 last spring, we raised concerns that this rebate was very badly structured because of the way that it disproportionately benefits the wealthiest in the province and even because of how it benefits large-scale commercial landlords that are out of province. There are more efficient and even less costly ways to provide tax rebates for the Manitobans who really need it. And some of these questions were raised during the legislative debates by members of the opposition.

* (15:30)

For example, the NDP Finance critic, the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliw), suggested that instead of sending rebate cheques, the government could have passed legislation that would actually adjust property taxes. The NDP Education critic, the member for Transcona (Mr. Altomare), raised the issue last spring that, given the cost of \$1.3 million to even mail the rebate cheques, the government could have instead increased the Education Property Tax Credit, which would have reduced the amount of tax immediately payable without the added cost of \$1.3 million.

But no, the PC process of giving the rebate is less efficient and more costly. Why? Because the point of the rebate was never about making things more affordable for Manitobans. One main point of the rebate is to buy votes.

Remember how we had to do an amendment so that the then-premier Pallister's picture and signature and letter to voters were excluded from the cheque? But if the term vote-buying is too harsh, maybe the characterization from University of Manitoba economist Gregory Mason is slightly softer around the edges. He characterizes the PC rebate cheques in their

form as a way to make the electorate feel good. Quote, that's really what the government is buying with the money, is that little bit of gratitude on the part of people, end quote, said Mason.

So, just a short recap here: this is supposed to be a bill giving Manitobans tax relief, but we are saying that this rebate could have been done in a more efficient and less costly way if that was really the intent, but sadly, the intent was more about making the electorate feel good, or what I would term vote buying.

Second, I'd like to emphasize our concern that this tax rebate severely impacts a plan to fund Manitobans—Manitoba's public education system. We in the NDP are very interested in education finance reform. We believe that the majority of public education should be funded out of provincial revenue and that there have been long-standing iniquities due to the property-tax-funded model.

However, what the PCs have done in mailing out rebate cheques is another rush job. Let's say they're putting the cart before the horse. Because, indeed, if the intent of the bill was to allow for a new education funding formula to be developed, why was there no consideration of what such a funding formula should look like before implementing the bill for these property tax rebates?

The PCs did not go through a thorough process to review and assess how public education will be funded. They have not presented any plan, let alone a sustainable plan for how to properly, sufficiently fund public education.

Instead, the PCs have just made cuts to how education will be funded before a sustainable plan was put in place. And it reminds me of the way the Shared Health cuts and consolidation were rammed through before 2019, before a sustainable plan was put in place to make sure our hospitals could function safely with the best patient care possible. We know that didn't happen. We know that Manitobans are faring very badly in comparison to other provinces because of the PC health-care cuts.

We heard about the Canadian Institute for Health Information latest findings, ranking Manitoba last for surgical backlogs. PCs and the current Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) continuing to say, well, it's because of the pandemic. They say, haven't you heard of a little thing called a worldwide pandemic? And they use the pandemic over and over to explain to people waiting in pain that the pandemic is a reason why they have to

wait years for surgical knee and hip replacements and cataract surgery. But that's not quite the whole story, is it, because every other province in Canada is also facing a worldwide pandemic, but it is Manitoba that is, unfortunately and painfully, ranking last.

This is why the NDP will continue our calls for an independent inquiry because the people of Manitoba deserve that and because they don't have to take our word for it. The truth will come out in this independent inquiry that we are calling for.

With Shared Health, it was cut and close first, come up with a plan later. Beds were cut. Emergency rooms were closed. Nursing and allied health positions were eliminated. There was no PC plan that accounted for staff recruitment and retention to account for increased capacity and increased needs at the planned consolidated centres; it was cut and close first, and then come up with a plan later.

It's 2022, and community members are still dying at higher rates than ever before due to COVID. We just recently saw those numbers for May. And the public and the exhausted health-care staff and patients waiting in pain are still waiting for an updated plan from PC task forces and PC advisory councils about what the plan will be to get surgical and diagnostic backlogs back on track.

And what they did to health care they tried to do, and are trying to do, with our public education system with bill 71 and bill 64: cut, consolidate and centralize power in the hands of politicians, giving control of our children's public education system to PC politicians that are literally running with scissors. Again, the PCs are cutting first, the method of how a substantial portion of public education is funded by introducing this property rebate of the education portion of property taxes.

But now the PCs are without their bill 64 plan. Bill 64 was the plan to cut public education further, consolidate and centralize power; so, currently, there is no PC plan for education. Why? Because the official opposition did what we had to do in the Legislature so the public could have more time to understand the bill's implications. And then once the public had more time, we saw the movement. We saw parents, students, the Manitoba Teachers' Society, school boards, municipalities. They all organized and expressed their displeasure with the cuts, consolidation and centralization of power that came with bill 64. Record numbers of individuals that signed up to the committee process to give their 10 minutes on why this PC plan for education is harmful.

* (15:40)

So the PC education plan was stopped. But, unfortunately, in opposition we couldn't stop bill 71, the plan for cuts. And bill 71 is actually part and parcel of bill 64. It goes together like honey and tea, or maybe a more apt description is like rats and sewers. In any case, bill 71 was the plan to cut education funding and bill 64 was the plan to consolidate and centralize public education.

So now that bill 64 is temporarily or permanently off the table, we still haven't been presented with a plan for how to fund public education. Last November, the PC government announced a new committee to assist in the creation of an education funding model intended to be implemented in the 2024 school year, but there has been no plan yet presented. Yet the government already made the cuts last spring and more cuts will be made this spring. Again, this government has gone ahead and made the cuts to how it has—how public education has been traditionally funded.

So just to recap, this is supposed to be a bill giving Manitobans tax relief, but we are saying that this rebate could have been done in a more efficient and less costly way if that was really intent. Instead, this tax rebate is more about the electorate feeling good or vote buying.

Second, this rebate is cutting public education off at its knees. The PCs have not presented a new public education funding formula. So this rebate removes money earmarked for public education, but we do not know how the government plans to pay for public education.

