

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

Official Report
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	N.D.P.
BLAIKIE, Bill, Hon.	Elmwood	N.D.P.
BOROTSIK, Rick	Brandon West	P.C.
BRAUN, Erna	Rossmere	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
BRIESE, Stuart	Ste. Rose	P.C.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
HOWARD, Jennifer	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MARCELINO, Flor	Wellington	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McFADYEN, Hugh	Fort Whyte	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Carman	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
ROWAT, Leanne	Minnedosa	P.C.
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	N.D.P.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WHITEHEAD, Frank	The Pas	N.D.P.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 11, 2009

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Please be seated.

Routine proceedings; introduction of bills.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 231—The Elections Finances Amendment Act
(Abolishing the Vote Tax)**

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): I move, seconded by the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), that Bill No. 231, The Elections Finances Amendment Act (Abolishing the Vote Tax); Loi modifiant la Loi sur le financement des campagnes électorales (abolition de la subvention sur les votes), be now read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, seconded by the honourable Member for Steinbach, that Bill No. 231, The Elections Finances Amendment Act (Abolishing the Vote Tax), be now read a first time.

Mr. McFadyen: This bill is designed to repeal a provision of last year's Bill 37, a provision that never should have been there in the first place, recognizing, Mr. Speaker, that political parties are already subsidized by taxpayers through rebates after election campaigns and tax credits paid by governments to individuals who make contributions. There's no need for a further taxpayer subsidy in the form of annual grants to political parties at the expense of Manitoba taxpayers. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Petitions.

PETITIONS

Photo Radar

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

It is important to protect the safety of construction workers who are on the job having

reduced speeds in construction zones when workers are present.

The Province—provincial government handed out tickets to thousands of Manitobans who were driving the regular posted speed limit in co—struction zones who were—where no construction workers present.

A Manitoba court has ruled the reduction speed zones in construction areas were intended to protect workers and that tickets were given when no construction workers were present were invalid.

Provincial government has decided not to collect unpaid fines given to motorists who were ticketed in driving the normal posted speed limit when no construction workers present.

The provincial government is refusing to refund money to the many hardworking, law-abiding Manitobans who already had paid fines driving the regular speed limit in a construction zone when no workers were present.

We pesi—we, we petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Attorney General (Mr. Chomiak) consider refunding all monies protected from photo radar tickets given to motorists driving the regular posted speed limit in construction zones where no workers were present.

Submitted on behalf of J. Baryliuk, Craig Ross, Alf Smith and many, many other Manitobans.

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

Long-Term Care Facilities—Morden and Winkler

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

Many seniors from the Morden and Winkler area are currently patients in Boundary Trails Health Centre while they wait for placement in local personal care homes.

There are presently no beds available for these patients in Salem Home and Tabor Home. To make more beds in the hospital available, the regional

health authority is planning to move these patients to personal care homes in outlying regions.

These patients have lived, worked and raised their families in this area for most of their lives. They receive care and support from their family and friends who live in the community, and they will lose this support if they are forced to move to distant communities.

These seniors and their families should not have to bear the consequences of the provincial government's failure to ensure that there are adequate personal care home beds in the region.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) to ensure that patients who are awaiting placement in the personal care home are not moved to distant communities.

And to urge the Minister of Health to consider working with the RHA and the community to speed construction and expansion of long-term care facilities in the region.

And this is signed by Ike Dyck, Corny Klassen, John Krahn and many, many others.

Ring Dike Road—Ste. Rose du Lac

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Ring Dike Road is a well-used gravel municipal road that is used as a secondary road in and out of the community of Ste. Rose du Lac.

Given this heavy pattern of use, there is strong interest in the community in seeing the Ring Dike Road upgraded to a paved provincial road.

It would be most cost-effective to upgrade the Ring Dike Road to a provincial road at the same time that upgrades are being undertaken at the junction of Highway 68 and Highway 5.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Lemieux) to consider upgrading the Ring Dike Road at Ste. Rose du Lac into a provincial road; and

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to consider upgrading the Ring Dike Road at the same time that work is being done at the junctions of Highway 68 and Highway 5.

This petition is signed by S. Therrien, Linda Ritchot, Sara Verhaeghe and many, many other fine Manitobans.

PTH 15

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

These are the reasons for this petition.

In 2004, the Province of Manitoba made a public commitment to the people of Springfield to twin PTH 15 and the floodway bridge on PTH 15, and then in 2006, the twinning was cancelled.

Injuries resulting from collisions on PTH 15 continue to rise and have doubled from 2007 to 2008.

In August 2008, the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Lemieux) stated that preliminary analysis of current and future traffic demands indicate that local twinning will be required.

The current plan to replace the floodway bridge on PTH 15 does not include twinning and, therefore, does not fulfil the current nor future traffic demands cited by the Minister of Transportation.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Transportation consider the immediate twinning of the PTH 15 floodway bridge for the safety of the citizens of Manitoba.

Signed by Trustee Gladys Hayward Williams, Cathy King, Sandie King and many, many other Manitobans.

Ophthalmology Services—Swan River

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Swan Valley region has a high population of seniors and a very high incidence of diabetes. Every year, hundreds of patients from the Swan Valley region must travel to distant communities for cataract

surgery and additional preoperative and post-operative appointments.

These patients, many of whom are sent as far away as Saskatchewan, need to travel with an escort who must take time off work to drive the patient to his or her appointments without any compensation. Patients who cannot endure this expense and hardship are unable to have the necessary treatment

The community has located an ophthalmologist who would like to practise in Swan River. The local Lions Club has provided funds for the necessary equipment, and the Swan River Valley hospital has space to accommodate this service.

The Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) has told the town of Swan River that it has insufficient infrastructure and patient volumes to support a cataract surgery program, however, residents of the region strongly disagree.

We petition the Legislative as-Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Health to consider rethinking her refusal to allow an ophthalmologist to practise in Swan River and to consider working with the community to provide this service without further delay.

This is signed by Rick Harris, Bruce Schoenratt, Marian Borland and many, many others.

Photo Radar

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

It is important to protect the safety of construction workers who are on the job by having reduced speeds in construction zones when workers are present.

The provincial government handed out tickets to thousands of Manitobans who were driving the regular posted speed limit in construction zones when there were no construction workers present.

