

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

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
AL TOMARE, Nello, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JACKSON, Grant	Spruce Woods	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Tuxedo	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: Order, please. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

The Speaker: Introduction of bills?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs Fourth Report

MLA Nellie Kennedy (Chairperson): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs presents the following—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on May 13, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 254 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 13)** – *The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les interventions médicales d'urgence et le transport pour personnes sur civière*
- **Bill (No. 22)** – *The Celebration of Nigerian Independence Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended) / Loi sur la Journée de la célébration de l'indépendance du Nigeria (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)*
- **Bill (No. 23)** – *The Change of Name Amendment Act (2) / Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur le changement de nom*

Committee Membership

- Mr. GUENTER
- MLA KENNEDY
- MLA LAGASSÉ
- MLA MOYES
- MLA SANDHU
- Hon. Mr. SIMARD

Your Committee elected MLA KENNEDY as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected MLA SANDHU as the Vice-Chairperson.

Substitutions received during committee proceedings:

- Mr. KING for Mr. GUENTER

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record:

- Hon. Min. ASAGWARA

Public Presentations

*Your Committee heard the following nine presentations on **Bill (No. 22)** – The Celebration of Nigerian Independence Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended) / Loi sur la Journée de la célébration de l'indépendance du Nigeria (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs):*

Vera Keyede, Private citizen

Lana Adeleye Olusae, Private citizen

Wilson Akinwale, Private citizen

Edward Onyebuchi, Private citizen

Babatunde Busari, Private citizen

Ifeanyi Chidume, Private citizen

Yechenu Audu, Private citizen

Olivia Onyemaenu, University of Manitoba Nigerian Students' Association

Taiwo Aromasodu, Private citizen

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 13)** – *The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les interventions médicales d'urgence et le transport pour personnes sur civière*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 22)** – *The Celebration of Nigerian Independence Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended) / Loi sur la Journée de la célébration de l'indépendance du Nigeria (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 23)** – *The Change of Name Amendment Act (2) / Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur le changement de nom*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

MLA Kennedy: Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for McPhillips (MLA Devgan), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development Fifth Report

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Chairperson): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the fifth report on the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development.

Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development presents the following as its Fifth Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on May 13, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- **Bill (No. 5)** – *The Adult Literacy Act / Loi sur l'alphabétisation des adultes*
- **Bill (No. 10)** – *The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'administration de l'enseignement postsecondaire*
- **Bill (No. 17)** – *The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la sécurité et l'hygiène du travail*
- **Bill (No. 18)** – *The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la garde d'enfants*
- **Bill (No. 202)** – *The Community Foundation Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended) / Loi sur la Journée des fondations communautaires (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)*

Committee Membership

- Mr. BRAR
- MLA DELA CRUZ
- Mr. JACKSON
- MLA LOISELLE
- MLA MOROZ
- Mr. PERCHOTTE

Your Committee elected Mr. BRAR as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected MLA DELA CRUZ as the Vice-Chairperson.

Non-Committee Members Speaking on Record:

- Hon. Min. ALTOMARE
- Hon. Min. CABLE
- Ms. BYRAM
- Hon. Min. MARCELINO
- MLA LAMOUREUX

Public Presentations

Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 5)** – *The Adult Literacy Act / Loi sur l'alphabétisation des adultes*:

Jim Silver, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
Manitoba

Your Committee heard the following 10 presentations on **Bill (No. 10)** – *The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'administration de l'enseignement postsecondaire*:

Allison McCulloch, Manitoba Organization of Faculty Associations

David Grant, Private citizen

Michael Shaw, Private citizen

Erik Thomson, Private citizen

Orvie Dingwall, University of Manitoba Faculty Association

Robert Chernomas, Private citizen

Peter Ives, University of Winnipeg Faculty Association

Katrin Nielsdottir, Private citizen

Mark Gabbert, Private citizen

Justin Lewis, Private citizen

Your Committee heard the following three presentations on **Bill (No. 17)** – *The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la sécurité et l'hygiène du travail*:

Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of Labour

David Grant, Private citizen

Sandra Oakley, Manitoba Federation of Union Retirees

Your Committee heard the following presentation on **Bill (No. 202)** – *The Community Foundation Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended) / Loi sur la Journée des fondations communautaires (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)*:

Nathalie Kleinschmit, Francofonds

Written Submissions

Your Committee received the following nine written submissions on **Bill (No. 10)** – *The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'administration de l'enseignement postsecondaire*:

Trust Beta, Private citizen

Mohamad Hasan Kadhim, Private citizen

Alia Lagace, Private citizen

Christine Kelly, Private citizen

RJ Leland, Private citizen

Julie Guard, Private citizen

Chris Tillman, Private citizen

Robert Shaver, Private citizen

Ariane Hanemaayer, Brandon University Faculty Association

Your Committee received the following two written submissions on **Bill (No. 202)** – *The Community Foundation Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended) / Loi sur la Journée des fondations communautaires (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)*:

Donna Morken, Rivers and Area Community Foundation

Reg Black, Brokenhead River Community Foundation

Bills Considered and Reported

- **Bill (No. 5)** – *The Adult Literacy Act / Loi sur l'alphabétisation des adultes*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 10)** – *The Advanced Education Administration Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'administration de l'enseignement postsecondaire*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 17)** – *The Workplace Safety and Health Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la sécurité et l'hygiène du travail*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 18)** – *The Community Child Care Standards Amendment Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la garde d'enfants*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

- **Bill (No. 202)** – *The Community Foundation Day Act (Commemoration of Days, Weeks and Months Act Amended) / Loi sur la Journée des fondations communautaires (modification de la Loi sur les journées, les semaines et les mois commémoratifs)*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill without amendment.

Mr. Brar: Honourable Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Radisson (MLA Dela Cruz), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Simard (Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism): L'honorable Président, je me lève pour présenter le rapport sur les services en français pour l'année 2022 et 2023.

Translation

Honourable Speaker, I rise to table the 2022-2023 Annual Report on French Language Services.

English

I rise today to table the 2022-2023 Annual Report on French Language Services.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Spirit Bear Day

Hon. Bernadette Smith (Minister of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness): It is my honour to rise today to acknowledge Spirit Bear Day.

On Friday, May 10, we recognized Spirit Bear Day here in Manitoba. This day acknowledges the life of Jordan River Anderson as well as the creation and history of Jordan's Principle.

May 10 services as an opportunity for all of us to learn more about Jordan's Principle and recognize the unique struggles First Nations children face when they try—when they are trying to access services and supports across the country.

Jordan, a member of Norway House Cree Nation, passed away at five years old. These short years were marked by disagreements between levels of governments as to who was financially responsible for providing in-home health-care costs for Jordan.

Because of this, Jordan spent most of his life in hospitals and was never afforded the time he was so rightly deserved to be with his family and within his community. Jordan deserved to have access to the services and supports that he needed when he needed them. Providing care for his complex needs should have been the No. 1 priority.

Since 2021, we recognize May 10 of every year as Spirit Bear Day. As MLA, I was honoured to introduce bill 223 in collaboration with Jordan River Anderson's family.

I want to acknowledge and uplift Jordan River Anderson's family, who are watching online right now, for the sacrifices that they have made over the years to help many other children in our province and right across our country.

Thank you so very much for your selfless acts of kindness in sharing the love of your beautiful little angel, Jordan, with all of us. We have all fallen in love with Jordan and are incredibly blessed to have his life story now educating folks across the country on the disparity of health care across—or, health-care access for First Nation children. I am sending you my love and support today and always.

Thousands of First Nation children now are now able to access the care they need through Jordan's Principle. Our government is committed to working with families and First Nations leadership so every child in Manitoba gets the care they need, when they need it.

Today in the gallery we are joined by students and educators from Niji Mahkwa School. I was fortunate to be invited to a tea party at the school a few years ago where each student was gifted a book and a white teddy bear. This teddy bear has become a symbol for

Spirit Bear Day because it was Jordan's favourite toy, and he had a blanket with a teddy bear on it when he was in the hospital.

When I look up at each and every one of you, I am filled with hope for the future for our province. Please know that we care for each and every one of you and we are committed to supporting your success. You can now be what you can see. Work hard, dream big. You are our future.

May 10 will forever serve as a reminder here in Manitoba that Jordan River Anderson's life mattered. As a community and province, may we continue to come together to honour Jordan's memory and uplift and honour the sacrifices his family has made in sharing their beautiful little boy with all of us.

Jordan's life story has made a huge difference for so many families and has saved lives, and for this, we are incredibly grateful. In Jordan's memory, may our gifts be nurtured and our needs cared for so that we can live our fullest lives with meaning and with hope for a bright future together.

Rest in power, Jordan River Anderson.

Miigwech.

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): Honourable Speaker, today as I rise in recognition of spirit day—Spirit Bear Day, which took place this past Friday, May 10.

Spirit Bear Day is an incredibly important day for Manitoba, as it is symbolic of Jordan's Principle, which seeks to ensure that all First Nations children across Canada can expect—access the supports they need when they need them. It is also a reminder of our commitment to never let anything like that happen—what happened to Jordan—happened in the case of Jordan River Anderson ever again.

We need to always put our children first. Jordan will always be remembered, and his life mattered. Jordan's Principle has been and continues to be incredibly important in upholding the human rights of First Nations children and our commitment to continually work with First Nations leadership across Manitoba.

I thank the minister for bringing this important topic to the forefront, as it also provides us with the opportunity to create more awareness for Jordan's Principle and the struggles that First Nations children have faced and continue to face. We reaffirm our commitment to helping all Manitobans who are in need, no matter where they live or what their background or

circumstances may be. And we will continue to hold this government accountable to ensure the better future of all Manitobans.

I encourage all Manitobans to learn more about spirit bay day—bear day and Jordan's Principle.

Thank you.

Cranberry Portage Wildfire Update

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): This weekend, an extreme wildfire began in northern Manitoba, just north of Flin Flon. What began as a fairly small fire escalated quickly when winds shifted overnight and resulted in the evacuation of hundreds of residents.

* (13:40)

The Manitoba Emergency Management Organization activated the co-ordination centre early Saturday morning, and we have begun having daily incident-command briefings to ensure a strong and co-ordinated whole-of-government response to these fires.

The communities of Cranberry Portage, Sourdough Bay and surrounding areas were evacuated, and Emergency Social Services are available to residents as needed at the evacuee centres. The fire is currently measuring at over 30,000 hectares in size and is approximately 1.5 kilometres away from Cranberry Portage. At this time, the wildfire has affected approximately 550 residents, noting that this number may increase as conditions change.

Air tankers from Manitoba and Saskatchewan have been working on the fire and additional crews from Ontario have arrived as of today.

My office has been in contact with local MLAs as they provide updates to the community and support their constituents. Today, the Premier (Mr. Kinew) is on the ground, speaking with first responders and impacted residents.

I'd like to sincerely thank and applaud the work of all departments who have responded to the aid in the co-ordination of provincial response like the members of emergency management operations and the Conservation Office Service. In particular, I'd like to thank the Manitoba Wildfire Service, who have been working extremely long hours over the past few days to ensure that people are safe.

School officials, members of the Justice and legal branches, individuals from the Families Department

helping to provide social services and members of the Parks Branch, who saw the need and have been helping with the intake services of the evacuees, and so many others from across our government, thank you all for your service to the people of Manitoba.

Over the past couple of days we have been hearing stories of folks who have gone above and beyond, such as one of our Wildfire Service members, whose family lives in Cranberry Portage, and while his family evacuated, he chose to stay and continue fighting for his community.

Outside of the government, there are everyday Manitobans coming together to provide what they can, such as Melissa and Blair Lundie, who own the local gas station in Cranberry Portage. They chose to stay back to ensure their community had emergency fuel supply and have been making meals for fire crews, or Rebecca Johnson, who has been making community meals for The Pas, for hundreds of wildfire evacuees, so that they can have a hot meal together.

We are proud when we hear that Manitobans are stepping up to help one another: opening up their homes, campers, hosting meals to ensure residents are taken care of.

Our top priority is ensuring the safety of Manitobans. Our thoughts are with all those that are displaced and affected by these wildfires during this stressful time. As the Premier indicated yesterday, our government will provide any resource that is necessary during this wildfire response to ensure that Manitobans are taken care of.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River): I rise today to address an emergency that is taking place in our province right now with wildfires in northern Manitoba, and express a few of our thoughts and feelings for all those who are facing displacement, know somebody who may be affected by the current wildfires and everyone else who is worried about the current state of the blaze.

I want to begin by extending an immense, extensive thank you to the first responders, volunteers, members of the community, local officials and anyone else who is fighting this fire and working around the clock to combat the hazardous damage being caused.

It is not possible to express in words how important and appreciated your contributions are in the protection of the province and its people. Without you,

these fires would not only be larger, but the horrendous damage to homes, to communities, our environment, would be beyond repair, and so we thank you for all your efforts, day in and day out, to reduce the reach of these fires, and honour you in thoughts and prayers.

We know that these fires started near Flin Flon and The Pas, but are rapidly spreading. As of this morning, the large fire just north of Cranberry and east of Flin Flon is over 30,000 hectares in size. Experts in the area are saying they have never seen such rapid growth, and we know that Manitobans are being forced to flee, leaving belongings and their lives behind to remain safe.

Honourable Speaker, I want to express our deepest sympathies and regards for all of those who are currently being forced to evacuate their homes and communities to escape the danger of the wildfires. Although we know that fires occur here almost every year, we acknowledge the threats that this poses to your safety, livelihood and family, and we are here for you in every way we possibly can.