And last, the biggest problem with the rebate as it is currently structured is that it disproportionately benefits the wealthiest among us and even those outside of our province. The NDP believe that there is currently an affordability crisis and that Manitobans are really feeling the crunch right now and that government can and should provide relief. But this rebate is not helping those who need it most. It's the opposite. This rebate is helping the most well off amongst us—the most.

This rebate should have been structured differently. There should have been a progressive element to it. There should be a cap on how much the wealthiest among us can get back.

Manitoba's new education tax rebate was touted as a way to bring relief to working people, seniors and low-income families. But a recent CBC analysis

found that owners of Winnipeg's most expensive properties reaped the most benefit to the tune of millions in rebates. The PC government's plan to reform school financing put this education tax rebate cheque into every homeowner's pocket last year. But the dollar amounts of those cheques for single dwellings and condominiums varied widely from \$8 for a tiny condo in Winnipeg's St. Johns neighbourhood to \$6,023 for a Tuxedo property according to data obtained through access to information.

Again, the stated goal by then-premier Pallister of this education tax 'reboite' program, which cost nearly \$250 million when the Province was in the biggest deficit we've ever been, was to put money, quote, back into the hands of people who work so hard to get money in the first place: seniors living on fixed incomes, families struggling to make ends meet, small businesses, as well, that were victimized with more red tape and higher taxes, end quote. Again, according to former premier Brian Pallister.

But the CBC analysis that was recently published showed that the Winnipeg properties for the top 10 per cent of education tax rebate recipients pocketed four times more cash than the bottom 10 per cent. The top tier was rebated \$17,750,239, which represents 18.5 per cent of total for homes and condos. Meanwhile, the bottom tier got \$4,310,223, or 4.5 per cent of the total.

So here, with these figures, you can see that with this government's plan, the top 10 per cent of the wealthiest property owners in Manitoba got the lion's share of the money that would have otherwise gone to funding public schools and public education. Meanwhile, the bottom 10 per cent, or the most modest property owners in Manitoba, received only 4.5 per cent of the total amounts.

Again, a University of Manitoba economist, Gregory Mason, said, quote: it's a fabrication to maintain that as putting more money into the pockets of Manitobans.

And there was another quote from the CBC article from a Point Douglas resident named Olivia Klaric, who owns a 672-square-foot home on a street where most of the houses fall into the bottom 10 per cent of tax rebates. Quote: Fairness went out the door on this little project of theirs. End quote. Sorry—it's not the end. Most low-income people realize that they're always going to get the shaft from the government, Klaric said.

Fairness. During the bill 71 debate last spring, I heard the member for Riding Mountain (Mr. Nesbitt) say that it's fair the wealthy get more back because the wealthy paid more in taxes. And some other folks quoted in a CBC article did allude to that as well. If—that is, indeed, a form of fairness—you get back what you put in—but there is also another type of fairness that I believe that Ms. Klaric from Point Douglas was referring to, and it's certainly the type of fairness that the Manitoba NDP subscribe to, which is we believe that, as members of a society living together in one community, we ought to contribute in our own way to the life of the community, to share and pool our resources together to ensure an efficient, safe and even beautiful community, and to make sure that members of society, especially our most vulnerable in society, can live in decency.

But, the basic definition of fairness for PCs is a little more basic. It's: What's mine is mine, and what's yours is yours. It will be my choice to give to charity or not. The government shouldn't tax me and decide for me what I do with my hard-earned money.

But—that type of mentality would be fine if we were somehow completely independent of each other, but the truth is we live together in one community. We share and benefit from the same good roads. We share and benefit from the same hospitals. We share schools and experience shared benefits from a well-educated population. We have shared responsibility for everything from food inspection to public health vaccination campaigns, to wildfire management resources.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, private property owners weren't the only ones that got these mailed cheques. Commercial properties received a 10 per cent rebate last year and will get the same percentage this year. And, in fact, the top 10 cheques were written out to corporations.

Polo Park shopping centre received the largest cheque overall totalling more than \$1 million. Other well-known Winnipeg buildings topped the list, including the three skyscrapers at Portage and Main. The top 10 biggest cheques were to Polo Park, at \$1,048,213; St. Vital Centre, at \$522,850; from—to Truth North Square, a cheque for \$259,709; a cheque to the Outlet Collection Winnipeg—\$249,484; a cheque to the owners of Kildonan Place—\$218,254; a cheque to commercial property owners of 360 Main St.—\$214,000 and \$203. Property owners went to—cheques went to Fort Garry Place at \$194,438—to the Richardson Building owners—\$164,872; to the Grant Park Shopping Centre owners—

a cheque for \$146,531 and a cheque to commercial property owners at 201 Portage—a cheque for \$140,849.

* (15:50)

But let's take a look at what, you know, Cadillac Fairview is about, since they're the ones that received the top cheque at \$1,048,213. This is an operator and developer of real estate properties that offer retail, office, residential, industrial and mixed-used asset classes. The company operates as an owner-investor and manages a portfolio of assets across the Americas and the United Kingdom, meeting the real estate needs of commercial and residential clients. Their main office is in Toronto, Ontario, 20 Queen St. West, on the fifth floor. I've been to this area in Toronto. I lived there for a while. This is one of the most expensive spots of property in downtown Toronto.

The next round of rebate cheques for this spring will be even higher, since the Stefanson government announced that it has bumped the rebate up from 25 per cent to 37.5 per cent and a plan to rebate 50 per cent in 2023. There are no caps on this amount that is rebated. Let's repeat that: there are no caps on the amount that can be rebated.

And as for borrowing money to cover the rebates, economists such as University of Manitoba's Jesse Hajer says that governments should think about whether paying all that interest is worth it.

Before the education property tax rebate was introduced in 2021, there were tax breaks for seniors and farmers which remain to this day. And in 2021, the seniors' Education Property Tax Credit was capped at \$300 with income-based clawbacks, and the Farmland School Tax Rebate had a cap of \$3,750. But these tax cuts now are very much less transparent than those public credits and information that we can access that way.