A Manitoba court has ruled that the reduced speed zones in construction areas were intended to protect workers and that the tickets that were given when no construction workers were present were invalid.

The provincial government has decided not to collect unpaid fines given to motorists who were

ticketee-ticketed driving the normal posted speed limit when no construction workers were present.

The provincial government is refusing to refund the money to the many hardworking, law-abiding Manitobans who had already paid the fines for driving the regular speed limit in a construction zone when no workers were present.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Attorney General (Mr. Chomiak) consider refunding all monies collected from photo radar tickets given to motorists driving the regular posted speed limit in a construction zone when no workers were present.

This petition is signed by M. Powers, Ed Higgs, Cynthia Sisson and many, many other rural Manitobans, Mr. Speaker.

* (13:40)

Twinning of Trans-Canada Highway

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

The six-kilometre stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway passing through Headingley is an extremely busy stretch of road averaging 18,000 vehicles daily.

This section of the Trans-Canada Highway is one of the few remaining stretches of undivided highway in Manitoba and has seen countless accidents, some of them fatal.

In its January 2009 budget, the federal government indicated it would work with the provincial government to cost share the improvements to this stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway.

In the interests of protecting motorist safety, it is critical that the dividing of the Trans-Canada Highway in Headingley is completed as soon as possible.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request that the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Lemieux) consider meeting as soon as possible with his federal counterparts to finalize the cost-sharing arrangements needed to

move the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway forward in order to ensure that the federal monies available for this important project do not lapse.

To request that the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation consider making the completion of the dividing of the Trans-Canada Highway in Headingley in 2009 an urgent provincial government priority.

And this is signed by Darlene Caron, Leanne Harris, Karl Gompf and many others, Mr. Speaker.

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Manitoba's Premier and his NDP government have not recognized the issues of public concern related to the Winnipeg regional health-care authority.

The win-WRHA is building an administrative empire at the expense of bedside care.

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority needs to be held accountable for the decisions it is making.

Health-care workers are being presu-pressed into not being able to speak out no matter what the WRHA is doing or has done.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier (Mr. Doer) and the NDP government to call a meeting of the standing committee of the Legislature and invite representatives of the WRHA to appear before it.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by L. Franco, F. Peters, L. Watson and many, many other fine Manitobans. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Committee reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Public Accounts Fifth Report

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Fifth Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts—

Mr. Speaker: Dispense?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings

Your Committee met on the following occasions in Room 255 of the Legislative Building:

- *December 5, 2003*
- *September 7, 2004*
- *September 8, 2004*
- *November 28, 2005*
- *August 15, 2007*
- *June 10, 2009*

Matters under Consideration

- *Auditor General's Report – Voluntary Sector Grant Accountability: Perspectives and Practices – Enhancing Board Governance in Not-For-Profit Organizations Report – February, 2005*
- *Auditor General's Report – An Examination of RHA Governance in Manitoba dated January, 2003*

Committee Membership

Committee Membership for the December 5, 2003 meeting:

- *Mr. AGLUGUB*
- *Hon. Mr. GERRARD*
- *Mr. LOEWEN*
- *Mr. MALOWAY (Vice-Chairperson)*
- *Mr. MARTINDALE*
- *Mrs. MITCHELSON*
- *Ms. OSWALD*
- *Mr. REIMER (Chairperson)*
- *Mr. SANTOS*
- *Hon. Mr. SELINGER*
- *Mrs. TAILLIEU*

Committee Membership for the September 7, 2004 meeting:

- *Mr. AGLUGUB*
- *Hon. Mr. GERRARD*
- *Ms. IRVIN-ROSS*
- *Mr. LOEWEN*
- *Mr. MALOWAY (Vice-Chairperson)*
- *Mr. MARTINDALE*

- Mrs. MITCHELSON
- Ms. OSWALD
- Mr. REIMER (Chairperson)
- Hon. Mr. SELINGER
- Mrs. TAILLIEU

Committee Membership for the September 8, 2004 meeting:

- Mr. AGLUGUB
- Hon. Mr. GERRARD
- Ms. IRVIN-ROSS
- Mr. LOEWEN
- Mr. MALOWAY (Vice-Chairperson)
- Mr. MARTINDALE
- Mrs. MITCHELSON
- Ms. OSWALD
- Mr. REIMER (Chairperson)
- Hon. Mr. SELINGER
- Mrs. TAILLIEU

Substitutions received during committee proceedings at the September 8, 2004 meeting:

- Mrs. ROWAT for Mrs. MITCHELSON

Committee Membership for the November 28, 2005 meeting:

- Mr. CALDWELL
- Mr. CUMMINGS
- Mr. HAWRANIK
- Mr. MAGUIRE
- Mr. MALOWAY (Vice-Chairperson)
- Mr. MARTINDALE
- Mr. NEVAKSHONOFF
- Mr. REIMER (Chairperson)
- Mr. SANTOS
- Hon. Mr. SELINGER

Committee Membership for the August 15, 2007 meeting:

- Mr. DERKACH
- Mrs. DRIEDGER
- Mr. FAURSCHOU
- Ms. HOWARD
- Ms. KORZENIOWSKI
- Mr. LAMOUREUX
- Mr. MAGUIRE
- Mr. MALOWAY
- Mr. MARTINDALE
- Hon. Mr. SELINGER
- Mr. SWAN

Your Committee elected Mr. DERKACH as the Chairperson at the August 15, 2007 meeting.

Your Committee elected Mr. MALOWAY as the Vice-Chairperson at the August 15, 2007 meeting.