It's our duty as legislators to adequately prepare for wildfires and ensure that when they come, we're ready for an immediate, efficient response. This is the job of any government and must be properly taken, or tragedies become worst than they otherwise would have been.

Honourable Speaker, having wildfires this damaging, especially this early in the year, is not normal and needs to be understood as a sign of what may come. We must act now to ensure that fire crews are assisted, people in the community are relocated where they need to be and all necessary steps are taken so Manitobans are protected, and we can work together to combat the ongoing emergency.

In closing, I want to again express our deepest condolences to all those relocating or affected in any way, and thank all those who are risking their lives to fight the horrendous, scary and immense damage caused by wildfires.

Thank you.

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I ask for leave to respond to the minister's statement.

The Speaker: Does the honourable member from Tyndall Park have leave? *[Agreed]*

MLA Lamoureux: I rise this afternoon as my heart goes out to all of the people in northwestern Manitoba

facing fear, uncertainty and danger as a massive wild-fire rages so close to Cranberry Portage.

It is truly scary that the drought conditions and high winds, which caused the fire to explode and grow at unbelievable speed, is engulfing an estimated two kilometres of land per hour, putting the citizens of the area at risk and their homes and livelihoods in jeopardy.

Honourable Speaker, fire season in Canada and Manitoba seems to start earlier and grow more severe each year, and really does give us warning as to how significantly our climate is changing.

With the current rail line shut down, I truly hope that the supplies waiting in The Pas for the nearby Mathias Colomb Cree Nation, Pukatawagan, make it to the people there in time.

To anyone being affected by the blaze, call Manitoba 211 for support, advice and help locating other evacuated loved ones. And a sincere thank you to the heroic firefighters, provincial support and the RCMP and firefighter reinforcements from Ontario for all of your assistance.

I'd like to thank the minister for bringing forward today's ministerial statement and hope for further statements and updates moving forward.

Thank you.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CDIC and the Wellness Institute

MLA JD Devgan (McPhillips): Honourable Speaker, I rise today in recognition of two incredible organizations working to advance world-class research in chronic disease and patient care right in the backyard of McPhillips. The Chronic Disease Innovation Centre and the Wellness Institute are neighbours at our very own Seven Oaks hospital. They both do phenomenal work to treat, manage and prevent a wide range of conditions, all while improving patient outcomes and community well-being.

Founded in 2016, the CDIC focuses on big-data analytics, health-care economics, nutrition, clinical trials, exercise science and knowledge transition to improve health-care delivery. They work alongside experts from health care, academia and business communities, as well as those with lived experience with chronic disease.

Some amazing innovations that have come out of the CDIC include risk prediction tools to guide kidney

specialists so that those with the highest risk of disease are seen as soon as possible.

They also work with Indigenous, provincial and federal governments to launch a mobile point-of-care chronic disease screening clinic, to address disparities and access to treatment for vulnerable populations.

* (13:50)

Just around the corner from the CDIC, the Wellness Institute is a medical fitness facility focused on preventative medicine, disease prevention and injury rehabilitation.

For more than 25 years, the Wellness Institute has given patients the tools to manage their health and deliver medically informed exercise, diet and other interventions. Manitobans should take great pride in both these organizations, as both the CDIC and the Wellness Institute are seen as leaders on the international stage in the fight against chronic disease, and are valued partners in our work in delivering high-quality health care to every Manitoban.

I ask that my guests' names be read into Hansard and for all members to join me in thanking the staff from the CDIC and the Wellness Institute for their incredible contributions to health-care research and patient care in our province and beyond.

Thank you.

Dr. Clara Bohm, Cynthia Carr, Michelle Di Nella, Paul Komenda, Jodi Kortje, Trevor Krahn, Dr. Rebecca Mollard, Dr. Carrie Solmundson, Karen Whalin, Reid Whitlock, Alex Yaworski, John Zabudney

The Speaker: I would ask the member for McPhillips (MLA Devgan) to clarify, does he want the names added to Hansard directly after his statement? *[interjection]* Okay.

Manitoba Airshow

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Anytime I get a chance to talk about the great community of Portage la Prairie, it's a great day for me.

After six years, the Manitoba Airshow will light up the skies in Portage la Prairie on August 3 and 4, just in time to celebrate Royal Canadian Air Force's 100th anniversary.

The two-day event is hosted by Southport Aerospace Centre, and will feature exciting activities throughout the day, including performances by military and civilian performers; a Piston & Props Car Show featuring cars from across Manitoba; a young aviators educational

tent featuring fun and interactive activities for children of all ages.

Some of the performers that will fly in the air include CF-18, Canadian Forces Snowbirds, the Canadian Forces Skyhawks, Dan Reeves Airshow, just to name a few.

As a kid, I can recall my many fond memories going to the airshow at Southport and hearing the sounds of the loud jet engines on the ground and soaring in the air, watching the acrobatic teams. My fondest memory is watching my father's face as the Lancaster bomber on display and listening to my father discuss his experiences when he served in World War II and seeing those planes in the air back in that day, and to hear him say when he was in World War II, that was when they were needing men, not feeding men.

I look forward to the Manitoba Airshow this year and watching the many faces of children and adults light up with amazement. Thank you to Southport for hosting this event and for all their hard work they do for the community.

Please join me in congratulating Peggy May, Deanna Talbot, Breanne Neudorf, Paul—

The Speaker: Order, please. Member's time is expired.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

The Speaker: Does the member have leave to conclude his statement? *[Agreed]*

MLA Bereza: Paul Riedle, Colby Orchard, Nate Coates, Raquel Lincoln and Audrey Wilson; for their hard work in hosting the return of the Manitoba Airshow.

Thank you so much.

Walking School Bus Program

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): Today I want to shine a light on the Walking School Bus Program at Chancellor School, a fantastic way for students to get to and from school in a safe, energizing and sustainable mode of transportation.

Every day, 130 students join the Walking School Bus to and from school, representing more than a quarter of the student body. With three separate routes led by Walking School Bus chaperones, families have several options to ensure their kids get to school in the morning and back again in the afternoon.

Chancellor School is proud of the sense of belonging that the Walking School Bus provides for many students and families in our community. Rain, shine,

snow, wind, no matter the weather, caring chaperones are ready to greet students at their morning and afternoon muster points.

And, during their walks, students are excited to share the events of the day while walking with classmates and chaperones. The lively conversation and connection during these walks are an important part of social development, creating opportunities to foster friendships and connections.

Walking to school with friends was always a highlight of my day growing up. It was a time to relive something funny that had happened at recess or to decide which books we wanted to dive into during independent reading time. And it was a critical point in the day to prepare ourselves for a jam-packed day of learning or to process critical moments after the 3:30 bell.

I want to thank Chancellor School Principal Robin Stacey, Vice-Principal Rachel Otto, Walking School Bus chaperone Louise Hawley and a couple of Chancellor students for joining us today.

Your dedication to your student's intellectual, physical, emotional and social well-being both inside and outside of school will set Manitoba's next generation up for success.

I know there is a chance of rain this week, but I also know that you're well prepared for whatever may come your way.

Congratulations.

The Vaags Family

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): I am pleased to rise today to speak about the Vaags family, who arrived in Manitoba 75 years ago.

Between 1947 and 1949, 16,000 people from Dutch farm families made their way to Canada to resettle, as they were seeking economic opportunity after the land was destroyed during the Second World War. Canada was an attractive place to the Dutch, as Canadian forces had spearheaded the liberation of the Netherlands.

In hopes of owning their own farm, Johan and Hannah Vaags and their four sons, Adolf, Bill, Harry and John, decided to make their way to Canada and arrived by boat in Quebec City in August of 1948. Their travels were not-so-smooth sailing, but once they arrived in the Prairies, the family could see the future they once envisioned for themselves.

The Vaags family were sponsored by the Bruce Edie family, and about a year later, they rented a farm on Dugald Road in the RM of Springfield. Soon their family was expanding in Canada, with their daughter and her family coming to join them in Dugald and, shortly after, opening a blacksmiths shop.

The Vaags quickly became ingrained into the community and were proud to be called Canadians. The family has been involved in many local causes, such as supporting the Canadian grains bank, volunteering to alleviate poverty across the world, rebuilding flooded communities, cycling for poverty relief and many, many more worthy causes.

Some of the most notable are their contributions to the pork industry, whether it be locally, provincially or federally.

From five children to 385 Vaags family members and counting is an impressive legacy, and most recently over 150 of the descendants got together for a family reunion in Dugald and made the decision to donate over \$36,000 to help build the Dugald Place Assisted Living Residence.

Johan and Hannah's decision to come to Canada has had a special impact on not only their family, but their community and, especially, Manitoba.

Thank you to the Vaags family for your decades-long dedication and support to our province, and we can't wait to see what the future holds for you, the Vaags family.

Transcona BIZ Annual Community Cleanup

MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz (Radisson): Young people are often told they are the leaders of tomorrow, though there are inspiring young people who know that said tomorrow is today.

Recently, I received a letter from students named Angel and Peyton that wrote to me about resource depletion, about environmental degradation. They articulated so eloquently that solid waste is a key culprit in climate change.

Over the past several weeks also, other students have approached me to share their concerns about our air quality, about our limited resources, about clean drinking water and about the health of our Mother Earth. Issues like these have no choice but to be solved within our lifetimes. As each day passes, it becomes clearer and clearer just how urgently climate justice is needed.

While we are tasked with heavy lifting in government, I am continually motivated by the young people in our community who take up lifting of their own.

Empowered and accompanied by their educators this year, kids from Bernie Wolfe School, from Joseph Teres School and Immanuel Christian School, all in Radisson, have joined the Transcona BIZ annual cleanup. In doing so, they have taken upon themselves to sweep our community of litter, but also take time to reflect on their relationship with waste.

* (14:00)

In 2023, the BIZ mobilized our local schools, businesses, scouts and community members to take action. Last year alone, over 200 people took action along with them. Since its establishment only a few years ago, over 1,600 did.

And on Saturday, May 25, our inaugural Radisson MLA community task force will be joining that fleet. We welcome all community members to join us for a cleanup event along Transcona Boulevard in solidarity and support of this Transcona BIZ initiative.

In Angel and Peyton's letter, they wrote: We hope that we inspired you so that we can make the world a better place.

Angel, Peyton, you absolutely did.

Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Political Party Subsidies Government Priorities

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Over the last few days I've been asking the Premier (Mr. Kinew) why he prioritizes taxpayer-funded subsidies to his own political party over education, public safety and wildfire fighting.

Now, today, I'm building off the great question from my colleague from Lakeside: Why does the NDP prioritize increasing the size of their taxpayer-funded political subsidy over funding summer camp experiences for Manitoba youth?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): I want to acknowledge the statement read out in the House today by our minister for Economic Development, Infrastructure and Trade that provided an update to this Legislature in regards to the wildfire situation.

And I think it's important to acknowledge the folks that he highlighted and the Manitobans who are stepping up in ways to take care of their neighbours,

to take care of their communities, to take care of first responders and wildfire fighters. It speaks to the heart of Manitobans.

I want to say thank you to those Manitobans who have stayed behind to make sure that their communities are served. We want to say thank you to folks across the province who are stepping up right now to make sure their fellow neighbours are taken care of.

I want to reassure them that our government is going to make sure that no—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a secondary question.

Mr. Ewasko: Just making sure, Honourable Speaker, you can hear me from there. The microphone's working today. That's good to see.

Honourable Speaker, the government is, in fact, cutting schools, cutting daycare spaces, cutting surgery options, cutting justice funding, cutting parks funding, cutting infrastructure funding and cutting emergency funding. And now they're learning from summer camp organizations that they are being cut as well.

Meanwhile, the NDP is looking to take more taxpayer money away—or, right to their political party and away from kids.

The question, and hopefully the Deputy Premier can answer this: Why are they doing that?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I'll admit I'm having a little bit of difficulty following the convoluted questions that the Leader of the Opposition is putting forward. Touched on several things there.

But what I will say is that we have made no cuts whatsoever to wildfire services, and the members opposite know that. He slipped that into his question and I think it's quite disappointing, actually.

On this side of the House, we have invested in strengthening our capacity to fight fires. An additional \$8 million in Budget 2024 to make sure that we have the resources to support those services across the province.

And we will spare no expense to make sure that folks who are navigating this emergency situation have the resources they need to be kept safe.

The Speaker: The member's time is expired.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Ewasko: So, Honourable Speaker, it seems that the Premier had difficulties answering this question. The Deputy Premier is having troubles answering this question. I'm just looking aside to the government side to see if anyone can answer this question.

Honourable Speaker, why is the NDP lining their own political pockets with taxpayer-funded political subsidies whilst cutting summer camp experiences for Manitoba youth?

Who does that, Honourable Speaker? Can the Deputy Speaker, or anyone on that side, answer this question?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, we're actually meeting with Kim Scherger, the executive director of the Manitoba Camping Association, to see how our government can work with their association.

I do want to note, however, that it's members opposite who ran a hate-filled campaign that targeted the very kids who access summer camps across our province. It's the members opposite who have a \$1.2-million campaign deficit. They spent \$1.2 million to attack the very kids who depend on camps throughout the summer.

Honourable Speaker, the Leader of the Official Opposition should stand in his place and apologize to those very kids who are going out this summer to experience summer camps. We'll keep working with their association to make sure they can access camps across Manitoba.

Carberry Emergency Department Hours of Operation Inquiry

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): Based on the NDP's news conference last week and on the media article the minister tabled in the Chamber just yesterday, Manitobans would expect the Carberry ER to be open 12 hours a day, seven days a week. That is not true. No.

I'll table Prairie Mountain Health's emergency department schedule, which clearly shows a week-long closure already on the horizon for the community of Carberry.