The economist Jesse Hajer says that tax cuts are less transparent than benefit programs because it obscures the fact that wealthier households are getting much more cash than those in the middle and lower classes. He says, instead, with benefit programs, it's usually very clear the amount a person qualifies for, and that maximum amount is public.

The key justification for bill 71 and all these tax rebates given during the legislative debates was that the bill was necessary to provide financial support to Manitobans during the pandemic. However, the bill instead operates to give the largest rebates to those who hold the most valuable property instead of those

who were the most in need of financial assistance. Therefore, bill 71 and these tax rebates is ineffective in implementing a strategy to assist Manitobans experiencing financial hardships due to the pandemic.

Finally, if the bill was intended to provide support, renters have been left out of the system entirely. Last year and this year, some renters will still be adversely affected by the reduction to their Education Property Tax Credit.

This budget is all about choices, and the PC budget and the unfair part of this rebate that disproportionately benefits the wealthy is about choices. Many Manitobans are still hurting despite what the PCs are saying about how child poverty has ended under their reign. How I wish that were actually true.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, just yesterday my colleagues, the member for St. James (Mr. Sala) and the member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux) visited Manitoba harvest. We had a tour there, and the directors also gave us a presentation of, you know, what their clients are really like and the kind of hardships that they experience. We learned that this March, March 2022, was a record-breaking amount of households that Manitoba harvest had to provide hampers for, and in this case, we're breaking records in a very, very bad way.

Now, food bank usage is high all over Canada, but Manitobans have higher usage even still. So, for example, in March 2020, Manitoba harvest served 8,946 households. In March 2021, Manitoba harvest served 9,820 households. But this past March, Manitoba harvest served 13,994 households, again, a record-breaking amount. This is not the end of child poverty that we're experiencing here in Manitoba, like what members opposite have been saying through their budget consultations and even here in debate in this House. This is not the end of child poverty; it's the worsening of child poverty.

All we have to do is, you know, look at the conditions at schools, even in my own constituency of Notre Dame. You know, the address of Pinkham School, 765 Pacific, it's very far from that Queen Street, very tony neighbourhood in Toronto where Cadillac Fairview has their main premises. You know, Pinkham School, that's—the students that go there, the families, they're recipients of Manitoba harvest Friday afternoon packs. Not only do children there live in so much poverty that they have to, you know, use those nutrition food programming during the weekday, but on Friday afternoons, Manitoba harvest provides food

for their breakfast for Saturdays and Sundays, as well, because that's just how much need there is there.

You know, this budget is about choices. Money that went to Cadillac Fairview could've gone to 765 Pacific instead. This school in my constituency doesn't even have enough money for a playground. They only have markings on their floor: stuff for four square and hopscotch, but not even a physical actual playground. When I asked the principal about that, why doesn't this school have a playground, the—her answer was that they have to make choices with their budget and, you know, nutrition programs are more important than a playground.

So, again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's about choices. Should money for education go to the Cadillac—

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): The member's time has expired.

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): It is my honour to put a few comments on Bill 39, The Appropriation Act, 2022 (School Tax Rebate).

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, Manitobans knew education tax rebate was supposed to bring relief to working senior and lower income families, but owners of Winnipeg's most expensive properties benefit to the tune of millions in rebate.

As inflation is at—or is at over 6 per cent, is this tax rebate will help the people who really need it? No, it won't help most people who really need the help. Some households in the St. Johns neighbourhood got \$8 in rebate, and properties in Tuxedo got over \$6,000 in rebate.

* (16:00)

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, this is a borrowed money. The Province does not have the money. We are paying interest on this money.

Last year, former Premier Brian Pallister saw in the polls that he was the least popular in all of Canada and he tried to pay for people to like him. Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, how much did he borrow for people to like him? It was in the tune of \$250 million. As I said earlier, we are paying interest on this \$250 million. Our future generations will be paying interest on this.

In addition, he spent \$1.3 million to mail out the cheques. That money should have been spent on better things such as health coverage to international students, who were out yesterday protesting outside the

Legislature, or a universal school breakfast program to ensure every child succeeds in the classroom.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this money could even have gone to—in The Maples, and we are looking for a field hockey turf to be put in The Maples. So that \$1.3 million could have gone to so many different things with better money spent instead of just mailing the cheques—cheques where the premier was trying to buy his popularity.

Again, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, was he able to buy the popularity with the taxpayers' money? No, not at all. Even his own party didn't want to keep him around. They said no.

The Acting Speaker (Dennis Smook): Order.

The conversation in here is getting a little bit loud on both sides and it's very difficult—it's on both sides, and it's very difficult to hear the speaker speaking. So I would—*[interjection]*

I'm listening, and it's on both sides. I would appreciate if the members would listen while I'm speaking.

Mr. Sandhu: So, I was saying, did he able to buy the popularity with the taxpayers' money? No, he couldn't buy the popularity with the taxpayers' money. Taxpayers know. They can see through it, what he was trying to do.

Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the current Premier (Mrs. Stefanson), she's also trying the same trick: borrowing money to pay for wealthy Manitobans and to pay big landlords. Those landlords don't even have their offices in Manitoba.

So, how much money is the Stefanson government is borrowing this year? Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, in the tune of \$349 million: \$349,800,000. That is lots of money. And again, I said earlier, we are paying interest—they are paying interest on \$250 million and we will be paying interest on \$349,800,000. That's into our future generations. In two years, that's almost \$600 million borrowed—\$600 million.

And I—probably I can't see the members on the PC side, but I really do want to know: do they like paying interest? I don't think so. Anybody—I really want to see if they can maybe raise their hands up, they will like to pay the interest. I don't think so, anybody want to pay interest.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this borrowed money, if it were to be spent on better things such as making life

more affordable for Manitobans instead of out-of-province big landlords.

So, again, I just, like—they are just borrowing money to pay the rich, wealthy Manitobans, plus out-of-province landlords. I think it was as I said—I was listening to the question period earlier, I think it was in the tune of around \$40 million that went out of province. Is that money going to be spent in Manitoba? No. That money left Manitoba. That money left Manitoba. Not coming back into Manitoba.

So, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, what did the education property tax really means more crowded classrooms, fewer teachers and EAs and less resources for the kids this year and the next year. As I said, it's not the—it's not our kids who will be benefitting from this education property tax, but it will be the wealthy Manitoban out-of-province landlords.

I'm just, like, say the—recently, a CBC article where we just found out that Polo Park shopping centre received the largest cheque overall, totalling more than \$1 million. This is the—Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, this is the company that's worth over \$20 billion. It doesn't make sense taking money away from our students and giving it to out-of-province landlords and \$20-billion companies. Again, over \$1 million.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, I do like to list a few of those—top 10, actually, that—I have the list. Again, Polo Park received \$1,048,213; St. Vital Centre received \$522,850; True North Square, \$259,709; Outlet Collection Winnipeg, \$249,484; Kildonan Place, \$218,254; 360 Main St., \$214,203; Fort Garry Place, \$194,438; Richardson Building, \$164,872; Grant Park Shopping Centre, \$146,531; 201 Portage, \$140,849. That's the big chunk of money that these people, these corporations don't need it, where this money went.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, Stefanson government is borrowing money and putting our future generations in deficit so they can give rebates to ultra-rich PC donors and out-of-province landlords. Not only PC government is giving money to out-of-province landlords through this education tax credit, but continue to send hundreds of thousands of dollars of Manitoba's money to Texas-based companies to access our provincial parks. Even, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I maybe add not only this, this hasn't been out there that much.

* (16:10)

Being the critic for MPI, I'd like to actually raise another issue where the money is going out of province. It is to MPI's salvage items—company named Impact Auto Auctions. This company is based in—near Chicago, in Westchester, Illinois. So, each time you want to buy a car through MPI—those cars are written off—each time, we have to pay this company first to bid. Then, once you are the winner of that bid, then you have to pay some money because you won the bid.

If you are a public buyer, if the car price or what item that MPI is selling is between 50 and 500 dollars, you are end up paying between 115 to 260 dollars to this Impact Auto Auctions, which is not even based in Manitoba. They have no employees in Manitoba, just using their software. But the money is going out of Canada, all the way to Chicago, Illinois.

I do like to list a few other items, like how much money is going out. Like, there's—if you were buying a car between \$500 to \$1,200, it is \$260 to \$350 going to this Impact Auto. If the car is between \$1,200 to \$2,000, it's \$340–\$350 to \$450 going to Impact Auto. If the car is between \$2,000 and \$5,000, it's \$450 to \$600 going to Impact Auto. If the car is between \$5,000 and \$10,000, it's \$600 to \$875. If the car is \$10,000 to \$15,000, \$875 to \$1,050 is going to Impact Auto. And the last one, if it is 15,000 to 17,015–\$17,500 on [*inaudible*] it's \$1,050 to 10–\$1,075 going to Impact Auto which is not even based in Manitoba. So, never mind it's least—not even based in Canada. This is based in Chicago.

Well, I'd just like to list, actually, the dealer's schedule too. That was—the earlier schedule was the public buying it. If the dealers are buying it, they get a discount. So you know what? Actually, I really want to know, like, how this is helping Manitobans, you know?

So, this is the list I probably include as the dealer schedule, is that between \$50 and \$500 an item, buying from MPI through Impact Auto will cost you \$50 to \$145. If the item is between \$500 to \$1,200, it will cost you \$145 to \$245. If the item is between \$1,200 to \$2,000, it's \$245 to \$365 will go to Impact Auto. If the item is between \$2,000 to \$5,000, the Impact Auto will get between \$365 to \$520. So \$5,000—if the item is between \$5,000 to \$10,000, it's between \$520 to \$610. If the item is between \$10,000 to \$15,000, it's going to be \$600–\$610 to \$660 going to Impact Auto. If the item is \$15,000 to \$20,000, it is \$660 to \$700 going to Impact Auto. If the item is between \$20,000, \$25,000, it will—it's going to go

\$700 to \$805 going to Impact Auto. And at last one, if the item was between \$25,000 to \$30,000 and greater, it is going to be \$805 to \$830.

So that's the pattern, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, where the money is flowing out of province; not into other provinces, but out of province to the other country, be it is Texas or be it Illinois.

I'd like come to—back to the plan. The government doesn't have a plan to make up this funding for the education except by cuts to our most important services; health and education.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, when we talk about the health care, there's so many things to say about the health care. Maybe I can start from Seven Oaks emergency room closures. Not only Seven Oaks emergency closures, they also cut ICU beds at Seven Oaks. During the pandemic, they closed out-patient CancerCare clinic at Seven Oaks.

Again if I bring it back to the residents of The Maples, or my constituents in The Maples, each and every day, I'm seeing life made more difficult by this Stefanson government.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

And I'm looking at also my City of Winnipeg tax bill that I just received yesterday. Before I came home, my wife put this right on the table so I can see it. We used to have a \$700 credit. That \$700 credit is gone down to \$437.50. So we lost around 200-some-odd dollars.

And the residents in The Maples, their tax—this education property tax, they probably going to get around \$600 cheque average, that's what the government is saying. So, for the residents for The Maples, they're ahead by only around \$300.

But if we really look at it, the residents along Wellington Crescent or in Tuxedo, those people got over \$6,000 cheque. So, \$300 cheques for the residents of The Maples, and \$6,000 cheques for the residents of Tuxedo. This is not fair.

In The Maples is all working-class people. How is that—how is this tax rebate helping the working-class people? It's not going to help those who really need it. There's a way to do it, maybe such as capping it for those wealthy people or even, if the property is between \$350,000 or \$400,000—if their value is under \$400,000, they go no education tax, and then between 400 to 500 thousand, pay certain—between 500 to 600 thousand, people pay certain.

* (16:20)

That's how we can help those really who need this help. A system that government had taken is not helping who really needs the help. Inflation is high. We are seeing gas prices so high. We are seeing food prices so high. Each and every time when I meet my constituents, the question comes to this: how are we going to survive?