Committee Membership for the June 10, 2009 meeting:

- Mr. ALTEMEYER
- Mr. BOROTSIK
- Ms. BRAUN
- Mr. DERKACH (Chairperson)
- Ms. HOWARD (Vice-Chairperson)
- Mr. LAMOUREUX
- Mr. MARTINDALE
- Mr. MAGUIRE
- Ms. SELBY
- Hon. Mr. SELINGER
- Mrs. STEFANSON

Officials Speaking on Record

Officials speaking on the record at the December 5, 2003 meeting:

- Mr. Jon Singleton, Auditor General of Manitoba
- Ms. Bonnie Lysyk, Deputy Auditor General and Chief Operating Officer

Officials speaking on the record at the September 7, 2004 meeting:

- Mr. Jon Singleton, Auditor General
- Ms. Bonnie Lysyk, Deputy Auditor General and Chief Operating Officer

Officials speaking on the record at the September 8, 2004 meeting:

- Mr. Jon Singleton, Auditor General
- Ms. Bonnie Lysyk, Deputy Auditor General and Chief Operating Officer

Officials speaking on the record at the August 15, 2007 meeting:

- Hon. Ms. OSWALD
- Heather Reichert, Acting Deputy Minister of Health

Officials speaking on the record at the June 10, 2009 meeting:

- Ms. Carol Bellringer, Auditor General of Manitoba
- Hon. Ms. OSWALD
- Ms. Arlene Wilgosh, Deputy Minister of Health and Healthy Living

- *Ms. Sandra Hardy, Deputy Minister of Culture, Heritage, Tourism and Sport*

Reports Considered and Passed

Your Committee considered and passed the following reports as presented:

- *Auditor General's Report – Voluntary Sector Grant Accountability: Perspectives and Practices – Enhancing Board Governance in Not-For-Profit Organizations Report – February, 2005*
- *Auditor General's Report – An Examination of RHA Governance in Manitoba dated January, 2003*

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member of Springfield, that the report of the committee be received.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Member for Russell, seconded by the honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler), that the report of the committee be received.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Tabling of reports.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table the report on the Recommendations for Reducing or Eliminating the Use of Diesel Fuel to Supply Power in Off-Grid Communities, which fulfils the Manitoba Hydro requirement under section 17(1) of the climate change emissions and reductions act. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Tabling of reports; ministerial statements.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

National Day of Healing and Reconciliation

Hon. Eric Robison (Acting Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

It was one year ago today that I stood before this House to reflect on a sad and painful past in response

to the Prime Minister's apology to survivors of Indian residential schools.

The sincere emotion and solidarity expressed by my fellow survivors and colleagues from both sides of this House that day continues to inspire and guide me despite the sorrow that remains.

But today is not about grieving, laying blame or dwelling on past injustices. Today is about celebrating progress and reaffirming commitments with action. It is in that spirit of optimism and hope that I am pleased to update the House on progress made over the past year.

Earlier today, I was honoured to join my friend and colleague the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson) in announcing important new curriculum resources for high school teachers as they work to educate all young Manitobans on the residential school system and its effect on generations of indigenous peoples in this province and in this country.

I am proud we have moved past decades of obstacles and are now building a road on the east side of Lake Winnipeg to connect the most impoverished and disadvantaged Manitobans, to provide some of the basic opportunities and conveniences taken for granted by most of us.

I am proud to be—I am proud of the new deal for northern First Nations on hydro development where unprecedented equity partnerships between Manitoba Hydro and several First Nations on the Wuskwatim and Keeyask projects are providing real and sustainable economic opportunity today and for as long as the rivers flow.

I am proud of the recently announced regional hospital in Pine Falls, a place where thousands of years of traditional knowledge and indigenous healing will take its rightful place alongside modern medicine.

I am proud we are building the first Aboriginal personal care home in Winnipeg, a place where our elders will be cared for with the dignity and respect they deserve by people who understand their needs and speak their language.

I am proud of The East Side Traditional land use—Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act, legislation nearly a decade in the making that'll ensure the rights and land-use plans of east-side First Nations are respected in all future development.

I am proud of the First Peoples Economic Growth Fund, which is now laying the groundwork for future prosperity and economic success of our people.

I am proud of our latest major investment in the University College of the North, announced recently in The Pas, particularly in light of the late Oscar Lathlin's lifelong commitment to improving education opportunities for Aboriginal people.

I am proud of the new policy initiative now moving forward in partnership with Métis Manitobans, a joint strategy aimed at erasing long-standing disparities.

And I'm proud that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is once again moving forward, thanks to outgoing National Chief Phil Fontaine's vision and determination and now under the outstanding leadership of Justice Murray Sinclair, two indigenous Manitobans whose immense contributions to our people have made Canada a better place for everyone.

But, as we account for our successes, we must also admit that much more work remains to be done, Working with the federal government to ensure First Nation housing, water and sewer systems meet the standards of the rest of the country, increasing high school graduation rates for Aboriginal students, stopping the outrageous national shame of our missing and murdered Aboriginal women, ending the epidemic of suicides born of intergenerational tragedy, dysfunction and despair and protecting indigenous languages must all remain urgent priorities. And perhaps the most pressing challenge right now, as I speak, is addressing the current outbreak of H1N1 influenza in our northern communities, an issue that has shined a light on the unacceptable health and housing conditions of our people.

I am confident we will solve these problems because despite the tremendous challenges we have faced and still face as Aboriginal people, we have overcome with the foundation of our culture intact, a testament to the remarkable strength and resilience of our nations.

So, today, we celebrate. We must never forget the past, but celebrate all we have to be proud of: Celebrate our unique and enduring culture and traditions that are once again thriving instead of dying; celebrate our friends, family and loved ones who get up every morning despite enormous

challenges to build a brighter future for their children; celebrate the fact that progress is being made each and every day. It will take action and commitment from all of us to get where we need to be.

With that, I call on all Aboriginal Manitobans: the Anishinaabe, Dene, Oji-Cree, Dakota, Inuit, Métis and Cree Nations, to recall our teachings and stand together in defiance of the inferiority, jealousy, shyness, greed and apathy that has stood between us and blocked the path of progress for far too long, and create the kind of province we want for our children. Ekosani.

* (13:50)

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, and I, I want to thank the minister and the Member for Rupertsland for that very heartfelt statement today, and I know that his life experience is a, is a—one of thousands of stories of people who have lived the circumstances of which he speaks today. And I want to thank and commend him for his words today and the other actions that he has taken on behalf of, of the people that he represents and, and our province.

Mr. Speaker, the—today is the one-year anniversary of Prime Minister Harper's apology to former residents and survivors of Indian residential schools in Canada. June 8th—sorry, June 11th, 2008, marked a significant turning point in our country for First Nations and all other citizens. It marked the beginning of a healing process and the end of one sad chapter in our history and, hopefully, the beginning of a, of a new chapter of hope and healing. Today, one year later, it's my honour to acknowledge June 11th as a national day of reconciliation and healing for our First Nations people.