Why was the minister not upfront to the community of Carberry about the ER?

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): Honourable Speaker, I know—I know—it must've been so tough for members opposite to watch that press conference. I cannot imagine how uncomfortable it was for them to see Loretta, one of the leads on the community health

action committee, give the Premier (Mr. Kinew) a hug, pull out two cases of gluten-free cookies—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Asagwara: —to say thank you for working with them to reopen the emergency department.

On this side of the House, we are reopening services the previous failed PC government closed, and I want to thank the people of Carberry for working with our government to get that done.

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

Mrs. Cook: After all the high-fives and the pats on the back and the Tupperwares of cookies that the Health Minister enjoyed last week, it's shocking to see such a significant closure already occurring in Carberry.

The press release didn't say anything about limited rotations or scheduled closures, and now less than a week after launch, a significant closure is already on the way. Carberry residents will now be forced to refresh the emergency closures page online in the event of an emergency.

Why was the minister unclear about the extent of rotational closures and the impacts on the availability of service in the Carberry ER?

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, the—*[interjection]*

Honourable Speaker, I understand why the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) is so loud. He was the one who orchestrated the closures of three major emergency rooms, ERs across rural Manitoba, and cut health-care workers from our health-care system. So I understand that it's difficult for him to watch our government reinstate the services that he cut.

We are working with the community. We're working with the health action committee, we're working with doctors, we're working with the nurse practitioners in that community to develop a long-term plan that meets the community's needs. We will continue to work with them as we move forward.

It's the community that helped get us here; it's the community that's going to help us make sure Carberry has services for the long term.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Roblin, on a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Cook: Rural Manitobans have not forgotten about the 16 rural emergency rooms that the previous NDP government closed permanently. Rotational usage of

doctors can allow for more resources in more places, but it leaves operations in Carberry unpredictable.

This all could've been part of the initial announcement last week, but instead the Minister of Health chose to leave this part out of the discussion.

So how often can the community expect these significant week-long closures to impact their emergency services?

* (14:10)

MLA Asagwara: Honourable Speaker, I want to be very clear. That member opposite, that entire PC caucus, have zero credibility on health care.

They have even less credibility when it comes to rural health care. They turned their backs on the community of Carberry and let that ER close. They did not meet with a single nurse practitioner, who's been providing care at their long-term-care home. They didn't meet with the health action committee. They didn't meet with the mayor of Carberry.

Our government from day one—actually, since before day one in office, has been meeting with that community, and we will keep working with them to make sure they have health care for the long term, something not a single member on that side ever did.

Electric Vehicle Rebate Program Cap

Mr. Obby Khan (Fort Whyte): Honourable Speaker, for the record, I have asked this Finance Minister over 50 questions in this Chamber, and he has stood up each and every time and not answered one of them. Manitobans deserve better.

Now, this minister has shifted from ducking and dodging to playing lottery with which Manitobans will get a rebate on their EV vehicle. He has misled Manitobans to think there is a \$4,000 waiting for them, but the truth is that not even 1 per cent of Manitobans will be able to get this subsidy since he capped the EV rebate.

Will the Finance Minister explain why he is capping this program and how will this finance—NDP Finance Minister pick winners and losers?

Hon. Adrien Sala (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro): We're proud to doing the work of making life more affordable for Manitobans. So proud. Our EV rebate is something's that's going to help Manitobans who want to make the switch from a fuel-based vehicle to an electrically powered vehicle.

That's going to help them to save money, help the environment.

But that's only one of 21 ways that we brought forward Manitobans can save, including a broad middle-tax cut, \$1,500 homeowner affordability tax credit, and we've continued to extend the gas tax holiday to make sure more Manitobans can save during this time of elevated prices.

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

Demand on Hydro Power

Mr. Khan: I stand corrected: That's 51 questions this minister has not answered.

The NDP have no plan. At this rate it would take over 1,000 years for every 1.5 million Manitobans to get an EV.

This minister has not addressed one of the largest concerns with going green and EVs, and that is energy production. I would table and I will quote an article by The Narwhal, where it says, and I quote: Hydro's long-term projections show it will need to at least double its current power supply to keep up with increased demands from electric vehicles. The province no longer has surplus power to draw on. End quote.

So what's the minister's plan to increase production in this province, or does he have no plan like the rest of his government?

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, did the members opposite ever do anything to expand our energy supply? Did they do anything to help Manitobans access electric vehicles?

No plan, no vision, nothing from the members opposite. They stand here in the House and complain, and yet they did nothing to advance Manitoba Hydro.

We're doing the important work of ensuring we have the energy we need for Manitobans. We're going to make sure that energy is reliable, affordable and we're going to help more Manitobans drive electric vehicles to help them save more money.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Whyte, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Khan: I stand corrected: 52 questions and no answers.

This minister is really good at yelling and screaming and reading off a piece of paper. He's also good at breaking his promises. He said he was going to

freeze the hydro rates, and now he's increasing them 4 per cent.

The former CEO of Hydro is quoted as saying: There's a perception that we have lots and lots of surplus electricity. I hate to have to say it, that is not the case. We may need new electricity by 2029. I would table that for the House here today.

The new CEO, the board chair and even this minister said that it's true and that this province will run out of energy by 2029.

Can the minister confirm that there is enough power available for all future EVs and that he is indeed breaking his promise of a hydro freeze?

MLA Sala: Honourable Speaker, again, seven and a half years, what is their record? They did absolutely nothing when it comes to Manitoba Hydro.

What was their sole focus? Raising—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Sala: Raising hydro rates on Manitobans in every single creative way possible. They brought forward a bill with a BITSA bill—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please.

The member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Jackson), kindly quit hollering across the Chamber.

MLA Sala: Their record is to bring, in BITSA, a 2.9 per cent hydro rate increase. They bring at—Hydro bills that were focused on setting hydro rate increases at the Cabinet table. That's their record when it comes to Hydro. Our record is building up the energy we need.

You know, the member across keeps showing us his counting skills. If he wants to show his math—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order. Order.

Let's try and hear the questions and maybe the answers too.

Aquatic Invasive Species in Clear Lake Inspection Station Locations

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Last year our Progressive Conservative government was committed to the fight against aquatic invasive species in Manitoba. We collaborated with the federal government on a one boat, one lake initiative for Clear Lake, and also established two new watercraft inspection stations.

I table a Brandon Sun story where the minister responsible for Natural Resources refuses to disclose the locations of two new inspection stations despite the fact he said in this House last week that all stations would be open last weekend.

If this minister was serious about battling aquatic invasive species, the federal government would have worked with him this year.

Will the minister tell the House today where the promised two new inspection stations are located?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): First of all, members opposite are just wrong. Second of all, we're working very concertedly to prevent the spread of zebra mussels right across Manitoba.

We're working and listening with community groups. That's why I was up in Wasagaming, listening to the local stakeholders. I don't—proactively finding ways that we can together prevent the spread of zebra mussels across Manitoba.

That's again why, in this year's budget, we have a 40 per cent increase to our funding for the prevention of zebra mussels and aquatic invasive species right across Manitoba. That's real action to solve a real problem, something the members opposite failed to do.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Riding Mountain, on a supplementary question.

Closure of Clear Lake to Watercraft Request for Support for Business

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Hundreds of thousands of visitors stream into Wasagaming and normally enjoy the sandy beach and boating on beautiful Clear Lake in Riding Mountain National Park. With Clear Lake closed to watercraft this season, the seasonal businesses in the townsites need immediate economic help.

But this Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources says he has no plans to provide them with any support, according to comments made in a CBC article, which I table today.

Will the minister tell those businesses and all members of this House why he won't provide them with any economic relief, or will he change course and do the right thing?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): Honourable Speaker, you know, this decision to—at Clear Lake I think disappoints a lot of Manitobans who are actively looking to experience the great natural resources that we have across Manitoba.

This decision was made by the federal government, and we've been actively calling on them to step up and do right by the local businesses. So maybe the members opposite should pose the question to the member for Tyndall Park (MLA Lamoureux) or maybe to folks in the federal government, because we've been advocating for businesses in the community to get that support from the federal government.

As for our bodies of water in Manitoba, we continue to invest to protect them from aquatic invasive species, with an additional \$500,000 of funding to prevent the spread of AIS right across Manitoba.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Riding Mountain, on a final supplementary question.

Aquatic Invasive Species in Clear Lake Request to Test Waterways

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): One of the most important things a province need to do is test the—all the waters coming out of Clear Lake, including the streams, creeks and the Little Saskatchewan River.

* (14:20)

This will show the federal government and the public here in Manitoba that the province takes aquatic invasive species seriously and is taking action to prevent their spread. I've been urging the NDP to start this work for the last six months.

I ask the minister today, has this work begun? If not, why not?

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources): To be clear, Honourable Speaker, we know that zebra mussels and aquatic invasive species are a serious issue and our government takes it very seriously.

And that's why we've already opened our water stations—water-clearing stations last weekend. We're already on top of this issue, providing that service to prevent zebra mussels across Manitoba. And that's why I want to make it clear to Manitobans to do their part along with us, as well, to clean, drain and dry their watercraft anytime they're leaving a body of water

right across in Manitoba so that we can together prevent the spread of zebra mussels.

Green Team Program Eligibility Concerns

Mr. Trevor King (Lakeside): Honourable Speaker, Manitobans want answers from this minister.

For years, camps, churches and organizations have gotten Green Team grants to hire young Manitobans. It was good for these organizations. It was good for all the youth. We all won.

Can this minister explain why many groups who previously qualified suddenly haven't?

Hon. Ian Bushie (Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations): Maybe the member could explain why his previous government did nothing but one-offs for youth in Manitoba, nothing but one-off programs time and time again.

Pre-pandemic numbers were a 40 per cent increase to Green Team numbers in Manitoba. We've had conversation with the Manitoba Camping Association as to how we could best go forward and we're going to continue to have those discussions, something members opposite never, ever did.

They did not consult with communities, they did not consult with front-line communities and they did not look out for youth to Manitoba, something we're going to do each and every day here in Manitoba.

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

Funding Request

Mr. King: This minister has the opportunity to do the right thing and restore this cut funding to community organizations, but he needs to act now. Not-for-profit camping and churking—church groups and community museums rely on this funding.

Will the minister commit to restoring these grants?

Mr. Bushie: Again, a 40 per cent increase from pre-pandemic levels that this government failed to do time and time again.

So here we are. We are committed to funding youth opportunities, summer camps. In fact, we fund summer camps in Dauphin, Brandon, Swan River, Pilot Mound, Killarney, Carman, Warren, Beausejour and FortWhyte Alive, as well as dozens of more summer camps across the province. The list goes on and on, something members opposite ignored each and every

time they were in government. Will—we'll continue to get the work done and fund youth in Manitoba.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Lakeside, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. King: Honourable Speaker, I ask the minister, was there a change to the scoring system that had more impact than intended? Mistakes happen, but this minister has to restore this funding before organizations take on even more debt, because these groups intend to honour the commitment they made to young Manitobans and will not cut programming.

Will he today, or is he saying these cuts were intentional?

Mr. Bushie: The only debt—there's the almost \$2 billion in debt that that government left with us, on top of the camps that we're funding, Honourable Speaker: The Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation; the Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg; the Allard Library; in Lac du Bonnet, the RM of Lac du Bonnet's public works; Art City drop-in program in Wolseley; the Harvest Moon Society, in Turtle Mountain; the *[inaudible]* ground maintenance; the town of Teulon's community beautification; the town of Stonewall's trails.

If they believe so much in cuts to these programs, then why will they vote against our budget?

Police Services and Public Safety Funding Concerns in Budget 2024

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): Last week, this Premier (Mr. Kinew) misrepresented funding to the Brandon Police Service in this House.

As chief of police for six years there, I can say that this Premier clearly has no idea what he's talking about. Year over year the Brandon Police Service received above-inflationary increases, and I expect that he's going to apologize.

And while we're talking about cuts to Justice, I ask the Minister of Justice why he made cuts to public safety in his budget?

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): In 2022, under the previous government, there was a 44 per cent increase in attempted murders, 40 per cent increase in homicides, and in Brandon alone, a 30 per cent increase in violent crime under the member's watch. There was a 13 per cent increase in frauds, 19 per cent in break-and-enters, 21 per cent increase in robberies, 26 per cent increase in auto thefts,

8 per cent increase in sexual assaults and 39 per cent increase in firearms offences.

All the while, every member opposite cut the budget of our law enforcement across this province. They should be ashamed of that record, and this member opposite should be asking questions of the former members of the PC government.

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

The honourable member for Brandon West, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Balcaen: More to come on our budget in Brandon in the next question. On page 68 of the 2024 supplemental to the Estimates of Expenditure for Manitoba Justice, it's clear there are budget decreases for public safety.

Policing service and public safety has been cut. Manitobans are rightfully concerned about their safety and the state of violent crime in this province, and yet this government is cutting funding to policing services and public safety.

So I ask the minister: Will he reinstate the funding that he cut in the policing and public safety budget?

Mr. Wiebe: Member opposite is just making it up at this point. The numbers are clear—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wiebe: Law enforcement across the province recognizes the increases that have come in Budget 2024. And he knows that under his watch, provincial funding to Brandon Police Service, funding went down relative to inflation every single year of the Stefanson government.

So this member opposite should look to his right, to his extreme right, at all the members opposite who are responsible for those cuts, while crime and public safety in this province got worse. This government was all talk. We're going to make things better, and we're going to work with community to do it.

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

The honourable member for Brandon West, on a final supplementary question.