Soon we will have the minimum wage, the lowest in Canada. People want to know why I'm even living in Manitoba sometimes. In Ontario the minimum wage is \$15. We always talk about the students coming to Manitoba. Have we really listened to those students—international students those are coming into Manitoba? Once they get the PR they usually leave, leave Manitoba to Ontario or even to Alberta and BC because they make more money there compared to what we are making here. Currently, we are the second lowest; come October 1st we will be the lowest.

We have seen inflation rates—a couple of months I was watching, even though I haven't looked at it for a long time—but for the last couple of months inflation rate in Manitoba is around 7.3 per cent, compared to the country at 6 per cent. So the cost of everything is going up, but the wages are not going up. How can we convince those people—those international students—to stay in Manitoba? We are always hearing that this is how many applications are processed. Have we ever seen how many people have left Manitoba to the other provinces because of the low wages in Manitoba?

Again, Madam Speaker, I have raised this issue so many times. We have seen the Stefanson government have underspent critical infrastructure for so many years, around two and two—\$347 million last year. We have been waiting for so, so long to have Chief Peguis Trail extended all the way to Route 90. I'm hearing this every single day from the residents of The Maples, my constituents. This is not only that high—that inner ring road, I think you can call it, going through The Maples only. This is also going through Kildonan-River East. I'm sure the member may be hearing from those people in that part of the town. And this is also going through McPhillips, and I'm sure the member is probably hearing from those residents, too.

You know, actually, no, let me go back to McPhillips. I don't think so—the MLA for the McPhillips even lives in the McPhillips, haven't seen him to any community events. I have so many people coming to my office and even at this issue, they are

calling me. I'm more than happy to help you. Never seen him in the community. I don't think so—he really know where that Chief Peguis Trail is going to be going through. That's why I think he never raised that issue with his government. It goes through McPhillips and it goes through Tyndall Park.

I'm sure member from Tyndall Park is also hearing on this issue, too. We have talked about it ourselves, too, and as her dad is the MP for the area, we have discussed these matters with him, too, and we have also discussed these matters with the City councillor for the area. She have been very, very supportive of us, but she's looking for partners, the provincial partners that really don't want to come to the table.

Meanwhile, on the one hand, we are spend—we are underspending the money and not really—like, again, earlier, I was—actually, I was thinking, actually, well, maybe we can call this government the government of announcements. There's lots of announcements, but then they always, always, always under-spent those amounts.

We have heard so many times McGillivray interchange. We have heard St. Mary's interchange. You know, this has been repeated, repeated every single day, like, but, again, not doing anything. Same announcement, same recycle this announcement over and over and over again. That's my—maybe I'm saying instead of calling Stefanson government, maybe we can call this announcement government, only announcement but not really taking any actions on those ones.

Even after we talk about surgical backlogs, 170,000 people are waiting on those lists, but we have announcement—again, last year there was announcement to spend certain amount of money. Where did they spend that money? They really didn't spend the money where supposed to spend to reduce the backlog.

No, they spent the \$110 million again. Where this money will be spent? You know, on the other hand, maybe not spent. Maybe your \$210 million, they may spend certain amount on certain other things, but then they, again, the question period, oh, we are spending \$110,000—\$110 million on surgical backlogs, but really, not really spending the money on backlogs.

So with this, Madam Speaker, I'm sure there are few other people who want to speak to this bill, which is not really helping the Manitobans who need the money most.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to share a few words about Bill 39, the appropriation tax—The Appropriation Act, 2022 (School Tax Rebate). That seems like an awful fancy description just to describe the inability of the government to live within its means, and I think that most Manitobans, they're not fooled.

They're not fooled by some of the usual kind of rhetoric that's being mentioned time and time again about tax savings—the word savings, the word rebate, the word relief, when the fact of the matter, Madam Speaker, is it's quite the opposite. It's quite the opposite to everyday Manitobans. And everyday Manitobans is the vast majority here in Manitoba.

So, the actions and the programs and the announcements that are made on a regular basis by this government don't actually benefit regular Manitobans. They impact regular Manitobans, but they do not benefit regular Manitobans.

* (16:30)

So the question is very simple: Why are we here right now? Why are we debating this appropriations bill? What supplemental appropriations bill? And it's a simple matter of the fact that this government cannot live within its means. It conveniently blames the pandemic for its incompetence to deal with the issues at hand. We've now been in a pandemic for a number of years now, Madam Speaker, and hopefully, we're not continuing in that for a few more years; hopefully, the end, and there is legitimate relief from the pandemic in sight.

But the fact is, Madam Speaker, on a regular basis in this Chamber and in this House we see this government blame the pandemic for its shortcomings. They've now had the opportunity to plan—hopefully plan—you would hope that they had that ability to plan for contingencies, for issues, for rainy-day funds, because it is pouring; it is raining—no pun intended—it is raining and pouring here in Manitoba, and we are all suffering for a variety of different reasons under a variety of different programs under a variety of different ministerial ships—all at the same time. So there is emergencies happening right now.

But this government is only conveniently, selectively choosing what's an emergency. Health care is in crisis. The education system is in crisis. Conservation is in crisis, and they have been in crisis through the entire term of this government, the entire term and a half or term and three quarters of this government. But

we are still talking here today, bringing forth the supplemental appropriations act to be able to deal with it as an emergency.

So Manitobans, like I said, Madam Speaker, will not be fooled. They know what the emergency is and they know that this government is using the word emergency just to try and help benefit themselves; just to try and help benefit themselves and their friends and their wealthy friends and their wealthy donors.

There has been so much, Madam Speaker, and if you are truly living within your means, and I realize members opposite probably really don't understand that whole concept of living paycheque to paycheque, living within your means and really struggling to make ends meet. And when you do that, if you're truly doing that and having that struggle, you do not spend frivolously on things. You do not go out there and spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on billboards to pat yourself on the back. You don't get out there and buy yourself a couch and go on a tour, and hopefully, that couch is a futon and can double as a hospital bed because that's what's needed in this province. You don't sit there and spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on a bill that nobody wants, meaning bill 64.