Mr. Speaker, it was important for us to acknowledge the injustices of the past and to apologize to all of those who were physically, emotionally or spiritually hurt by the residential school experience. It's through our amends that First Nations can begin a new journey into a future that includes equality, justice and a belief in a better tomorrow. It's also through these amends that a country can move forward into a place of unity, where members of all communities can live side by side to grow, prosper and achieve our highest destiny as a strong and united province within a great country.

Mr. Speaker, it has only been one year since the apology, and the, the important step past that sad chapter in our history, and we know that in the road ahead there will be false starts but we also are optimistic that much progress will be made.

It's my sincere hope, Mr. Speaker, that each person affected by the residential school experience, including their descendants, will receive the strength to heal and move forward into a bright future that they deserve. It's my hope that we in the Legislature will never forget the mistakes of the past and move ahead with—in a spirit of fairness and, and justice so that First Nations people are able to achieve the same quality of life as other Canadians and Manitobans.

There's still many systemic issues facing First Nations people that need to be addressed, and the minister has identified some of those today, and we're dealing today, in particular, with the H1N1 outbreak which has had a particularly profound impact on First Nations community, and a matter that we had the opportunity yesterday to spend some time debating. And I thank the minister for, for raising that and other issues.

There's much to be done in the areas of housing, education, health care and the economic status of First Nations people that will require commitment and effort from all people and all levels of government.

It's important that we make this national day of reconciliation another turning point in our history, a turning point where all children in the province receive a quality of edu—education, regardless of their ancestry, and a turning point where no one in our province feels the pangs of hunger or the despair of poverty. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the National Day of Healing—

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member will have to ask for leave first.

Mr. Gerrard: I ask leave to speak to the minister's statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave, leave has been granted.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join other members on this National Day of Healing and

Reconciliation, on the first anniversary of the apology, to add my voice to those who have already spoken.

First and foremost, today, I think we must recognize and remember those who were taken away from their homes and families and put into residential schools. We must also recognize and remember the awful abuse that was suffered by many who were in residential schools and, third, we must renew our apology, and this I do today. I offer, again, my personal apology on—apology on behalf of members of my party for what happened and my resolve to improve things for the future.

And I believe we must recognize that the effects of what happened in residential schools have, in many instances, had very long-lasting effects with a major impact today. We must make our commitment to work with all Manitobans to create a better future, a future in which the abuses of the past cannot happen again, a future in which we can dedicate ourselves to continuing to make progress.

I, too, want to join the others in celebrating the progress that had been made, the huge achievements of many individual Aboriginal Manitobans and their contribution to our province today. And yet, at the same time, we must also recognize, as other members have done, that we have a long way to go.

In St. Theresa Point, today, and in Garden Hill, they are suffering greatly from the H1N1 flu epidemic, which is affecting their communities so fiercely. And, in part, this is because of very poor housing conditions, inadequate water and sewage supplies and other factors. We can and we must do better. We have a long way to go yet, and to that better future, we must dedicate ourselves in the spirit of this day, a day of healing and reconciliation. Ekosani. Meegwetch.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw Education Resource Centre, we have 22 grade 4 students under the direction Ms. Linda Fariss. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Whitehead).

And also in the public gallery we have from Melita School, we have 23 grade 6 students under the direction of Ms. Leanne Bugg. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire).

And also in the public gallery we have from Border Valley School, we have 25 grade 5 students under the direction of Renee Hildebrandt. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here today.

Oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

1999 Election

Campaign Returns—Premier's Awareness

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): The Premier said repeatedly that he doesn't believe it was a big deal for members of his party to engage in a cheque-swap scheme involving phony invoices in order to trigger rebates from taxpayers, Mr. Speaker. He said that he thought it was, he thought it was legal and fine, but Elections Manitoba disagreed with him, and that was why they worked with Elections Manitoba to resolve the issue.

Mr. Speaker, many Manitobans would disagree with his assessment, both that it was a long-standing practice—they might agree that it was a long-standing practice, but they wouldn't agree that it was an appropriate long-standing practice or that his assessment that it was legal. It's clear that when the Premier became aware of it in 2001, rather than having the matter properly looked into by an independent agency, he put pressure on that agency to fire the auditor and, in fact, the auditor was fired. The auditor, the auditor received—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: —the auditor received word 15 days after the 2003 election that Elections Manitoba wanted to sever their ties with the auditor.

I just want to ask the Premier whether that's his definition of co-operating with Elections Manitoba.

* (14:00)

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Well, Mr. Speaker, my definition of an independent, non-partisan agency is Elections Manitoba. It is the Auditor General. It is the Child Advocate. We respect the office. We didn't criticize the boundaries when they were handed out in draft form a year ago. We didn't criticize the boundaries when they were finally

printed as a year ago. We're old enough and adult enough to accept whether we agree or disagree with Elections Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the member putting words in my mouth, here is his words dealing with the upcoming session of the Legislature. Now, I do—his priorities were going to be health care and the economy. This will be—this will be the mighty Conservative opposition holding the government to account.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker—[interjection] Mr. Speaker, how many job questions did we get? Zero.

The member said we're going to deal with the brewing crisis in the Manitoba economy. They did not hold the government accountable. There were off on other issues, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, we did anticipate that we might have from the government an economic plan that involved more than cancelling debt payments on \$300,000 for a bakery in Burnaby, and we were disappointed—we, we were disappointed that they didn't present any kind of an economic plan and have yet to do so, and we've commented on that many times.

But the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that their economic plan is a photo radar cash grab. It's a debt repayment debacle, and now we're into an election finance issue which is extremely serious.

And I want to ask the Premier: The approach he took to the Auditor was to have Elections Manitoba sever their ties with him through their lawyers 15 days after the 2003 election. That's not co-operation, Mr. Speaker. That's interference with Elections Manitoba.

Why won't he allow us to call a committee, call witnesses, bring forward the relevant documents and let Manitobans have a peek into his co-operation with Elections Manitoba?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, these questions were answered at the committee last July and again a couple of weeks ago.

Again, health care and the economy needs a leadership, accountability and solutions, Mr. Speaker, and, you know, a month later, a month later, in Elmwood and The Pas, the public voted on health care, on the economy and on leadership. I want to point that out.

Now, that was after the last session of the Legislature. What was the dominant issue in December last year from the opposition party? It was the coalition, or alleged coalition in Ottawa. Day after day, they puffed up their chests and said, oh, we're holding you accountable for something that's happening in Ottawa.