Mr. Balcaen: It's a good thing that this is the Minister of Justice and not the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala), because he doesn't understand funding. The 2024 Supplement to the Estimates is clear: cuts were made to policing and public safety under this NDP government.

The state of violent crime has only gotten worse in recent months, yet this government is making cuts to their own budget. In the city of Winnipeg, it has become unsustainable to keep businesses open in a-downtown. Honourable Speaker, \$300 security camera rebate just doesn't cut it. While I was chief in the Brandon Police Service, we averaged 3.77 per cent increase every year under this PC government.

Will the minister commit to matching that, year over year?

Mr. Wiebe: Again, Honourable Speaker, under his tenure, and while the PCs were in office, crime in Brandon, like the 'mrest' of Manitoba, increased substantially: 17 per cent increase reported assault, 43 per cent increase in sexual assaults, an 80 per cent increase in offensive weapons crimes.

In his last year as chief, violent crime in Brandon went up by 29 per cent. And when he was police chief, what did he have to say about that? Well, he said that he felt the impact of these cuts, because in 2021 he told the Brandon Police Board that while the BPS had the authority to lay charges, they did not necessarily have all the resources to follow up on all complaints.

We're going to change that, Honourable Speaker. We're going to—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

Senior Citizen Abuse and Neglect Claims Auditor General Findings

MLA Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): This past Saturday at McDonald's, I had some individuals come and see me and express how upset they are that this government campaigned on protecting seniors, but they have now turned their backs on them, despite the objective findings of the Auditor General.

Why is this government ignoring the dozens of cases of abuse and neglect that have further been deemed credible by the Auditor General?

* (14:30)

Hon. Uzoma Asagwara (Deputy Premier): On this side of the House, we take very seriously the responsibility of protecting seniors. We know that seniors helped build this province. We know that as folks age in Manitoba they deserve access to the services and care in their communities. This is why our government committed to set up an independent office for the seniors advocate, something that seniors have been calling for for years. And we're going to make it a reality in our province.

We are also doing the work of righting the wrongs under the previous government where they failed to ensure that PPCO investigations were actually being done. On this side of the House we're working with our staff to make sure that that backlog is cleared, something that never happened under the previous PCs.

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

Assessment Criteria Used

MLA Lamoureux: Honourable Speaker, in order to right the wrongs, you need to be transparent. According to the minister's own briefing note, the independent investigator is to provide assurance to the public and to government of their work. However, the victims and families of physical and sexual assault and all of us here have received no assurance at a time where transparency is desperately needed.

Will this government be transparent with Manitobans, and to what criteria was used to determine these cases of abuse and neglect as unfounded?

MLA Asagwara: I welcome that question. I thank the member for that question.

I think she is well aware that the previous cases were reviewed by an independent reviewer; that's been publicly reported on. We've answered that question many times, actually, that an independent reviewer was responsible and tasked with evaluating all of those cases. That is an independent process that we do respect.

I also know that that independent reviewer met with many, many families and got feedback from them as well.

I can certainly appreciate concerns that that member or other folks might have, and I'm always willing to have a conversation if there are outstanding concerns. We are awaiting a report from the Justice Burnett on the path forward that's best for Manitobans.

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

Supports for Victims and Families

MLA Lamoureux: Manitobans want assurances that there will be safeguards in place so that victims and their families receive better transparency for the cases that remain under investigation.

Does this government plan to provide any specific supports to victims and their families who have

brought forward complaints of abuse, and will this government commit to implementing all of the Auditor General's recommendations so that such a flawed investigation process will never happen again?

MLA Asagwara: I appreciate that question very much. We have already committed to making sure that all the recommendations are actioned and they—and that work has been long under way.

Certainly, if there are families, if there are seniors or folks who have outstanding concerns and want their voices heard, we are always, and I am always, willing to meet with folks and see how we can better support them.

As I said earlier, an independent reviewer did meet with many families and get their feedback on what their experiences were. We have done a lot of work as a government to ensure the backlog under the PPCO was cleared and that we establish a path moving forward that prioritizes the protection and safety of seniors.

I want to make it explicitly clear on this side of the House we respect seniors and their families. We are taking steps to protect them. We are always open to hearing feedback about ways we can do this work better.

Indigenous Children in CFS Care Transfer of Jurisdiction to First Nations

MLA Nellie Kennedy (Assiniboia): Honourable Speaker, today over 90 per cent of children in care are Indigenous. Our government is committed to addressing the challenges within the child-welfare system.

First Nations families are best placed to care for their own children. Yesterday the Minister of Families and the Premier (Mr. Kinew) signed a historic declaration with First Nations leaders.

Can the Minister of Families please share with the House more about this historic declaration which commits to the transfer of jurisdiction over child welfare to First Nations?

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Minister of Families): Miigwech to my colleague for that great question.

Yesterday was a historic day for Indigenous children here in Manitoba as the Premier and I signed a declaration with First Nation rights holders in respect of the transfer of jurisdiction of child welfare, where we upheld the inherent rights of Indigenous children to be cared for by their families in their communities and in their nations.

I think it's important, Honourable Speaker, to point out that in a mere seven months, while members opposite took away the constitutional rights of Indigenous children, in seven months our government has upheld them, entrenched them and certainly is looking to honour and restore them.

Miigwech.

Provincial Nominee Program Applicants Non-Postgraduate Work Permit Holders

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Honourable Speaker, concerned MPNP applicants have reached out to my office with questions around the recent work permit extension announcement.

These are applicants that have been waiting for months in the queue with no status update or communication from the MPNP office. They do not hold a postgraduate work permit.

So I ask the minister today: What is being done for applicants in the queue that do not hold a postgraduate work permit?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Thank you to member opposite for that question.

Right now, what we're doing for folks that have been receiving—their EOI has been accepted, those folks have been prioritized by the department if—with—if it's within 45 days that their work permits are expiring.

We've also posted on the website a form that folks could download and then return to the department to make sure that their files will be—continue to be engaged. And we are prioritizing those people who have already had their expression of interest drawn.

In addition—

The Speaker: Member's time is expired.

The honourable member for Agassiz, on a supplementary question.

Provincial Nominee Program Application Processing Time

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): While the extension provides temporary relief to applicants, the announcement does not address the significant processing time required to eliminate the backlog and prevent this from happening again.

We know that processing time has doubled under the NDP government. Applicants in the queue have

been waiting for over half a year with no update from the office.

What is the minister doing to alleviate the backlog?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Honourable Speaker, that's really rich coming from members opposite.

They did not even have a Labour and Immigration Department for the duration of their term, except for the last year, where they did have a Labour and Immigration Department, but then they didn't even staff it up. They had a 30 per cent cut—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

MLA Marcelino: —of folks in that department over the last seven and a half years. What do they expect?

When we came into this office with Budget 2024 from our fabulous Finance Minister, we finally got the resources to bolster the public service and Labour and Immigration Department. And members opposite will see that we are serious about growing Manitoba with immigration.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: The honourable member for Agassiz, on a final supplementary question. *[interjection]*

Order.

Provincial Nominee Program Applicants Non-Postgraduate Work Permit Holders

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): Honourable Speaker, last week, I sent an email to the minister's office. As I mentioned in my earlier question, I've had many concerned individuals reach out to me looking for answers, so I reached out to the minister looking for clarification on their behalf. I've yet to receive response from the minister's office.

So can she now provide the answer that Manitobans are looking for?

Hon. Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Honourable Speaker, I have offered members opposite with an open-door policy. Member opposite actually has my cellphone number and can text me herself or email me herself and has never once approached me with this question.

Manitoba was first. We were first in getting this historic deal with the federal government to allow 6,700 folks whose work permits were expiring this year. Other provinces can follow suit.

But this is a shared jurisdiction, and at the end of the day, it's up the federal government about which folks can stay and go.

But we are doing our very, very best to resource—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Manitoba School Divisions Operational Decisions

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): Yesterday, the minister said he believes that school boards having—have autonomy in decision-making processes, and yet just last week, he told the Hanover School Division that they shouldn't have the final say over operational decisions within their division.

* (14:40)

Typical NDP: You can have all the autonomy you want until you disagree with their belief systems. Socialists don't like people choosing, for they might not—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Jackson: —choose socialism.

Will the minister just admit that under this new government, school divisions need to check with him and his office before they make operational decisions?

Hon. Nello Altomare (Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning): Well, I want to thank the member for that question. It's a very important question. It's important because what we do as a government here is that we work with other levels of government.

So when the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning wants to know what's going on in other school divisions, what he does is that he makes a phone call, calls trustees in, asks them, what is the rationale behind some of these decisions? Is the rationale sound?

Because I can tell you in Hanover, and the size of that school division, when you're micromanaging the hiring process, what you end up doing is ensuring that you're not going to get the best candidate.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired. The time for oral questions has expired. *[interjection]*

Order. Order. Order.

I'd ask both sides to refrain from speaking, yelling, otherwise carrying on when the Speaker is standing and asks for order.

PETITIONS

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Leader of the Official Opposition): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly—*[interjection]*

The Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

When a member's trying to read a petition, the rest of us should sit quietly, not be hollering back and forth across the Chamber. So please allow the member the courtesy of being able to read his petition.

Mr. Ewasko: Thanks for that guidance.

I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The federal government has mandated a consumption-based carbon tax, with the stated goal of financially pressuring Canadians to make decisions to reduce their carbon emissions.

(2) Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with a higher efficiency furnace, the carbon tax is costing the average family over \$200 annually, even more for those with older furnaces.

(3) Home heating in Manitoba is not a choice or a decision for Manitobans to make; it is a necessity of life, with an average of almost 20 days below 0°C annually.

(4) The federal government has selectively removed the carbon tax off of home heating oil in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, but has indicated they have no intention to provide the same relief to Manitobans heating their homes.

(5) Manitoba Hydro indicates that natural gas heating is one of the most affordable options available to Manitobans, and it can be cost prohibitive for households to replace their heating source.

(6) Premiers across Canada, including in the Atlantic provinces that benefit from this decision, have collectively sent a letter to the federal government, calling on it to extend the carbon tax exemption to all forms of home heating, with the exception of Manitoba.

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provinces—the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

(8) Provincial leadership in other jurisdictions have already committed to removing the federal carbon tax from home heating bills.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to remove the federal carbon tax on home heating bills for all Manitobans to provide them much-needed relief.

This petition is signed by Irene Abraham, Matthew Andrade and Cory Wincheruk, and many, many more fine Manitobans, Honourable Speaker.

Louise Bridge

Mr. Derek Johnson (Interlake-Gimli): 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) Over 25,000 vehicles per day cross the Louise Bridge, which has served as a vital link for vehicular traffic between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown for the last 113 years.

(2) The current structure will undoubtedly be declared unsafe in a few years as it has deteriorated extensively; it is now functionally obsolete, and therefore more subject to more frequent unplanned repairs and cannot be widened to accommodate future traffic capacity.

As far back as 2008, the City of Winnipeg has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

After including the bridge replacement in the City's five-year capital budget forecast in—back in 2009, the new bridge became a short-term construction priority in the City's transportation master plan of 2011.

(5) City capital and budget plans identified replacement of the Louise Bridge on a site just east of the bridge and expropriated homes there on the south side of Nairn Avenue in anticipation of a 2015 start.

(6) In 2014, the new City administration did not make use of available federal infrastructure funds.

(7) The new Louise Bridge Committee began its campaign to demand a new bridge and its surveys confirmed residents wanted a new bridge beside the current bridge, with the old bridge kept open for local traffic.

(8) The City tethered the Louise Bridge replacement issue to its new transportation master plan and eastern corridor project. Its recommendations have now identified the location of the new Louise bridge to be placed just to the west of the current bridge, not to the east as originally proposed.

(9) The City expropriation process has begun. The \$6.35-million street upgrade to Nairn Avenue from Watt Street to the 113-year-old bridge is complete.

(10) The new City administration has delayed the decision on the Louise Bridge for a minimum of one year, and possibly up to 10 years, unless the Province steps in on behalf of northeast Winnipeg residents and completes the overdue link.

(11) The Premier has a duty to direct the provincial government to provide financial assistance to the City so it can complete its long overdue vital link to northeast Winnipeg and Transcona.

* (14:50)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier to financially assist the City of Winnipeg on building this three-lane bridge in each direction to maintain this vital link between 'northit' east Winnipeg, Transcona and the downtown.

(2) To urge the provincial government to recommend that the City of Winnipeg keep the old bridge fully open to traffic while the new bridge is under construction.

(3) To urge the provincial government to consider the feasibility of keeping the old bridge open for active transportation in the future.

This petition has been signed by Murray Jaenen, Terry Jaenen, Paige Jaenen and many, many, many other Manitobans.

Medical Assistance in Dying

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition.

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

This has been signed by Milly Kocik [*phonetic*], Crystal Vanderveen, Russell Termoer and many, many more Manitobans.

Louise Bridge

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Over 25,000 vehicles per day cross—excuse me—the Louise Bridge, which has served as a vital link for vehicular traffic between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown for the last 113 years.

(2) The current structure will undoubtedly be declared unsafe in a few years as it has deteriorated extensively, is now functionally obsolete, and therefore more subject to more frequent unplanned repairs and cannot be widened to accommodate future traffic capacity.

(3) As far back as 2008, the City of Winnipeg, has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

(4) After including the bridge replacement in the City's five-year capital budget forecast in 2009, the new bridge became a short-term construction priority in the City's transportation master plan of 2011.

(5) City capital and budget plans identified replacement of the Louise Bridge on a site just east of the bridge and expropriated homes there on the south side of Nairn Avenue in anticipation of a 2015 start.