But, Madam Speaker, still to this day, they're still touting aspects of that bill 64, which was so vastly disagreed to by not only members opposite, obviously; that is something we took forward to, and we took very passionately, on behalf of Manitobans, to say let's do this. And we took a lot of flack for that, but what that did is that gave Manitobans the opportunity to actually look at the details. And when that occurred, that piece of legislation was so vastly criticized that it had no place in Manitoba. But this government still spent thousands and thousands of dollars to promote that.

So we're sitting here talking about supplemental appropriations and the need for more money because they're having a difficult time to make ends meet when they frivolously spent money on all kinds of different—and, I mean, we could go down that list; we could go down that list and, Madam Speaker, that list will come very close to what we're dealing with here today. So if there was no place to go to, if there was no magical bank account for this government to go to, would they be able to function?

And the answer is no. At least they wouldn't be able to function for all of Manitoba. They would be able to function for a certain percentage, and I understand that's the government's base and their demographic to just kind of cater to that few.

But the fact of the matter, Madam Speaker, is that it's just a shell game, it's just a house of cards. And we're having this discussion time and time again about seeking supplemental appropriations because they can't make ends meet, and at some point in time this is going to catch up to them.

And I know they're hoping—they're hoping that it doesn't catch up to them in the fall of 2023, because when that bill comes due for all of these pieces of legislation that are brought forward, it's going to be—and I know that's a thought process—and that somebody else will clean up that mess. As long as we look good today, somebody else will clean up that mess. And it's going to be Manitobans left footing that bill, Manitobans left having to clean up that mess.

And Madam Speaker, when we—you've—they throw out the property tax rebate, inflation, tax relief, all these numbers, but at the end of the day most Manitobans don't even care for that terminology. Manitobans just want to know what that means for them at home, what that means for them at—on that kitchen table that Brian Pallister always used to talk about.

And what that means for them, Madam Speaker, is they're going to have a difficult time to put the food on that table. They're going to have a difficult time make end's meet. There's going to come a time in the next few weeks here, the next few months, where we're going to—our claim to fame, or this government's claim to fame, is going to be to have the lowest minimum wage in the country. I—and I guarantee you, I won't see that on a billboard; I won't see that advertising on a billboard because they should be ashamed of that.

And what that comes down to, Madam Speaker—and if you want to relate, and I realize that we—you're not allowed to bring a prop in this Chamber and discuss it in that way, but for a person working 80 hours a pay period, that minimum wage is the equivalent of two rolls of nickels. Two rolls of nickels. That's the raise that that person can expect; a legislated raise they can expect, mind you. And what does that do? I bet everybody in this Chamber has spent more than that just today alone, yet that's the two-week, the biweekly increment that somebody can expect.

And Madam Speaker, when those kinds of things are mentioned in this House, it's just kind of almost a joke on that side of that Chamber, but that shows how out of touch this government is, how out of touch they are with Manitobans, how out of touch they are with the reality. And the school tax rebates and all the

property tax rebates that only go to benefit the few, to benefit the wealthy, to benefit just a core group of not only Manitobans, a core group of businesses that don't even—are not even based here in Manitoba. You—we've tossed, and you've seen the number. It's been reported about last year—Polo Park mall, Cadillac Fairview—and the amount that the—the tax rebate they got.

But meanwhile, all the employees in that same mall that are working for that basic, basic minimum wage will not see that. And they see that number and they look at that and they think, wow, my boss's landlord got that? What does that mean for me?

And the straight answer, Madam Speaker? It means nothing. It means nothing and that's the absolute intent, that that effect will have no meaning on everyday Manitobans. And that's very unfortunate and that just goes to show the disconnect between this government and Manitoba and Manitoba workers, Manitoba homeowners and Manitoba students and Manitoba parents. There's a real disconnect there.

Some rebate cheques may be as low as \$8, Madam Speaker. Do you know how many cheques have to go out to make that equivalent to what Cadillac Fairview gets—\$1 million divided by eight; that's a lot of Manitobans that are going to be left just with the bare minimum. It's going to cost them more to cash that cheque than actually go and do anything with that cheque. Again, shows how out of touch this government is with that reality of what Manitobans see every single day.

So when we're here talking about supplemental appropriations and the government asking for more money, again, I don't see those advertised. This is something almost that's internal housekeeping and internal terminology around the Chamber and in the Legislature and in—within government. Let's put this in terms that are basic, that everybody can understand, and just say straight out, we need more money because we can't live within our means. Every Manitoban would understand absolutely what that is, what that means, and would they support that? Absolutely not, because that doesn't mean anything to them.

* (16:40)

So these rebates—and my colleagues have talked about even just their own personal experience and what they receive as a tax rebate compared to wealthy landlords and wealthy corporations, and, Madam Speaker, the comparison there is already so uneven

and unequal. And we get into parents that are at home struggling to put food on the table, struggling to make ends meet, struggling to pay their bills, and they just can't do it.

And they can't do it, and here we are talking about tens of millions of dollars that will go into the government to what? Do more patting on the back? Do more programming? Do more advertising to say, this is how great we are, vote for us in 2023?

You know, and whether that—and, I mean, we talked about it, and you heard mention of the fact that, you know, it's—and it's a very grey area as to whether or not that's vote buying or not. We've had this discussion previously with Brian Pallister at the helm of this government, wanting to sign a cheque to all seniors in the province: Here's \$200, here's my signature, basically it's my autograph, and here's a picture of me, by the way, thank you.

I remember talking to even my own parents, people in the communities, people all—from all over Manitoba just saying what the heck am I supposed to do with that? What does this mean? Is this a payoff? Is this a bribe? Perhaps it was. Perhaps that was the absolute intention. Perhaps that was the swan song of Brian Pallister saying, let's do this, so let's use government coffers to make myself look good. Let's use government coffers to promote myself.