You are so out of touch with the everyday concerns of Manitobans. You are so out of touch—you are so out of touch that we're going to run a tougher campaign in Tuxedo in 2011.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order. Just remind members that we have a lot of school students in the gallery, and I think we should be setting a good example, so let's have some decorum here, please.

Mr. McFadyen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it is feeling a bit like the last day of school here, so that may account for some of it.

Mr. Speaker, he can scream, he can scream like Howard Dean all he likes, but it doesn't change the fact—it doesn't change the fact that we have debated the failure of the emergency room system, their mishandling of the flood, their mishandling of Manitoba's rising debt. We've handled a variety of issues, but the fact is we have a serious issue on our hands today in terms of how he handled the way his party engaged in deliberate actions to take money from taxpayers, taxpayers today who are seeing their pensions go down, who are seeing their jobs threatened, who can't afford to have any more money taken out of their pockets by this greedy NDP government.

Why won't he come forward, let the taxpayers know what they did, and give them their money back, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Doer: Well, you know, last—I remember, I remember last November, the Leader of the Opposition said that, from the late Oscar Lathlin, that he got some advice about, have your—be a little quieter and keep your ears more open. I want to paraphrase his more direct comments to the leader.

You know, last night I was at the Border to Beaches trail that we are building, and I'm sure it will be in next pamphlet of more—much accomplished, more to do from the member from Lac du Bonnet. And that was, that was a good theme in the 2003 election, you know, Mr. Speaker.

But a number of people came up to me and said, how can the Cons—how can the Conservative Leader of the Opposition be opposed to banning logging in our provincial parks? Why are they so backwards in terms of protecting our environment, protecting our forests, protecting at having the balance? We have the mean team over here. We have the green team over here. I'm very confident of that.

Elections Manitoba Attendance at Committee Hearing

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, in asking my question today, I do with so, so with much sadness. In the last three weeks, we've learned of major concerns with the handling by Elections Manitoba of issues around the financing of the NDP campaign in 1999. The issues which have come to light go far beyond the simple Tory-NDP fight. The issues, perhaps for the first time in the history of our province, cast a cloud over the independence of Elections Manitoba. The evidence indicates recently released—includes a letter from Mr. Asseltine to Mr. Graham, the general counsel for election Manitoba.

And I ask the Premier: Will he join all parties in ensuring a committee hearing is as—held as soon as possible so that Richard Balasko and others can answer questions about the role of Elections Manitoba in this issue?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, in December of 2004—and the member was in this Chamber—the report was tabled and the committee was held as soon as possible, in fact, within the rules of holding it as soon as possible. And we've had four meetings since, including last July, when this matter was fully explored and questioned by Mr. Balasko.

I would say that the members opposite have already cast aspersions on Elections Manitoba. The member from Inkster made a comment about the boundary proposals that spoke against the independent—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: —independence of Elections Manitoba. We stand with Elections Manitoba's independence. We don't always—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: –agree with them. We stand with their independence, their non-partisanship, their expertise. The Chief Returning Officer of Saskatchewan called Manitoba's election laws—an officer—some of the best in Canada, Mr. Speaker. We stand with that integrity. I'm disappointed in the member from River Heights.

* (14:10)

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Asseltine shows in his letter tabled just two weeks ago that both Mr. Graham and the Chief Electoral Officer agreed that the NDP were not entitled to public funds that they'd received since the mid-1980's, and that Mr. Tom Milne then called into question the independence of Elections Manitoba, and that the Chief Electoral Officer failed to defend the professionalism of Elections Manitoba. These facts raise grave concerns about the office of Elections Manitoba, and there is no doubt that action is needed to restore confidence.

Will the Premier immediately call a committee hearing which can call witnesses, including Tom Milne and David Asseltine—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: –so that we can get—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: –to the bottom of this?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, one of the facts, one of the facts that members opposite forget to put in the equation is when we came into office in '99, we banned union and corporate donations and banned things like money coming from the Liberal Party of Canada. Corporations who, who received benefits from the privatization of MTS couldn't give money to the Tory party, *[inaudible]* the Liberal firms—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: –couldn't give money to the Liberal Party. We banned those after '99. Following '99—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: –the Chief Electoral Officer has said all three political parties have resubmitted statements. All three political parties have given money back, Mr. Speaker.

And the evidence, the so-called new evidence which is a letter dated four years ago which is a self—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: –serving letter to a lawyer—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: –has been around for a long time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the MLA for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) may have known about these facts for a long time, but to many of us and many Manitobans these have just come to light in the last two weeks.

Mr. Speaker: *[inaudible]* You're trying to ask a question and no one can even hear it. So, so I don't know how members can expect a response. I'm sitting up here higher than, than, than all of you and I can't hear a thing he's saying. Let's have a little decorum, please.

The honourable Member for River Heights has the floor.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I would warrant that never before in the history of our province has there been these sorts of major concerns raised so recently with the conduct of Elections Manitoba.

Is the Premier going to stand in the way of the ability of Manitobans to learn more about the role of Elections Manitoba and what happened in this funding issue of 1999 election? A committee meeting and, preferably, a public inquiry are both needed. In my view, a committee meeting should be held urgently.

Will the Premier agree to calling such a committee which can hear witnesses like Tom Milne and David Asseltine and get to the bottom of what's happened?

Mr. Doer: You know, Mr., Mr. Speaker, the whole matter was dealt with in a 2004 report. Secondly, that report went to the legislative committee two weeks later. So either the member didn't choose to read it or did not choose to pursue it.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, in July at the committee—and I can't recall whether the member was there—and in May in the committee, Mr. Balasko—and he's been

misquoted by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen)—said that all the material from the auditors, all the material from the parties were presented to Mr. Green and Mr. Blair Graham. They, with their integrity and independence and knowledge, decide how an issue is being resolved by the Chief Electoral Officer.

The Chief Electoral Officer said he directly took the advice of Mr. Green. I trust the integrity of Mr. Green. All parties trusted his integrity when they agreed to be—for him to be the new officer of the Legislature. We don't pick and choose what we choose to take. We take all their integrity, Mr. Speaker.

1999 Election Campaign Returns

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice continues to say that all of this was old news. Well, maybe he was the only one who knew about this since 1999, since he was the co-campaign chair. So he—to him it's old news.

But, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) continues to sit in his chair without being able to stand up and answer a question. He has in his possession a letter that absolves him from any responsibility, yet his leader, the Premier (Mr. Doer), says that he was obviously involved.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Finance whether in its investigation of this scheme the Minister of Finance as candidate for the constituency of St. Boniface was interviewed by Elections Manitoba as a result of his own return not being signed by an auditor.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, on page 17 of the report, of the public report where it talks about the member, I think it's Greg Selinger, the member of Finance, had his statement—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: The Minister of Finance who was cited by the Member for Russell had his statement amended just like the Conservative Party of which the member was a minister in 1995, amended his statement and paid back the money, and I'm not sure if Elections Manitoba investigated the Member for

Russell at that time. I don't think so, Mr. Speaker. I think they followed the pattern consistently when they looked at the Conservative Party returns and the Conservative Party had to refund and the NDP had to refund, and the Liberals, and the Liberal had to refund. At least we didn't have two bank accounts and rip up cheques.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance paid out \$76,000 to the NDP in the 1999 election scam, and all of this money was fraudulently claimed by the NDP.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Finance if he can tell this House whether any penalties or interest were charged on the \$76,000 even to his own constituency.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, generally, in the law, fines and penalties, as some members of the Tory caucus might know and as half the ex-Devine government knows, fines or penalties are usually attached to criminal sanctions. That is something done deliberately with intention.

Elections Manitoba looking at this clearly indicated the error as they did with the Conservative Party in '95, as they did with the Liberal over contributions, Mr. Speaker. And that—in fact, I think the Leader of the Opposition's statements in the most recent by-elections were amended by the Conservative Party without penalty. Why? Why? Because that's a common practice like you do with your income tax and like you do with other financial forms that you're required to submit.

Mr. Derkach: One more chance for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) to stand up and clear his name and come forth with some answers. Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Finance, it's his responsibility to look after the financial affairs of this province and to ensure that these funds are protected on behalf of taxpayers in this province.

So I want to ask the minister whether or not he has asked his department to investigate whether there were any overpayments to the NDP in the 1995 election, in the 1990 election, or in the 1988 election.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, the member ought to know when he was a member of the Crown, although there were some problems that—the department reports to the minister, and the independent Elections Manitoba is an independent officer who reports to the Legislature, all 57 members, and on that basis, there are reviews. There are rules in place and

regulations that Elections Manitoba has said it followed, and he said, not only have some political parties had refunds, some political parties have had more than one refund as a result of errors and corrections made, as in the 1995 election, as in the 1999 election, as reported in 2003, as asked ad nauseum in this Chamber.

**1999 Election
Campaign Returns—Premier's Awareness**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, it's only the NDP that tried to steal money from the taxpayers in 1999. In 1999, in 1999, Michael Green, in 1999, Michael Green led the inquiry that cleared Brian O'Leary. Who was Brian O'Leary? A buddy of the Premier (Mr. Doer), a campaign manager of the New Democrats. Remember, Mr. O'Leary is the person that transferred a teacher to another school because the said teacher spoke out when Mr. O'Leary opened a province-wide mat exam, math exam before it was supposed to be written. That was the time for the Premier to stand up and say he believes in a code of ethics. He, at the time, chose to sit down and he allowed Mr. Green to give him a clear slate.

My question to the Premier is: Does the Premier believe that he is exempt from a code of ethics?

*(14:20)

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, use—using the word "steal"—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, using the word "steal" is a very strong word in this Legislature, and the only people I know that have gone to jail for things like that are as a result of the Liberal sponsorship scandal in Ottawa, and half of the—[interjection]—and half of the Grant Devine Cabinet, and Colin Thatcher. All those were criminal acts, and all those were investigated by the RCMP for criminal.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that an independent officer of the Legislature reviewed the Liberal returns and asked the Liberal Party to refund money, will he suggest that was stealing?

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, Mr. Speaker, at this rate you will be in opposition and you will be able to ask questions.

Mr. Speaker, I call it—I call it as I see it. The NDP, in 1999, attempted to steal man—money from Manitobans. That's, that's the reality.

Mr. Speaker, in 2007 the NDP claimed that the Premier's chief of staff had been cleared by Michael Green. That's what they claim, yet I've never received a piece of paper from Michael Green or Elections Manitoba clearing the chief of staff.

My question to the Premier is: Does he believe in a code of ethics for the Province of Manitoba?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, in 19—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, if I were to—if I were to follow the logic of the lea—of the member of Inkster—and I suggest there's not a lot—but if I were to follow that, then the Liberals stole—the Liberals stole in 1995, \$60,000 when they amended their 1995 election, because they had to repay that, and they also—oh, let me see. They also stole, oh, their chief of financial officer was fined \$1,880. That wasn't stealing. I know that was a fine. That wasn't criminal.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I—when you don't have issues—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: —when you don't have issues and you—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: —and, you know, Mr. Speaker, when the economy is the major issue, when we've had gang problems, is a problem, and we've just had—we just had a conference where all the gang prosecutors across Canada were here in Winnipeg to talk about grind—gang prosecutions, and the member is worried about 1999 when it was reviewed already by Elections Manitoba.

You know, Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order. Come on, let's have some order here. Order.

Mr. Chomiak: I just think time travel's okay in fiction, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, they, they say in baseball, three strikes and you're out, and this Premier is out.

Three—on three separate occasions, Michael Green has given indication, whether it's to the previous two or now to the most recent one, where the NDP got caught trying to steal the money from a donation of kind to a cheque exchange.

What does the Premier do? He ignores the code of ethics. That's the third time the Premier has sat down and not stand up for what's in the public's best interests, Mr. Speaker, three times already.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier: What does it take to get this Premier to realize that if there—the biggest message that Monnin inquiry said is that it was important to have a code of ethics, and this Premier refuses to acknowledge the valuable role a code of ethics can take—can play in keeping government honest, because if we have learned something from this government in this session is that this government cannot be trusted. It is a dishonest government. It's a government that supports the New Democratic Party to it—and its attempts to steal from Manitobans.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Well, Mr. Speaker, the—I assume if the member thought this was a, a, quote, important public issue, he would have raised it in the 2007 election. It was fully produced and available to the public in 2004. We—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order. Order.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite likes to attack staff of, of parties that can't defend themselves. I also know that when the map was produced by Elections Manitoba, an independent office, with the chief of the court, with the president of the University of Manitoba, the president of Brandon University, with the Chief Electoral Officer—when that report was produced he accused Elections Manitoba of having the Premier draw up the map, only because he didn't like the demographics in his own backyard. That's the integrity of the member opposite.