(6) In 2014, the new City administration did not make use of available federal infrastructure funds.

(7) The new Louise Bridge Committee began its campaign to demand a new bridge and its surveys confirmed residents wanted a new bridge beside the current bridge, with the old bridge kept open for local traffic.

(8) The City tethered the Louise Bridge replacement issue to its new transportation master plan and eastern corridor project. Its recommendations have now identified the location of the new Louise bridge to be placed just to the west of the current bridge, not to the east as originally proposed.

(9) The City expropriation process has begun. The \$6.35-million street upgrade of Nairn Avenue from Watt Street to the 113-year-old bridge is complete.

(10) The new City administration has delayed the decision on the Louise Bridge for a minimum of one year, and possibly up to 10 years, unless the Province steps in on behalf of northeast Winnipeg residents and completes the overdue link.

(11) The Premier has a duty to direct the provincial government to provide financial assistance to the City so it can complete this long overdue vital link to northeast Winnipeg and Transcona.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier to financially assist the City of Winnipeg on building this three-lane bridge in each direction to maintain this vital link between northeast Winnipeg, Transcona and the downtown.

* (15:00)

(2) To urge the provincial government to recommend that the City of Winnipeg keep the old bridge fully open to traffic while the new bridge is under construction.

(3) To urge the provincial government to consider the feasibility of keeping the old bridge open for active transportation in the future.

Honourable Speaker, this petition has been signed by many, many, many Manitobans.

Thank you.

Medical Assistance in Dying

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling in mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to the provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition.

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

Honourable Speaker, this petition is signed by many, many, many, many Manitobans.

Louise Bridge

Ms. Jodie Byram (Agassiz): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

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

(1) Over 25,000 vehicles per day cross the Louise Bridge, which has served as a vital link for vehicular traffic between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown for the last 113 years.

(2) The current structure will undoubtedly be declared unsafe in a few years as it has deteriorated extensively, is now functionally—functionally obsolete, and therefore more subject to more frequent unplanned repairs and cannot be widened to accommodate future traffic capacity.

(3) As far back as 2008, the City of Winnipeg has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

(4) After including the bridge replacement in the City's five-year capital budget forecast in 2009, the new bridge became a short-term construction priority in the City's transportation master plan of 2011.

(5) City capital and budget plans identified replacement of the Louise Bridge on a site just east of the bridge and expropriated homes there on the south side of Nairn Avenue in anticipation of a 2015 start.

(6) In 2014, the new City administration did not make use of available federal infrastructure funds.

(7) The new Louise Bridge Committee began its campaign to demand a new bridge and its surveys confirmed residents wanted a new bridge beside the current bridge, with the old bridge kept open for local traffic.

(8) The City tethered the Louise Bridge replacement issue to its new transportation master plan and eastern corridor project. Its recommendations have now identified the location of the new Louise bridge to be placed just to the west of the current bridge, not to the east as originally proposed.

(9) The City expropriation process has begun. The \$6.35-million street upgrade of Nairn Avenue from Watt Street to the 113-year-old bridge is complete.

(10) The new City administration has delayed the decision on the Louise Bridge for a minimum of one year, and possibly up to 10 years, unless the Province steps in on behalf of northeast Winnipeg residents and completes the overdue link.

(11) The Premier has a duty to direct the provincial government to provide financial assistance to the City so it can complete this long overdue vital link to northeast Winnipeg and Transcona.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Premier to financially assist the City of Winnipeg on building this three-lane bridge in each direction to maintain this vital link between northeast Winnipeg, Transcona and the downtown.

(2) To urge the provincial government to recommend that the City of Winnipeg keep the old bridge fully open to traffic while the new bridge is under construction.

(3) To urge the provincial government to consider the feasibility of keeping the old Louise Bridge open for active transportation in the future.

This has been signed by Ken O'Donnell, Sherry Francis, Danielle Carefoot and many, many, many more Manitobans.

* (15:10)

Child-Welfare System—Call for Inquiry

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): Honourable 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:

On Sunday, February 11, 2024, Manitobans witnessed an unimaginable tragedy when five individuals were murdered.

(2) The victims ranged in ages from two months to 30 years.

(3) Manitoba has the second highest rate of intimate partner violence among Canadian provinces, at a rate of 633 per 10,000 people, according to police-reported data from Statistics Canada.

(4) Public reporting indicates that on December 9, 2023, Myah-Lee left a voicemail for her Child and Family Services worker in which she pleaded to be moved out of her home in Carman.

(5) Manitoba's Advocate for Children and Youth noted: This case highlights the failures of the government to respond to our recommendations.

(6) On March 6, 2024, the Minister of Families, the MLA for St. Johns, indicated that—indicated on public record that she was too busy to discuss issues surrounding children in care, including calling a public inquiry into this unprecedented tragedy.

The last inquiry held in Manitoba was for the death of five-year-old Phoenix Sinclair in 2008.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Families to develop better policies to protect youth in care from potential physical or psychological abuse.

(2) To urge the public—or the—to urge the provincial government to immediately establish a public inquiry to identify the failings of the child welfare system to ensure that no call from a child ever goes unanswered or ignored again.

This was signed by Michael Hiebert, Colleen Kyle, Hank Boschmann and many, many other Manitobans.

Louise Bridge

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

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

(1) Over 25,000 vehicles per day cross the Louise Bridge, which has served as a vital link for vehicular traffic between northeast Winnipeg and the downtown for the last 113 years.

(2) The current structure will undoubtedly be declared unsafe in a few years as it has deteriorated extensively, is now functionally obsolete, and therefore

more subject to more frequent unplanned repairs and cannot be widened to accomplish—accommodate future traffic capacity.

(3) As far back as 2008, the City of Winnipeg, the City, has studied where the new replacement bridge should be situated.

(4) After including the bridge replacement in the City's five-year capital budget forecast in 2009, the new bridge became a short-term construction priority in the City's transportation master plan of 2011.

(5) City capital and budget plans identified replacement of the Louise Bridge on a site just east of the bridge and expropriated homes there on the south side of Nairn Avenue in anticipation of a 2015 start.

(6) In 2014, the new City administration did not make use of the available funds—or, federal infrastructure funds.

(7) The new Louise Bridge Committee began its campaign to demand a new bridge and its surveys confirmed residents wanted a new bridge beside the current bridge, with the old bridge kept open for local traffic.

(8) The City tethered the Louise Bridge replacement issue to its new transportation master plan and eastern corridor project. Its recommendations have now identified the location of the new Louise bridge to be placed just to the west of the current bridge, not to the east as was originally proposed.

(9) The City expiration—expropriation process has begun. The \$6.35-million street upgrade of Nairn Avenue from west—sorry, from Watt Street to the 113-year-old bridge is complete.

(10) The new City administration has delayed the decision on the Louise Bridge for a minimum of one year, and possibly up to 10 years, unless the Province steps in on behalf of northeast Winnipeg residents and completes the overdue link.

(11) The Premier has a duty to direct the provincial government to provide financial assistance to the City so it can complete this long overdue vital link to northeast Winnipeg and Transcona.

* (15:20)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier to financially assist the City of Winnipeg on building this three-lane bridge in

each direction to maintain this vital link between northeast Winnipeg, Transcona and the downtown.

(2) To urge the provincial government to recommend that the City of Winnipeg keep the old bridge fully open to traffic while the new bridge is under construction; and

(3) To urge the provincial government to consider the feasibility of keeping the old bridge open for active transportation in the future.

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

Medical Assistance in Dying

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): Honourable Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

To the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition.

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

This petition has been signed by Susana Wall, Anna Wiebe, Henry Wiebe and many, many, many Manitobans.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

(3) There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

(4) Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

MLA Robert Loiselle, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

(5) The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

(6) Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for the mental health of all Canadians.

(7) Vulnerable Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

(8) The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering

medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

* (15:30)

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those for whom mental illness is the sole condition.

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling—mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

This is signed by Helen Booth, Jane Wolfe, Helen Braun and many, many other Manitobans.

MRI Machine for Portage Regional Health Facility

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): 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:

Thanks to the investment made under the previous PC provincial government as part of the clinical and preventive services plan, construction for the new Portage regional health facility is well under way. The facility and surrounding community would greatly benefit from added diagnostic machinery and equipment, but specifically the addition of an MRI machine.

(2) An MRI machine is a non-invasive medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and a computer-generated radio waves to create detailed images of organs and tissues in the human body. It is used for disease detection, diagnostics and treatment monitoring.

Portage la Prairie is centrally located in Manitoba and is on Highway No. 1 in the Southern Health/Santé Sud Health Authority. Currently there is only one MRI machine in the RHA.

An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will reduce transportation costs for patients as well as reduce the burden on stretcher services and ambulance use. It will bring care closer to home and reduce wait times for MRI scans across the province.

(5) Located around Portage la Prairie are Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains, Sandy Bay, Long Plain First Nations reserves. Indigenous peoples in Canada

disproportionately face barriers in access to services and medical care. An MRI machine located in the Portage regional health facility will bring care closer to their home communities and provide greater access to diagnostic testing.

(6) Located in close proximity to the new Portage regional health facility is Southport airport. This 'aerodome' has a runway length that is more than adequate to support medical air ambulance services. This would provide an opportunity to transport patients by air from remote communities to access MRI imaging services.

(7) The average wait time for Manitobans to receive an MRI scan is currently six to eight months. Having an MRI machine in Portage regional health facility will help reduce wait times for patients and provide better care sooner.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to support the investment and placement of an MRI machine in Portage regional health facility in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

This petition has been signed by Janice Millions, Jean Stanley, Denys Marion and many, many more Manitobans.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle): I would just like to remind members that you have to read the first three names of your petition only. Thank you.

Medical Assistance in Dying

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

Persons struggling with mental health as their sole condition may access medical assistance in dying unless Parliament intervenes.

(2) Suicidality is often a symptom of mental health illness, and suicide is the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the age of 10 and 19.

There have been reports of the unsolicited introduction of medical assistance in dying to non-seeking persons, including Canadian veterans, as a solution for their medical and mental health issues.

Legal and medical experts are deeply concerned that permitting Canadians suffering from depression and other mental illnesses to access euthanasia would undermine suicide prevention efforts and risk normalizing suicide as a solution for those suffering from mental illness.

The federal government is bound by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to advance and protect the life, liberty and security of its citizens.

Manitobans consider it a priority to ensure that adequate supports are in place for mental health for all Canadians.

'Vounerbal' Manitobans must be given suicide prevention counselling instead of suicide assistance.

The federal government should focus on increasing mental health supports to provinces and improve access to these supports, instead of offering medical assistance in dying for those with mental illness.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to stop the expansion of medical assistance in dying to those whose mental illness is the sole condition; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to lobby the federal government to protect Canadians struggling with mental illness by facilitating treatment, recovery and medical assistance in living, not death.

This petition has been signed by Patricia Pellard [*phonetic*], Joel Tourand, Greg Bugera and many, many other Manitobans.

* (15:40)

Removal of Federal Carbon Tax

Mr. Richard Perchotte (Selkirk): Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker—correct? 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:

(1) The federal government has mandated a consumption-based carbon tax, with the stated goal of financially pressuring Canadians to make decisions to reduce their carbon emissions.

(2) Manitoba Hydro estimates that, even with a high-efficiency furnace, the carbon tax is costing the average family over \$200 annually, even more for those with older furnaces.

(3) Home heating in Manitoba is not a choice or a decision for Manitobans to make; it is a necessity of life, with an average of almost 200 days below 0°C annually.

(4) The federal government has selectively removed the carbon tax off of home heating oil in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, but has indicated they have no intention to provide the same relief to Manitobans heating their homes.

(5) Manitoba Hydro indicates that natural gas heating is one of the most affordable options available to Manitobans, and it can be cost prohibitive for households to replace their heating source.

(6) Premiers across Canada, including in the Atlantic provinces, that benefit from this decision, have collectively sent a letter to the federal government calling on it to extend the carbon tax exemption to all forms of home heating, with the exception of Manitoba.

(7) Manitoba is one of the only provincial jurisdictions to have not agreed with the stance that all Canadians' home heating bills should be exempt from the carbon tax.

(8) Provincial leadership in other jurisdictions have already committed to removing the federal carbon tax from home heating bills.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to remove the federal carbon tax on home heating bills for all Manitobans to provide them much-needed relief.

Signed by Harlan Perchotte, Reed Sutherland, Gerald Sawatsky and many, many, many more Manitobans.

Provincial Trunk Highway 2

Mr. Grant Jackson (Spruce Woods): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

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

(1) Provincial Trunk Highway 2, PTH 2, is a 315-kilometre, 196-mile highway that runs from the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border to Winnipeg's Perimeter Highway.

(2) A significant portion of PTH 2 runs through the constituency of Spruce Woods, from the border of

the rural municipality of Pipestone and the rural municipality of Sifton to the border of the rural municipality of Victoria and the rural municipality of Norfolk-Treherne.

(3) This route is historically significant, as it follows the original path taken in 1874 by the North West Mounted Police in their march west from Fort Dufferin to Fort Whoop-Up.

(4) PTH 2 is a significant commuting route for Westman families and is also utilized by those in the trade, commerce, tourism, agriculture and agri-food industries.

(5) The condition of PTH 2, from the east side of the town of Souris straight through to the hamlet of Deleau, is in an unacceptable state of disrepair.

(6) The newly appointed Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure has confirmed the department has no plan to refurbish this stretch of road until the 2028-2029 construction season.

The minister—I'm sorry.

(7) The minister outlined that the current 2028-2029 construction plan does not include the stretch of PTH 2 that runs through the town of Souris, but instead starts on the west side of town.