And even though, I mean, that's a name you'll never hear mentioned on that side of the Chamber. You'll never hear the name Brian Pallister, and it's unfortunate that the fact that they think Manitobans will not remember that, because this is still the government of Brian Pallister. This agenda is still the government of Brian Pallister. Even just sitting here talking about The Appropriation Act and not living within their means is the shell game of Brian Pallister hoping that he would have got re-elected in 2023, hoping that Manitobans would've forgot all the damage that he did.

Again, trying to do all this under the umbrella of the pandemic, saying, we need more of this because the pandemic; do you not know there's a global pandemic?

Well, you know what, Madam Speaker? All Manitobans know there was a global pandemic. Manitoba, in particular, paid a heavy price for the pandemic. So they paid the heavy price because of cuts of this government, because of this government not wanting to truly invest in Manitobans. And I don't mean certain projects, I mean truly invest in the spirit

of Manitobans, truly invest and appreciate the sacrifice that all Manitobans have made, to truly have the respect for the lives lost during the pandemic, the sacrifices that are made, the families that were affected.

But instead, we just hear the rhetoric of saying, we're going to do this; we're going to pat ourselves on the back; we did a great job. Did you not know that we did best per capita, whatever, in the country? You know, we are the best province west of Ontario and the best province east of Saskatchewan, you know. But by that terminology, you're also the worst.

So, Madam Speaker, the focus needs to truly be on what these things mean for Manitobans, what these things mean for Manitobans that are just sitting there working day in, day out; working, going home, putting their kids through school, putting—trying to put their kids through post-secondary, trying to give a better life for their family, trying simply to get ahead. But they can't do that.

They can still go out there, work a full pay period, 80 hours, 100 hours, at minimum wage and still live below that poverty line, and that's just shameful that this is also a promotion of this government to say this is the best, we are the—if that's the best we can do as a government and as a province, then they should be ashamed. They should be ashamed to say this is where we are; do you know how great we are? Well, do you also know how bad we are? And that's what Manitobans see. That's what Manitobans see every single day. That's what Manitobans see when they take their cheque to the bank, when they look at their bank account on Friday. They see that.

So when they come down and they see an annual tax rebate, you know, education tax, property tax, whatever rebate of the day this government is trying to promote as being sufficient, Manitobans are not going to be fooled. Manitobans will see that and know what it is.

And you could see that in the dialogue and the narrative that Manitobans are having. They're not fooled. Manitobans are very, very smart, very, very intelligent, and they could see exactly what's happening here. They could see the shell game and the house of cards that is being built by this government.

But you know what, Madam Speaker? It's not fair, and it's shameful that this government is going to expect Manitobans to be under that house of cards when it collapses. When that bill of all this borrowing comes due, all these appropriations that we're constantly

in, we're constantly talking about, we're constantly debating—when those come due, that's when Manitobans will hurt the most. And that's shameful on this government to expect Manitobans to bear all of that burden—not the brunt of the burden, all of that burden.

And we can see that, and Manitobans can see that, and I know the government can see that. I know the government can see that happening. And, honestly, Madam Speaker, it just seems like they simply don't care. We're just going to live in the moment; we're just going to live in the day; there's no planning forward. There's no planning for tomorrow, let alone next week, next month, next year.

And that's why we're sitting here talking about the appropriation act and supplemental appropriations, because they just simply can't live in the moment. They can't live in the day. They can't plan with any real vision for what Manitoba's going to do. How are we going to come out of this pandemic? How are we going to thrive as an economy? How are Manitobans going to thrive?

You truly got to invest in Manitobans—not invest in yourself as the government but invest in Manitobans. Recruit, retain, appreciate Manitobans, not defund, criticize and privatize Manitobans. And that's what's happening, and that's the method you see this government take, which is shameful.

So, Madam Speaker, when we—you've seen articles about what rebates are available, and there's glowing examples of that—Cadillac Fairview, of course, being one of the highest. So you see those glowing—and that's—there was just a top 10 in some of the—some of those articles that are brought forth. Let's look at the top 100. Let's look at the top 1,000 and truly see what that number is between that and the bottom 1,000. Because I guarantee you, that bottom 1,000 doesn't even equal one of those top ones by far.

So when you've heard the terminology of rebates and tax relief and inflation, et cetera, to everyday Manitobans they don't want to hear the excuses this government has. They want to see the action. But what are they seeing? They're seeing the absolute inaction—the inaction to invest in Manitobans.

What else are they seeing? They're seeing billboards that are spending thousands of dollars on, tens of thousands of dollars on, some cases hundreds of thousand dollars on, to promote themselves, promoted bill 64, promote the surgical backlog.

And even that—and, Madam Speaker, that was a question that the member from Fort Rouge had raised in this, that, okay, is that an actual commitment that the billboard is saying? We're going to clear that—this budget is going to clear that backlog. Is that a commitment? Is that a commitment? Then tell us when that's going to be zero. Tell us when that backlog will be entirely cleared up. And you can't do that because you're only living in the day. You're only living in the moment.

And I've heard the minister say, you know, we've cleared this much off the backlog. Well, I mean, there is even just a little bit of play on words there, Madam Speaker. Shouldn't say a little—there's a lot of play on words there. Well, we've cleared this off, but meanwhile, lots going over here. If I've taken five names off the list, but I'm not going to tell you that I've added 10 names to the list, the list is longer, and that's just simple math.

But, again, not expecting simple math solutions out of this government. That's why we're here talking about the supplemental appropriation because the simple math of running the government, the simple math of helping and benefiting Manitobans is just not in this government. It's just simply not. That investment that they're making in—or they think they're making in the province, it's just simply not there. Instead, they're looking for those excuses and looking for those issues of the day to say why the incompetence is there to justify that incompetence.

* (16:50)

Madam Speaker, we came out of the biggest waves of the pandemic. We're still in waves right now. We had a tremendously dry fire season. We had an incredible amount of snow this past winter. We have an incredible amount of water right now and it's causing the infrastructure of our government to crumble—literally crumble and figuratively crumble.