We'll debate ethics with the Tories and the Liberals in the 2011 election, and it will be the same result as 2007, 2003 and 1999, Mr. Speaker.

Influenza A (H1N1) Patient Care Plans

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, Manitobans are becoming more concerned about a pandemic, and there's also concern being raised about whether or not this Province is ready for a pandemic.

Considering how contagious the H1N1 virus is, I'd like to ask the Minister of Health to tell us if all of the hospital patients that have been admitted are being treated in isolation rooms.

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. This, of course, is likely the most serious ish—issue facing Manitobans and, arguably, people across the world today, so I'm sincere in my gratitude for the question.

I can let the member know that our medical professionals on the front lines, for whom we all owe a debt of gratitude in Manitoba, are treating severe cases of respiratory illness, including patients with H1N1, with appropriate protocols for isolation. The H1N1 advice is that not all patients require negative pressure rooms but do, indeed, require an element of isolation. They're being handled in this manner.

We're going to continue to take the advice of our infection control experts in dealing with these very serious cases of people who are very seriously ill.

Mrs. Driedger: Again, Mr. Speaker, she skated directly around the question.

Can, can she tell us how many surgeries have been cancelled because of the inability of the hospitals to manage this surge in patients? How many surgeries to date have been cancelled?

Ms. Oswald: I can let the member know that, of course, according to the pandemic plan and plans that have been created by officials across our nation, part of the pandemic plan is surge capacity, and in situations of intensified patients in intensive care units one of the automatic options is to cancel elective surgeries so as to make for more capacity, not only in rooms in hospitals, Mr. Speaker, but for human resources.

In addition to that, I can let the member know that we are working with our regional health

authorities and our First Nations communities to build capacity in northern communities, and I can tell you more about that in my next answer.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health refuses to say exactly how many patients are being treated in isolation, whether it's on the wards or in the intensive care unit. She's refusing to tell us how many surgeries have been cancelled to date. Those are simple update type of questions that are being put to her.

I'd like to ask her then, if she could tell us, how many hospital beds are currently being taken up by personal care home type of patients.

Ms. Oswald: Mr. Speaker, just to be clear, we make available the Chief Public Health Officer for Manitoba, Dr. Joel Kettner, each day to answer medical questions concerning surge capacity, the use of antivirals, the use of personal protection equipment. We also make available officials from the front line in our regional health authorities.

I want to announce to the House that today, in response to issues that are emerging in the north, immediately after question period I'll be convening a summit of our medical leadership, which, of course, includes Healthy Living, fa-Manitoba Health and Healthy Living, Faculty of Medicine, all the nursing colleges, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, doctors in Manitoba, all CEOs of regional health authorities, the Northern Medical Unit, FNIHB, AMC, Manitoba Council of Health Care Unions, the MNU, the WRHA, to call for a-an urgent call to action for medical professionals from everywhere in Manitoba to provide services in the north.

We know that if each one of these individuals did even one shift, Mr. Speaker, we could respond to the most important part needed for primary care.

*(14:30)

Economy Fiscal Statement

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, the NDP dragged their feet coming back to the Legislature this spring. When they came back, we were told that things were steady and balanced.

Earlier this week, the Premier (Mr. Doer) said that we had the worst economic conditions since the 1930s. Mr. Speaker, clearly, the NDP are talking out of both sides of their fa-mouths. The only thing that they are clear on is their desire to line their own pockets. Fraudulent campaign contributions and a

vote tax is more important to this Finance Minister than fiscal accountability.

Will the Finance Minister share with us the true conditions of Manitoba's finances?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr., Mr. Speaker, I'm, I'm glad the member got a question. I've been waiting for him to ask me a question on the economy and finances for quite a while.

And, and, and I'd like to inform him that he's dropped back, and there is a, a wicked race going on for the Rush Limbaugh award in North America, and he's dropping back; he's losing in a terrible way to the member from Steinbach and the member from Russell. He's just dropping back in the pack. So, that's unfortunate perhaps. However, if he loses that award, he can compete with the, with the member from Fort Whyte for the Dick Cheney award. But I think he might even lose that one as well.

In terms of the economy in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, all economies, all economies around the world have been suffering under this recession, and in relative terms, the Manitoba economy has done quite well in-a-as a matter of fact, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have fared relatively well-

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Borotsik: Mr., Mr. Speaker, I thought the economy was important, and obviously sarcasm is much more important to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, today in a speech, Michael McCain said that open-openness, honesty and transparency leads to accountability. This Finance Minister displays none of those traits.

Today, the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister is getting their fiscal-their federal fiscal report card, yet, Manitoba's Minister of Finance continues to leave us in the dark and treat Manitobans like mushrooms.

Why isn't he prepared to tell us the true state of affairs in the province of Manitoba? Mr. Speaker, is it because he has no plan or is he too focussed on protecting himself from the fallout of the Elections Manitoba scheme?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I just have to say that I'm extremely proud to be part of a party that banned corporate union donations even before this became

an issue. I'm glad that we moved the democracy forward in Manitoba.

And, and I hope the members will reverse their policy of opposing the banning of corporate union donations and join us in setting, in setting a set of standards where these kinds of issues don't have to be debated, that we can discuss the important issues of the economy.

And the member might remember—recall that he voted against the budget that added 10,000 person-years of additional employment in this province. Perhaps he could explain to Manitobans why he voted against a budget which generates jobs all across this province.

Mr. Borotsik: Mr. Speaker, we've given the Finance Minister the opportunity to respond. He finally got up on his hind legs, but he's still not talking—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order. Order.

Everyone knows the reference to that. The honourable member, withdraw that.

Mr. Borotsik: I withdraw that, Mr. Speaker. I do apologize.

However, the minister did have the opportunity to talk about the economy, Mr. Speaker, and he didn't do that. He stood up and he said anything but the economy.

This minister put forward a, a bill not that long ago, that said he'd repay debt at 110 million. Then he put in a budget that said there would be 20 million. Then he put in a bill, Bill 30, that said there'd be no debt repayment. Now, we're back to 20 million, Mr. Speaker. The minister's flip-flopped so often, he doesn't know where he stands.