(8) The communities in the area have been clear that any reconstruction of PTH 2 must include the stretch that runs through the town of Souris.

(9) The minister and the Premier have a duty to respond to infrastructure needs identified by rural communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To urge the Premier and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to immediately prioritize the reconstruction of Provincial Trunk Highway 2 in the upcoming construction season; and

(2) To urge the provincial government to include the stretch of Provincial Trunk Highway 2 that runs through the town of Souris in its reconstruction plans.

This petition has been signed by Gail Williamson, Tim Morden, Disha Patel and many, many more fine Manitobans.

The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle): Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Nahanni Fontaine (Government House Leader):

It's about time. Can you please call for the continuation of second reading debate of Bill 30 for the umpteenth time, The Unexplained Wealth Act, criminal property forfeiture act and corporations act amendment.

Hopefully, members opposite don't waste everybody's time. Then we can go on to second reading of Bill 31, The Captured Carbon Storage Act.

And hopefully, they don't waste more time after that and we can get to the second reading of Bill 29, The Body Armour and Fortified Vehicle Control Amendment Act.

* (15:50)

The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle): Resuming debate on second reading—it has been announced that we are resuming debate on second reading of Bill 30, followed by the second reading of Bill 31 and 29.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 30—The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended)

The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle): Resuming debate on second reading, Bill 30, and the reasoned amendment, standing in the name of the member for Red River North, who has 25 minutes remaining.

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Red River North): Thank you very much assistant—Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, for that acknowledgment. Thank you.

Again, it gives me great privilege to stand up here representing the great folks of Red River North today and every day in this House.

Certainly, again, to talk about the—Bill 30 and the reasoned amendment brought forward by my colleague from Interlake-Gimli. Certainly, my job today will be to speak directly, again, to the constituents that have reached out to me and many Manitobans that are wondering why we're debating Bill 30. Maybe the member from St. Johns could tell us, because the member from Concordia certainly can't, we know that. *[interjection]*

And, certainly, I understand that the member from St. Johns loves to hear herself speak and, certainly, she'll continue to talk down my time. She certainly has

enough time to speak in this House, and she makes it up usually, anyways.

So you know, obviously, Honourable—*[interjection]*

The Acting Speaker (Robert Loiselle): Order. Order. Order.

I will call all members to order. It's important for me to hear what's going on in the House.

Thank you.

Mr. Wharton: Certainly, I appreciate you calling all the members to order in this House, and we take that advice very seriously, unlike, maybe, the member from St. Johns.

So again, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, we're here today, again, to talk about the similarities between Bill 30 and the former PC bill, bill 58. And we know, and we've—when we've asked the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) about Bill 30, to just simply explain to Manitobans, as we're going to do today, and as we continue to do every day—of course, the member for St. Johns (MLA Fontaine) may not like that, but Manitobans want to know: What's the difference between Bill 30 and bill 58?

And we're here to share some of that information with Manitobans. *[interjection]* And, certainly, the member from St. Johns can feel free to sit in her seat and continue to debate me any time. I'm happy to do that. But we're here to discuss, again, the reasoned amendment brought forward by my colleague from Interlake-Gimli.

If the Minister of Justice and the member from St. Johns maybe consulted with Manitobans, perhaps maybe we wouldn't be having this discussion. And the member from St. Johns can go have her lunch, for as far as we're concerned, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker.

But yes, certainly, we know that if there were some consultation done, if there was any consultation done during the process, we know that we wouldn't be standing up here again today, debating Bill 30. Certainly, the members opposite have a lot to say too, and that's great. Maybe they want to stand up and talk about the reasoned amendment and why we're here.

So what we'll do today, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, again, is talk about essentially the big problem with Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act. It—is it—that it does not make any relevant or distinct changes to the legislation already in place within Manitoba, as in 2021, there were amendments

made within the Legislature by the PCs that allowed for the unexplained wealth order.

So again, right off the hop, Bill 30, bill 58 and the amendments made in 2021 are the same. They're there. They're already existing. Again, if the member from Concordia, the Minister of Justice would just get up, simply get up and say, you're right, Manitobans were—we made a mistake, this bill is the same as bill 58, then we wouldn't, again, be having this discussion. But we'll continue.

So these amendments will allow the Criminal Property Forfeiture director and the mechanism within the area of government to explore an individual's finances to see if there is any explanation for their wealth, again, existing in bill 58 and now moving into Bill 30. Same theme right here, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker.

This piece of legislation is important and appears to be non-partisan. But we must understand today how this is—how is it any different from already existing legislation, again, as we talked about bill 58.

If not, it begs the question that the NDP are taking the approach of: we have to look like we're doing something, even though we're not taking any steps forward the issue of public safety.

Now, we know public safety is so important to Manitobans, particularly these days, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker. We know that. That's why our government and the former Justice minister and the other former Justice minister were doing their job to ensure that Manitobans were being safe.

That's why the amendment was brought forward in 2021 and we can appreciate that the NDP, during the campaign, made a promise to bring forward Bill 30. But it was already there and they knew that, because the similarities between bill 58 and Bill 30—well, I'm going to get into some more of those right away.

We know, on this side of the House, it's the opposition's role to ensure that any legislation that comes forward in this House is different from legislation that currently exists. Again, I spoke to it many times, and I'll continue to speak to it in the 18 minutes I have left, the similarities between bill 58 and Bill 30, particularly after the amendments were made by the former PC government.

However, whether or not this particular amendment to the legislation actually is actually—is in advance at all difficult to say because the minister has not

explained it. So I know many of my colleagues have gotten up and spoken about, again, with respect to the reasoned amendment, the comparisons between bill 58 and Bill 30 and have given the Minister of Justice plenty of opportunity to get up and just clarify for Manitobans what the differences are between Bill 30 and bill 58.

If this is actually enhancing something, well just let us know. Manitobans deserve to know what it's enhancing to ensure that public safety and Manitobans, Winnipeggers, folks in Brandon, my colleague from Brandon West would know, are protected for sure.

And we appreciate that Bill 30 is, you know, a mirror of almost bill 58, so we understand that.

One of the challenges for—and it's interesting—of the challenges for law enforcement, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, when it comes to legislation like Bill 30 and comparing it to bill 58, is the folks on the front lines are now having to, I guess, decipher, much like Manitobans are doing and much like this side of the House is trying to do, is to figure out what the changes are, because when you introduce legislation like that, that is very comparable to the legislation that's already on the books, their similarities are very apparent.

However, Bill 30 now would go to the public service. It would go to the front lines, our officers, RCMP, local police, East St. Paul police, all looking for an explanation on—okay; so we have bill 58, which is comparable to Bill 30. What are we applying to enhance public safety here in Manitoba?

So that would be the first question, and that's what we've been hearing, too, as well, when Bill 30 was introduced. And that's why, again, I'm so pleased that my colleague, member from Interlake-Gimli, introduced again the recent amendment because it really shows that there's a lot of work to be done here with Bill 30.

If they really want to continue and the NDP want to continue to try to enhance the current legislation, bill 58, because, again, the comparables are incredible.

Again, some of the areas, I think—unfortunately, it was—again, it was a campaign promise. We understand why the minister had to get up and introduce it. But it's still—it's too comparable to bill 58 to even be real true legislation.

* (16:00)

And, quite frankly, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, I think a lot of this could have been done, and

I tried to get this on yesterday, but unfortunately I ran out of time. But a lot of this, what the NDP is perceiving as changes and enhancements to the former bill 58—or the bill 58 and its amendments likely could've been talked about in regulation.

So what they could've done, the NDP, to maybe save a lot of time and enhance, is just simply bring forward enhancements in respect to areas of the bill that could've maybe just, through regulation, could've been done. So we probably would've been able to tool up our front lines, our police officers, with some additional regulation that maybe they felt was missed in bill 58, because the similarities between bill 58 and Bill 30, again, are incredible.

So I would suggest that, you know, the minister, I know, is listening today. He will probably take that back and maybe, around the Cabinet table, have a discussion about how Bill 30 and bill 58 are similar; however, maybe we can enhance it by introducing some regulation.

So I'll leave that with the minister. I know the minister's been in the—as an MLA from Concordia for about 14 years and certainly has had a fairly lengthy run and a lengthy commitment to the folks in Concordia, and certainly commend him for that.

However, he is new to Cabinet. I know he sat for the better part of seven years in government under Selinger and Doer, at the time, and wasn't in Cabinet, so I know he's new to Cabinet. Certainly going to try to help him understand the differences and the similarities between legislation that former governments and current governments introduce in the House and certainly for the betterment of all Manitobans when it comes to public safety.

Again, the reasoned amendments that have been brought forward brings forward the reason why the bill shouldn't—should be withdrawn, quite frankly, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, and not slipped into BITSA. Because we know that public safety is, again, very important to Manitobans and certainly slip it into BITSA as the government is doing—and, again, it's in BITSA already—they're going to go ahead and push it through without any public consultation now because they feel that they know best.

And we know that—and that's why we're up here today talking about the reasoned amendment with Manitobans to ensure that the—all the facts come out. Because there was no consultation on Bill 30—we know that—and along with other bills that they're

slipping into BITSA, but I digress. I'll go back to the point here of the similarities between the two bills.

In this particular case, of course, the—that reason the bill hasn't been described has been the information about how different and how not different the legislation is between bill 58 and Bill 30. Again, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) was asked about difference between the legislation and the legislation that currently exists and didn't answer the question and still, to this day, has not answered the question.

I'm glad that the minister is listening, again, and I know that this is important to him and, you know, certainly remind him that when he was first elected, we know the great service that he's provided for Concordia. And fairly new to the ministry, he knows that there's lots of work to do, and he certainly—I know that he'll be consulting in the future as he gets, you know, a little bit more rolling into his role as the Minister of Justice.

Now that I'm sure, you know, the Department of Justice could provide, in writing, for him too, as well, an explanation of how the bills are already in existence. That would certainly be something—I don't know if the minister's had a chance to talk to the fine folks that staff up his department. I know there's some great people working in that department, as there are throughout all the departments in this great building.

And those folks are a great resource for ministers, especially new ministers that are just getting started in their portfolios and drinking from the fire hose and understanding—trying to understand current legislation and bringing forward their own legislation like Bill 30 and not really maybe having the opportunity to discuss the similarities between the two bills when they're speaking, whether it be around the boardroom table in Justice or other places where they can certainly get out and understand a little bit of the similarities that we're trying to bring forward today.

And you know, again, with this reasoned amendment that is before the House today, we have—the government has to make a decision. We know that. That's what governments need to do. They must decide whether or not they do a—the simple thing, the path of least resistance and simply answer the questions. The minister can get up and answer the questions in this House about the legislation and the differences in the legislation that currently exist. A very, very simple request, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker.

We know that the minister has heard a lot of—put—we put a lot of information on the record regarding the

similarities. And I know he's taken it back and he's looked at them. I suspect he has, and if he's doing his due diligence as a minister of the Crown, and I'm sure he is, and he will be certainly poring through that information because there's going to be a lot of it by the time we get through the reasoned amendment and again, provide this House and Manitobans the similarities between bill 58 and Bill 30, and the reasoned amendment is going to do that for us.

Again, I'd like to touch a little bit on the similarities at this time, again, the PC amendments that we put in in 2021. British Columbia actually, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, had examined what we did under The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and hoped to do the same with their provincial legislation and they introduced bill 21. And bill 21 was the Civil Forfeiture Amendment Act, and the minister of Public Safety, who was the deputy premier in BC at the time, talked a little bit about how this was modelled off of the changes in the legislation in Manitoba that took place, again, in 2021, not under the current NDP government.

So, again, the BC NDP are saying, look, the model and the amendments in bill 58 in 2021 are almost exactly what this minister and this government are providing Manitobans today. There's several, several similarities here.

And, again, I mentioned earlier for the—to the minister about perhaps maybe looking at simple regulation within the bill, within the current bill, that could maybe help with the current environment where, you know, again, I know the minister's done his research and I'm sure he's looked at that, but I just wanted to put it on the record for Manitobans too, as well, that that's an opportunity that he could look at, that—pardon me, I need a little bit of water here. Thank you, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker. I've been fighting a bit of a cold, so a bit of a tickle in the throat.

Again, the NDP government in BC that referenced to our PC government here in Manitoba are setting the example across the country of what we need to ensure or do—the unexplained wealth and money laundering is dealt with and how money laundering is dealt with with their province. And so they looked at Manitoba again in setting that example with bill 58 and the amendments that were provided back in 2021 and now looking at a mirror almost, of Bill 30, introduced by the NDP government here in Manitoba.

So, again, we're—call on the minister to take the time. Perhaps our members on this side will agree that if the minister did get up and explain the differences

between Bill 30 and bill 58 with respect to the amendments of bill 58, then you know what? Then we will likely move that forward. I would probably bet that we would, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker.

So maybe we'll provide him that time soon so we can get those answers. Mind you, I don't mind standing up. I know the member from St. Johns likes me—likes when I get up and talk about NDP legislation. But, certainly, we look forward to further comments from the member from St. Johns. I'm sure the member will be piping up shortly.

In any act like this and in any particular justice like this, there are competing interests so the public rightfully demands, and they should, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker. And this is one of the reasons why we brought the unexplained wealth order in 2021: it was asked for. Again, the minister at the time, the member from Steinbach, brought that legislation forward, worked through the amendments, and the NDP went out and in 2023, promised legislation of Bill 30, mirrored the current legislation, and here we are today talking about a reasoned amendment on Bill 30 to ensure that, you know, Manitobans are getting enhanced legislation. We're not sure they are, quite frankly. We think it's very similar, and that's why we're up here talking about it again today. And, in the act, again, we need to make sure the public is fully informed.