I had the opportunity to drive up to Peguis and see the lack of investment in there. So, when the people of Peguis and the people of southern Manitoba wonder what supplemental appropriations mean, what does this mean for me, the simple answer, Madam Speaker, is this government is not telling you that it doesn't mean anything for you. It doesn't mean any investment in you. It doesn't mean any investment in your community.

On a regular basis, there's questions raised in question period in this House just to hold the government to account, just to ask for simple answers. And,

Madam Speaker, we had a large contingent of future—hopefully future politicians, future leaders that sat in the gallery today and heard no commitments and no answers to basic questions, to basic questions about investment, basic questions about infrastructure. There was simple questions about just keeping community resources open and there couldn't—this government could not commit to that because they know that those young Manitoba minds will not be fooled.

Those young Manitoba minds left here asking themselves a bunch of questions. And hopefully they raise those questions to their parents, to their family, to their friends, to their teachers, to the—to each other, and those questions continue on because that's truly how you hold this government to account. You consistently ask those questions and you demand those answers. You don't demand double talk. You don't demand somebody trying to kind of condescend and talk down to you. You demand those answers because as a Manitoban you're owed those answers. And as a Manitoban, by doing this supplemental appropriation, you are paying for those answers.

You're not paying for the incompetence. You're not paying to have somebody pat themselves on the back. You are truly paying to have that investment mean something to you, mean something to your family, your community, mean something for your future, because this government has slowly, slowly, slowly, and now it's getting more and more, borrowing into the future of Manitoba.

And the simple matter of—again, Madam Speaker, I can't stress this point enough—because they cannot live within their means. They bring this up, and it's mentioned. It's going to be mentioned in the media, that, oh, this is an emergency, we need this, we need to function. If this isn't passed, Manitobans are not going to get a paycheque, civil servants are not getting a paycheque, nurses are not getting a pay—are not going to get a paycheque. But the simple matter is if this was thought out and planned and invested in properly, we wouldn't have those discussions. We wouldn't be having that worry.

Through the course of the pandemic, and this government, again, has 'conveniency' blamed the pandemic for its shortcomings. There's also been a lot of 'additional' financial investment just for that, also. And sometimes—and it's—and I've said this in many—many times I had the opportunity to speak, is sometimes Ottawa just asks the simple questions: Are you spending that money where you're supposed to?

You go and ask in Ottawa for additional health dollars. Are you spending that money in health care? Are spending—is that money making it to the bedside? And this government cannot give that answer because they're just putting it in this lump general fund, and they're all poking away at it. And if you're the last one to get there and take your piece, then you're short.

And, Madam Speaker, Manitobans deserve better. Manitobans deserve better than to just have somebody picking at little pieces here and there. Manitobans deserve that true investment in Manitoba.

So by standing here and debating this supplemental appropriations act and not just rubber stamping this government's ability to give themselves more money to do whatever they want to do with it, we need to hold them accountable. And members on this side of the Chamber will hold them accountable because they need to, they have to, and they deserve a better government. Manitobans deserve to have that accountability. Manitobans deserve to have that government that's truly looking out for everybody, not just the select few, not just the ones that can afford to be looked after.

We have a lot of vulnerable Manitobans, Madam Speaker, and this is potentially something that could truly be invested in them. But instead this government is choosing just to invest in the select few. Instead it's leaving so many Manitobans by the side. It's leaving so many Manitobans taken for granted.

But, Madam Speaker, Manitobans, in election year, will not forget. And I know for a fact that Manitobans, when they come to this Legislature, when they come and ask the questions of an MLA who's knocking on that door, members on this side can truly say we spoke up for you; we advocated for you; we know you deserve better; we're not going to take you for granted, just like is happening today.

So, Madam Speaker, Bill 39, the appropriations act, and 2022, and whether or not that's mentioned by year, because we're just simply losing track of how many times we're going to have this discussion and how many times we're going to bring forth an appropriations bill, which that in itself is shameful. Being able to say that you can do this, oh, I have to do this this year and next year, the year after that, again, borrowing into the future of Manitobans because you just simply can't function as government.

And, albeit, Madam Speaker, if this government is truly investing everywhere that need to, and we were maximizing all the effort into health care, into

education, into conservation, into all of these issues, if we were truly investing that, I would be one of the ones saying yes, let's do that. We need more.

But, Madam Speaker, while they may think they need more, they just need more because they can't function, they can't manage, they can't budget and they're using and trying to compensate for that on the backs of Manitobans. They're trying to use Manitobans. They're trying to take for granted Manitobans that are sitting there every single day, going to work every day, a lot of cases in their minimum-wage jobs, wondering how come I can't get ahead.

Well, this government is the reason you can't get ahead. This government is the thing that's holding you back. This government is the organization that's holding you back. They're not investing you to thrive. They're wanting to keep you at that level because there's simple a matter of you don't fit into the demographic; you don't fit into that core base; you don't fit into that top tier of Manitobans. And if you don't fit into that top tier, you're left by the wayside, you're forgot about until election time.

Manitobans, Madam Speaker, are very smart, and come election time, they're going to know, and I know members opposite already see this; they've already talking about it; they're already working so hard to try and kind of save face and distance themselves from decisions that are made. But the fact of the matter is

Manitobans are smarter. They know better and they want to be treated fairly.

Miigwech.

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Vice President Hubert Humphrey once said that the moral test of government is how the government treats the sick, the needy and the disabled.

Well, I want to talk about this government's treatment of all these groups. I represent Point Douglas, which is a poverty-stricken community—great people, you know, everyone helps each other, the best community to live in.

But if you drive down Main Street, and I'm sure lots of members opposite have driven down Main Street, and it's hard not to see Main Street Project right on the corner of Logan and Main and see all of the folks who are relatives, who are Manitobans, who we should be taking care of instead of giving tax breaks to, you know, the wealthy.

We could be housing these folks, people who don't have a house to live in dignity, that have to shop around a shopping cart with their—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. When the matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 29 minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

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