* (16:10)

When an order is given under The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act, that is, the vast majority of—70 per cent are never contested by an individual. Well, again, that's already there. We know that.

During the leader debate, we know that the now-Premier (Mr. Kinew) talked about gangsters driving \$100,000 vehicles. I think I've seen a few hundred-thousand-dollar vehicles around the parking lot here, and I hope that he wasn't referring to all Manitobans that drive \$100,000 cars are gangsters because I don't think they are, are they?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Wharton: I didn't think so; no. So, certainly, you know, maybe the Minister of Justice (Mr. Wiebe) could help under—us understand that comment too as well.

Public safety is really important; we know that but we certainly can't always point the finger at everybody that walks or drives by in a \$100,000 vehicle.

So, again, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, I've about four minutes left. I wanted to just—to again touch on some of the others areas and the similarities between bill 58 and Bill 30, and again share the several similarities, despite their distinct focuses.

But the bill aims to strengthen the legal framework in combatting criminal activity, particularly in relation to property and financial transactions. Well, again, this analyst will dwell—the analyst would delve into the similarities between the two bills, highlighting their common goals, provisions and implications.

So we also talked about enhanced power in bill 58. Bill 30 says the same thing. Both bills grant law enforcement agencies increased authority to investigate the seizure of property suspected of being linked to criminal activity. Bill 58 expands that definition by criminal—of criminal property to include assets used in the commission of criminal offences. So it's actually enhanced already.

Maybe the minister wouldn't have to put that into regulation because it's there; it's already there. It's similar. So that's good news.

The commission—while Bill 30 allows for the forfeiture of unexplained wealth, of course, the commission would naturally review it. The same increased power enables law enforcement to more effectively target criminal organizations and individuals who's used property and financial transactions to facilitate illegal activities; already in place. It's already there. It's—and again, to Manitobans, this is—essentially I'm reading a mirror of what we did in 2021.

Criminal property forfeiture. Both bills deal with criminal property forfeiture. Bill 58 amends The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and allows for the forfeiture of property used or intended for use in criminal activity, regardless of whether the conviction is obtained; similar to Bill 30. Again, amends the same act to include unexplained wealth. It's there, as a grounds of forfeiture.

This shared focus on criminal property forfeiture demonstrates a commitment to depriving criminals of their ill-gotten gains or their \$100,000 vehicles; we're not sure yet.

Targeting criminal organizations. Both bills aim to disrupt and dismantle criminal organizations by targeting the financial assets. In bill 58, expanded definition of the criminal property and Bill 30 focuses on unexplained wealth. Both seek to prevent. They—both bills seek to 'corrent' criminal—criminals from using property and financial transactions to further their

illegal activities. Again, it's in there. It's already spoken to in bill 58, the former PC bill that was amended in 2021 by our Justice minister at the time.

By targeting the financial roots of criminal organizations, both bills aim to reduce their ability to operate and cause harm. It's in there. The Minister of Justice can get up today and just simply state what I'm stating right here on—for the record, saying, yes; yes, you're right. The opposition is right. I—they've got it right; they do and we're going to accept it. And we'll see if he does that later today.

Increased transparency. Bill 30's amendment, The Corporations Act, requiring companies to disclose beneficial ownership and control as a significant step towards increasing transparency. Bill 58 has those provisions in, for the forfeiture of criminal property can be seen as a means to increase transparency in financial transactions. Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker, it's already there. It's written here in black and white.

Prevention of money laundering. Both bills indirectly address money laundering by targeting the financial aspects of criminal activity. Bill 58 actually expands on that definition of criminal 'proverty'—or, property, and Bill 30's focus on unexplained wealth both seek to prevent criminals from using financial transactions to conceal their legal—illegal activities.

Again, perhaps a simple regulation added to the current bill, bill 58, and the amendment put forward by PC party in 2021, would do it, Honourable Assistant Deputy Speaker.

That's about my time today to speak to the amendment today and to speak again to the reasoned amendment, Honourable Deputy Speaker. It's been a great pleasure to speak on behalf of the residents and the great folks of Red River North.

Thank you.

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): I just want to—just need to tell the difference between what's different about—from the bill from 2021 and the bill that was brought forward this last month. I just want to read the motion that we're using to amend the current Bill 30.

Just going to read it over, just so we can hear it: That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word that, and substituting the following: this House declines to give second reading to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended) because this House

has not received satisfactory evidence or assistant—assurance that this bill is different to the existing legislation that was brought forward and passed in this House in 2021.

In 2021, the PC government passed legislative—legislative changes that strengthened the ability for the Criminal Property Forfeiture Unit to quickly act on securing money that investigators believed to be illegally acquired and could be subject to Monday—money laundering.

This is why we—sorry. I just need to—we just fail to see the difference between this bill and the one that's been brought forward.

In 2022, the PCs expanded staffing capacity within the criminal property 'forfitchal' unit, CPF, to combat money laundering. They hired two investigators and a financial analyst to target organized crime. The PC government distributed millions of dollars from the Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund to various initiatives and agencies. This includes dollars to Bear Clan Patrol, law enforcement agencies, community safety groups, victim service organizations and services, and rural charities.

When BC announced their new law in March of 2023, their Attorney General was quoted saying, there is a similar piece of legislation in place in Manitoba, and that was in 2023. So it was already done.

So, a reasoned amendment is a proposed modification to a bill or motion that includes a clear and concise explanation of the reason behind the suggested change. This essential tool enables lawmakers to engage in informed and constructive debate, refining legislation to better serve the public interest. That is the goal here with the amendment that we're bringing for Bill 30.

A reasoned amendment is a specific type of amendment that is not only proposes a change to a bill or motion, but also provides a rational justification for the alteration. This justification is typically presented in a clear and concise manner, outlining the reasons why the amendment is necessary or desirable.

* (16:20)

Reasoned amendments is necessary—sorry; reasoned amendments can be proposed by individuals, lawmakers, committees or even the executive branch, and are an integral part of the legislative process. And that is why we are bringing forward the amendment to Bill 30 that we have proposed.

Reasoned amendments serve several purposes in the legislative process. Number 1, it's for clarification.

Reasoned amendments can help clarify ambiguous or unclear provisions in a bill, ensuring that the intent of the legislation is understood and implemented correctly.

Number 2, for improvement, which is what we are doing now, is we're trying to improve the bill that was brought forward as Bill 30. By proposing alternative language or modifications, reasoned amendments can strengthen a bill, addressing—sorry—potential flaws or weaknesses.

Number 3: compromise. Reasoned amendments can facilitate compromise among lawmakers working together as a team with differing opinions, allowing for the finding of common ground and the creation of more effective legislation, as we are all here to work for our constituents. And we all want to do the best we can to make sure that we provide what we need for the lawmakers and investigators that are working on all of our behalf to ensure that they're—when they do seize criminal property, or there's suspicious money situations going on, that we want to make sure that we give all of the people involved the best tools that they can have. And we should all be working towards that goal.

Transparency. The explanatory nature of reasoned amendments promotes transparency, enabling lawmakers and the public to understand this—the reasoning behind proposed changes.

Number 5: accountability. By requiring lawmakers to provide clear justifications for their proposed amendments, reasoned amendments promote accountability and responsible 'governance'. We believe, on this side of the House, that it's important for us to represent our constituents and our province, and I believe that that accountability is important for us to do our jobs and to do the best we can, holding each other accountable and—as well as the current government accountable.

So best practices. To maximize the efficiency of reasoned amendments, lawmakers should do these things. First, we need to be clear and concise when making amendments to bills—and that is what we're doing today; we need to be clear and concise to the amendment to Bill 30—to ensure that the explanation accompanying the amendment is easy to understand and directly addresses the purpose—the proposed change.

Number 2, focusing on the issue. For us, avoiding using 'reasonab' amendments is a vehicle for unrelated policy debates or political decisions. We need to make sure that we know why the bill was brought forward, and why we need to make the amendment to the—Bill 30, and we believe it's because it's similar to what's already in legislation.

We need to engage in constructive dialogue, which is what we're doing. Used—use reasoned amendments as the starting point for respectful and informative decisions with fellow lawmakers. It's important for us to talk things out and to discuss what's happening.

We need to consider multiple perspectives. I think it's always really good to make sure we have many, multiple perspectives when we are discussing bills, amendments and specifically the amendment to Bill 30 but—we're currently discussing.

The Speaker in the Chair

We need to be open to feedback and willing to incorporate suggestions from others into the amendment. By employing reasoned amendments, lawmakers can engage in a more informed, transparent and accountable—sorry—legislative process, ultimately leading to better crafted laws that serve the public interest. And as lawmakers, we want to make sure that we do the best we can, and that is the reason we have made the amendment to—brought forward the amendment to Bill 30.

Comparisons of bill 58, that was currently done already, and Bill 30, we will discuss those—a few of those things just to make sure that we know that—why we need to do the amendment to Bill 30 currently. So bill 58 in 2021 was brought forward by the PC government, and we need to find out what the difference is between the bill 58 and the current Bill 30 that we have proposed the amendment to.

Bill 58, the current—or sorry, The Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act, amends The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act to allow for the forfeiture of property used or intended for use in criminal activity, regardless of whether a conviction is obtained, which is a really important part of this act.

We need to be able to go ahead and seize property and investigate situations that are—that look criminal and don't have any explanation as to why people have extra wealth, if they go out and buy a brand-new house or whatever it is.

Expands the definition of criminal property to include property used in the commission of a criminal offence, such as fraud or drug trafficking. It increases the power of law enforcement to seize and forfeit property suspected of being linked to criminal activity.

We need to make sure we understand the difference between bill 58 and Bill 30, and that is why we're bringing the amendment forward to Bill 30. Bill—this is the different—this is—so I just explained

bill 58, the changes that were made to that. Now I will talk about Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended).

Targets unexplain—sorry, Bill 30 targets unexplained wealth by allowing the government to seize assets that cannot be explained by known income or assets. So that sounds very similar, or pretty much the same as what I read earlier about bill 58.

Amendments to The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act to include unexplained wealth as a grounds for forfeiture, which is exactly what bill 58—it says. Amendments to The Corporations Act to require companies to disclose beneficial ownership and control.

Maybe there are a few differences. So bill 58 focuses on crime—or, sorry, it focuses on criminal property forfeiture, while Bill 30, it targets unexplained wealth and beneficial ownership. Bill 58 requires a connection to criminal activity, while Bill 30 does not require criminal conviction. Bill 30 has a broader scope, but it is basically the same as what has already been legislated in 2021, including the disclosure of beneficial ownership and control.

* (16:30)

A big problem and the reason we're doing the amendment to Bill 30 is there's issues with repeated legislation. A big problem with Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act, is that it does not make any 'revelant' or distinct changes to the legislation that has already in place within Manitoba.

As in 2021, there were amendments made within the Legislature by the PCs that allowed for unexplained wealth orders. These amendments allow the Criminal Property Forfeiture director and the mechanism within that area of government to explore an individual's finances to see if there is an 'explanation' for their wealth. And that is why we are doing the amendment to the Bill 30 legislation.

And I know I've talked about this story before, but I'm going to tell this story about my son and how he—we had a visit from one of the kids' parents down the road when he was about seven or eight. He was trying to be a really good kid and he had some extra money in his piggy bank.

So one of the moms down the street had asked her son where he got all this money in his pocket, and he said, well, because she said, this is not your money. She knew he did not have that much money in his pocket. So this is a simple, you know, dumbed-down

kind of a situation about the wealth act. It's made in more of a simple form but basically, from a child's perspective and a mother's perspective, she said she noticed there was something in his possession that he didn't earn and it wasn't his and she didn't know where it came from.

So she asked him, which for example, a police officer would ask somebody, where did you get—buy that big mansion of a house when you don't have a job right now? Anyway, she asked her son, where did you get that money from and he said, from the little boy down the street. And so they came over. Mother, you know, realized that that wasn't his money. The mother came over to investigate, to see where the money came from.

And it was a legitimate, you know, gift that my son had given her—or her son. And he had just said, he had wanted to share his money. He had broken up his—opened his piggy bank and wanted to share his money with his friend.

But those are not situations that happen, generally, with adults who are involved in criminal activity. So it's really good to use that as an example of suspicious money and how we can, as citizens, as legislators, as investigators and people who are defending us and taking care of society for us, how they can see, you know, that this isn't legitimate and this doesn't look right and just to investigate and find out what's going on with that.

So that's why we need to do that. We need to investigate and explore an individual's finances to see if there is an explanation for their wealth, which is what this mother had done with her son.

This piece of legislation is important and appears to be non-partisan, but we must understand today how this is any—how this is any different—how is this any different than existing—already existing legislation? If not different, it begs the question that the NDP are taking the approach of, we have to look like we're doing something even though we are not taking any steps forward in the issue of public safety.

On this side of the House, it's the opposition's role to ensure that the—any legislation that comes forward in this House is different from legislation that already exists currently. Or else, why are we even here? We are constantly needing to make things better for our province and for our constituents. That is what we have been appointed to these positions for. And I take that very seriously, that role. And I really value my constituents in Morden-Winkler, and I value everybody

in my province. I want to work hard for every one of them. That is my goal, to do the best I can with everything I can.

On this—or the—in—on this side of the House, it's the—yes, I said—already said the opposition's role to ensure that any legislation that comes forward in this House is different from legislation that already currently exists. I'm going to say that again. I just said it again because it's important.

However, whether or not this particular amendment to legislation—actually, because the minister has not explained it, we need explanation as to how it is different from bill 58. The Bill 30—the amendment to Bill 30 was brought forward because we don't know the difference between those two, and we are searching for that information.

If this is enhancing something, well, we would—just let us know what it is. If it's not, then maybe just admit that it's not. And the other question, really, is, why is this legislation coming forward when the legislation currently exists already in the province of Manitoba? But I think, unfortunately, it was a campaign promise that was made. It was a campaign promise that was made by the NDP to attempt to try to tell Manitobans that they are tough on crime when, in fact, those laws already exist.

But the recent amendment—the reasoned amendment to Bill 30 that's been brought forward, brings forward the reason why the bill should be withdrawn, not slipped into BITSAs, as the government is doing with other pieces of legislation that are continuous—contentious before the House, but to be able to have a reason for not proceeding with the bill. In this particular case, that reason is the—that the bill hasn't been described, hasn't been given any information about how it's different from other legislation that we already currently have and exists in the province of Manitoba.

Bill 58, that was amended already in 2021, is basically the same as Bill 30. That is why we are bringing forward this amendment to Bill 30 to draw attention and to show that this is not what we need right now and this is not what need to bring forward.

When asked if the difference between the legislation—this legislation and the legislation that currently exists, was—the answer was not given to those questions and still hasn't been answered for those questions. Now, I'm sure that the Department of Justice could provide in writing some form of—a way of explanation of how the bill that is already in existence—the legislation that exists already in Manitoba is different from

that particular bill that already exists in Manitoba, how this might enhance it or come alongside and support it. But there seems to be something holding us up.

There's—okay—with this reasoned amendment that is before the House for Bill 30, we have the government—the government has to make a decision. It must decide whether or not they do the simple thing, the path of least resistance, and answer the questions that have been put forward by myself and others in this House about how this legislation is different than legislation that currently exists. It's a very, very simple question.

At the time of our legislate—or, our PC legislation in 2021, British Columbia had examined what we did under The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and hoped to do the same with their provincial legislation. They introduced bill 21, the Civil Forfeiture Amendment Act. The minister of Public Safety, who was the deputy premier of—in BC at the time, talked a little bit about how this was modelled off the changes to—in legislation in Manitoba. That took place, again, in 2021, but not under the NDP government, but under the Conservative government.

So, again, we want to know what is the difference between bill 58 that we currently have and that BC used as a model or Bill 30, and that's why we're bringing this amendment forward on Bill 30. That the—was—that was the NDP government in BC that referenced our PC government here in Manitoba as setting the example across the country of what needed to be—to do to ensure that unexplained wealth and money laundering is dealt with in their province. And so they looked to—at Manitoba as setting the example.

* (16:40)

Again, that was bill 58, and that was done in 2021 by the PC government, and Bill 30 was brought forward, which doesn't make any sense because it's the same legislation, and that is why we're making the amendment to Bill 30.

In an act like this, and in the particular part of Justice like this, there are competing interests, so the public rightfully demands, and this is one of the reasons why we've brought the unexplained wealth orders in in 2021. The public rightfully demands that those who are dealing drugs or money laundering as a result of dealing drugs or other sort of things, that there's a punishment upon them—put upon them.

It is important for us to give tools to those that are doing these important work for us, and that is why we

are asking what purpose of Bill 30 is currently with—that's why we need the amendment.

When an order is given under the criminal forfeiture act—property forfeiture act, that the vast majority, up to 70 per cent, are never contested by the individual. During the leader debate, the now-Premier (Mr. Kinew), Mr.—the now-Premier talked about gangsters driving \$100,000 cars. Well, you know, there's a lot of people that drive \$100,000 cars here in Manitoba. I'm unfortunately not one of those people. I have a recycled car. I'm like a—I'm a recycled-car user. It's new to me, but not new new.

But anyway, I guess I—yes. So that's just an explained—if I were to drive a car like that—if I were to drive a car like that, then they would come look and investigate me, too. So anyway, I hope he wasn't referring to all Manitobans that drive cars as gangsters, because I'm not a gangster, but I don't have a car like that, but.

Issues on the bill itself, issues of political targeting, opponents raising concerns about the act being used for political targeting. They may argue that authorities could exploit the act to harass or intimidate individuals who hold different political views or are critical of sitting government, thereby infringing on their rights to free speech and political expression.

Another one that could be a problem, and that's why we're bringing the amendment to the Bill 30, is personal vendettas. Many Manitobans are from small communities, and there are sometimes people that are jealous in small communities, as well as neighbours down the street in the city. You maybe don't see it as much in larger communities, but people can get jealous. And you want to make sure that you don't get reported for something that is not an actual crime or anything that's been going on. Yes.

People question, how did that person get this money? Why can that person drive the new car? And this can lead to unnecessary conflict, and that is a bit of an issue with Bill 30.

The minister is the reason why this bill has now been delayed. It's critical and important that we as legislators know what it is that we're debating and what it is that we're passing, and it's the responsibility, the accountability of a minister to be able to bring forward those answers.

So that opportunity still—is still here today, to provide the answers. But in absence of that, we need—there needs to be continued—to hear opposition members to do our jobs and ask those questions to get

answers and to provide before this bill moves on to the next stage.

Similarities between bill 58 and 30 is very, very close. They're very similar to each other. And I just want to bring it forward again, one more time, as my time ends here, that it's important for us as legislators to continually, continually work for the good and the goal of our constituents and our province.

And that's why I'm here and that's why I think all of us are here, as well as the current government. That should be the priority. It shouldn't be just to bring forward legislation that is similar to what's already happened, and that's why we have the amendment to Bill 30.

And as a legislator myself, I think it's important for us to spend time on situations and legislation that's really important to everybody in my constituency, down—from the seniors down the street that live down by my—where I live—to the children in the schools. It's just really important for us to continually work for the good of the people and not to take the time to just smash people, but just to actually let's keep positive with integrity as legislatures—'layers'—and I just want to bring that forward that that's a really important part of what we do here.

And I want to thank all of you here in this room today, in the Chamber, for putting your life on hold—or, not on hold, but for giving a large part of yourself. So thank you.

Mrs. Kathleen Cook (Roblin): I'm very pleased to rise in the House today and put a few more comments on the record with respect to my colleague's reasoned and very reasonable amendment to Bill 30.

And in preparing my comments I made sure to give a good read of the amendment itself put forward by the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson). And I understand why this is important, because colleagues across the way, the government, the NDP, have put forward a bill that is substantially similar to a bill that was already passed in 2021. That was bill 58, The Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act.

This bill, Bill 30, is not substantially different, and as a result, our amendment states that this House declines to give second reading to Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act (Criminal Property Forfeiture Act and Corporations Act Amended), because this House has not received satisfactory evidence or

assurance that this bill is different to the existing legislation that was brought forward and passed in this House in 2021.

So with that in mind, I'd like to discuss some of the similarities between these two bills, and there are many, Honourable Speaker, many similarities that, in fact, make the two bills indistinguishable. Bill 58, The Criminal Property Forfeiture Amendment Act, passed and got royal assent in 2021, and the House is currently considering its sister bill, if you will, Bill 30, The Unexplained Wealth Act.

Both bills aim to strengthen the legal framework for combatting criminal activity, particularly in relation to property and financial transactions.

So I did a bit of an analysis of both bills and I, along with many of my colleagues along this side of the House, see many commonalities. The goal—the both bills have common goals, provisions and implications. And it's kind of flattering, actually, that the NDP would like bill 58 so much that they would want to see it again, to take it as their own and debate it again in this House. So I'm very glad that we've given this bill such thorough debate in this House.

So both bills—the first point I'll make is that both bills provide enhanced power for law enforcement. Both bills grant law enforcement agencies, whether that's, you know, for example, the Winnipeg city police, or the Brandon city police, increased authority to investigate and seize property suspected of being linked to criminal activity. Both bills do that.

Bill 58, passed in 2021, expanded the definition of criminal property. It expanded that definition to include assets used in the commission of a criminal offense, and Bill 30 is allowing for the forfeiture of unexplained wealth.

But they're, in fact, the same. Bill 58, which is very similar to Bill 30, enabled law enforcement to more effectively target criminal organizations and individuals who use property and financial transactions to facilitate their illegal activities.

* (16:50)

So that's point 1. Point No. 2, regarding the similarities between bill 58 and Bill 30, is with respect to criminal property forfeiture. Both bills—in fact, this is the main point of both bills. Bill 58 amends The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act to allow for the forfeiture of property used or intended for use in criminal activity, regardless of whether a conviction is obtained. Meaning that if someone has been

changed, law enforcement can seize that property. They don't have to wait for it to go through a court of law; they don't have to wait for a conviction.

But Bill 30 is amending the same act to include unexplained wealth. And as I've said, Honourable Speaker, I think that property and unexplained wealth are the same thing. It's very similar grounds for forfeiture. Both bills are intended to target criminal organizations. They both aim to disrupt and dismantle criminal organizations by targeting their financial assets. And that's really how we get to the root of organized crime.

But both bills are doing the same thing. Bill 58's expanded definition of criminal property and Bill 30's focus on unexplained wealth both seek to prevent criminals from using property and financial transactions to further their illegal activities. Very similar, bill 58 and Bill 30. By targeting the financial roots of criminal organizations, both bills aim to reduce the ability of those criminal organizations to operate and to cause harm.

So again, we see just how similar these two bills really are. Both bills place a focus on increased transparency, and I can't stress enough how important that is. Bill 30 amends The Corporations Act, requiring companies to disclose beneficial ownership and control. And that increases transparency. But similarly, bill 58, which was the Progressive Conservative bill passed on this side of the House in 2021, included provisions for the forfeiture of criminal property, and those provisions can also be seen as improving transparency in financial transactions.

Both bills seek to shed light on previously hidden or obscure financial dealings, thereby preventing criminal activity and promoting accountability. So again, the point here is they're very similar. I'm not here to point out the differences. In fact, in my analysis of these bills, I could not find any differences. I found only similarities.

Members of the government could stand up in this House and point out those differences for us, and tell us what those differences are; to date, they haven't done that. So I'll move on to my next point. I think this is point 3.

Both bills indirectly address money laundering. Now, my understanding of money laundering is really limited to what I've seen in TV shows, but I understand its potential for criminal activity right here in our province. So both bills target the financial aspects of criminal activity. Bill 58 expanded the definition of

criminal property, and Bill 30's focus on unexplained wealth, both seek to prevent criminals from using financial transactions to conceal their illegal activities.

That's the point of bill 58, and it seems to be the point of Bill 30, as well. So by making it more difficult for criminals to launder their money, both of these bills contribute to the global effort to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. And those are laudable goals. I don't take issue with Bill 30's intent; I take issue with the fact that it's the same as bill 58. And that, indeed, is why my colleague, the member for Interlake-Gimli (Mr. Johnson) has put forward this very reasoned and reasonable amendment to the bill.

Another similarity between the two bills concerns the protection of the public, and that is perhaps the most important purpose of both bills. Ultimately, both bills aim to protect the public from the harmful effects of criminal activity.

By targeting criminal property and financial transactions, both bills seek to reduce the ability of criminals to cause harm and perpetuate their illegal activities. It seeks to stop the criminal activity in its tracks. This shared focus on public protection demonstrates a commitment to the safety and well-being of citizens.

And that's why I'm sure the NDP has good intentions with Bill 30. I believe they may have campaigned on this as an election promise. And maybe they just forgot about bill 58, or maybe they didn't go back and take a look at it and say, oh, you know what, the previous government already did this. We don't have to do it.

But if that's the case, I think that all of the important comments my colleagues and I have put on the record with respect to my colleague's amendment, we'll remind them of that.

And both bill 58 and Bill 30 demonstrate a commitment to complying with international standards for combatting criminal activity. We're not reinventing the wheel in Manitoba. We know that other jurisdictions are doing this well and we can learn lessons from where this is done elsewhere, particularly in relation to money laundering and terrorist financing.

Again, bill 58 and Bill 30 are very similar there. Both strengthen the legal framework for criminal property forfeiture. They increase transparency in financial transactions and, as such, both bills align with global efforts to combat these issues.

So, again, my analysis of these bills shows that both bills facilitate enhanced cooperation between law enforcement agencies, financial regulatory bodies and other organizations involved in combatting criminal activity. By sharing information and resources, these agencies can more effectively target criminal organizations and individuals, leading to further success in disrupting and dismantling their operations. And that, of course, is the goal of both of these bills. Think I'm up to point number nine now in my demonstration of the similarities between bill 58 and Bill 30. I'm not ready for that yet. I have many more important comments to make.

Both bill 58 and Bill 30 aim to create a deterrent effect, discouraging individuals and organizations from engaging in criminal activity. Indeed, I think if criminals were to read in Hansard all of the important comments members on both sides have put on the record with respect to this bill, they would, in fact, be deterred.

By increasing the risk of forfeiture and penalties for criminal property and financial transactions, both bills seek to prevent criminal activity before it even begins, promoting public safety and promoting a culture of compliance with the law.

And both bills, in fact, demonstrate a commitment to the rule of law and to justice, and that's something we should all be striving for. By strengthening the legal framework for combatting criminal activity, both bills aim to ensure that those who engage in illegal activities are held accountable for their actions, as they should be.

The shared commitment to justice is a fundamental aspect of both bills and is the 10th way in which these bills are substantially similar.

Both bills rely heavily on the findings of the Cullen Commission. The Cullen Commission was established in the wake of significant public concern about money laundering in British Columbia. Again, we're not reinventing the wheel in Manitoba. Both of these bills are basically—

The Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 16 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 o'clock, the House is now adjourned, stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

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