What we need now is leadership, not sarcasm and rhetoric, Mr. Speaker. How can Manitobans have faith in this government's ability to manage our province when he can't even imagine his own affairs?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, you know, we started in November when we saw this economic crisis looming up. It started out as a financial crisis, and we saw it rapidly transforming itself into a global economic crisis.

That's why, in our November Throne Speech, we made an additional commitment to \$4.6 billion of capital spending over the next four years, and we started immediately rolling out projects to invest in

highways, to invest in water, and, and sewage infrastructure, to invest in schools, to invest in health facilities. They voted against that. They voted against that Throne Speech. And then, and then, as we moved into the budget, we confirmed measures to make credit available to small business, to make Manitoba industrial opportunities loans available, to ensure that Manitobans, businesses and consumers had the opportunity to participate in the economy.

And all the members do—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Economy Government Record

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): And as we've been in the current economic challenges, all we've had from this government is an acknowledgement by the Premier of the worst economy since the 1930s, and then stonewalling on election finance scheme.

Mr. Speaker, who is this Premier's role model, President Hoover or President Nixon?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, if you were using American presidents, we would probably prefer Roosevelt. If the whole, the whole idea that, that government should not be just evaluated by what it does for those who have the most, but rather by—evaluated by those who have the least, we would actually prefer to, we would actually prefer to go to Roosevelt. Now, we're pr—pleased—we would be, we would love to debate, we would love to debate—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: —the kind of Darwinian, mean models that the Leader of the Opposition has. As I said yesterday, listening to real Manitobans, in a forum yesterday, people were shocked that the Leader of the Opposition would be against bo—preventing logging in the Whiteshell Provincial Park. He would be against logging in the—our ban on logging in the provincial park. We're in touch with Manitobans. We like Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Thank you very much.

Mr. McFadyen: And President Roosevelt said something else. He said there's nothing to fear but fear itself. Why is he so afraid of an inquiry into his election mishandling, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, FDR laid out a plan that inspired his country. The best we can tell is that his economic plan in this difficult times are Burnaby bakeries, a

photo radar fiasco, a cheque-swap scheme to take money from taxpayers and the debt debacle in order to pay for the first three.

Of these four policies which, in this Premier's view, is the most important?

Mr. Doer: We continue to join your caucus in wishing you many more years as opposition leader. We, we fear not the kind of *Animal House* kind of approach he takes to politics, public policy and the, and this Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Let's—order. We have to pick our words carefully here. I don't think that was warranted, that last comment. The honourable First Minister should withdraw that one.

Mr. Doer: I certainly withdraw it, Mr. Speaker. Dare I say, their approach, no-lawyer-left-behind, that's the Tory fight song, now and into the future. And we are absolutely confident, all this thundering talk, all this rhetoric about the economy. The economy was going to be the issue in November, and then it was a coalition in Ottawa. The economy was supposed to be the issue in February. What happened in the by-elections? What happened on March 24th? What happened on March 25th? We're one of only two provinces in Canada to bring in a prudent prairie budget for the people of Manitoba.

And, Mr. Speaker, last Friday, Manitoba created more jobs than any other province, more than British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: —that's why they're afraid of asking questions on the economy. They have nothing as an alternative to our great government on economic growth in Manitoba.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Time for oral questions has expired.

Members' statements.

* (14:40)

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Southdale Community Centre Basketball Program

Ms. Erin Selby (Southdale): I rise in the House today to congratulate Southdale Community Centre's basketball program for another successful year. This spring, there were nearly a hundred kids registered for the teams, which is a new record.

The basketball program has been successful because the coaches and the parents truly believe in the importance of fair play and that more than anything, kids should be having fun while playing basketball. It is an accessible and affordable sport, with means—which means kids can play almost anywhere. The basketball program, like many other sports at Southdale Community Centre, plays an important role in encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle for kids and their families in Southdale.

This year, the Southdale's boys' team made it to the playoffs and won. The team was down one point and, right at the buzzer, Matt Choi shot for the basket, winning the game. And, as you can imagine, the crowd went wild.

Over the years, the basketball program has been growing. The kids are excited about basketball because they have dedicated coaches that come back year after year to help them build their game. And I would like to thank Devon Daley, Rosario Gigliotti, Curt Bauer, Ken Beckett, Jeff Butler, Don Dawson, Dave Doleman, and Dave Purpur, who continue to dedicate their time. Without them, the program could not achieve the success that it has.

I would also like to congratulate all the teams and the members for a great year for Southdale basketball. Thank you.

Bothwell Cheese Retail Store

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): I'm very pleased to rise in the House today to congratulate my good friend, Ivan Balenovic, the president and CEO of Bothwell Cheese and his team on the opening of their first-ever retail shop. The new cheese shop at the Richardson international airport will provide travellers with a taste of Manitoba as they pass through the province and will allow locals to satisfy their Bothwell Cheese cravings in one convenient trip upon visiting the airport.

Bothwell Cheese began as a small company started by local dairy farmers in 1936 in New Bothwell, Manitoba, which is located within the

constituency of the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen). The co-operative was formed by Frank Giesbrecht and Bernhard Dueck, who built the town's first cheese factory with volunteer labour and support from the surrounding community.

In those early days, children would come to the plant for samples, leaving with bags full of cheese curds to take home. Today, the strong community values continue in New Bothwell, as they continue to purchase all their milk from local farmers for quality and fresh taste. And visitors to New Bothwell can still purchase curds in the cheese stop—in the cheese shop, which are often still warm.

While Bothwell Cheese has become an intrinsic part of Manitoba cuis—cuisine over the past 70 years and is now sold all across the country, the airport cheese shop marks the first time that they will have opened a retail location outside of New Bothwell. The shop is located on the second floor of the terminal building and will stock all the different varieties of New Both—of Bothwell Cheese—which is now more than 30 types. They will also carry other Manitoba gourmet foods, cookbooks, Bothwell Cheese merchandise and snack packs on, on hand for a hungry traveller at air—or airport employee.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again congratulate Mr. Ivan Balenovic of Bothwell Cheese and all of the employees of, of Bothwell Cheese on this achievement. It is exciting to see home-grown Manitoba business exceed with op—the opening of a new retail location, and I wish Bothwell Cheese all the best as they embark upon this endeavour. I am glad that this unique Manitoba flavour will be shared with travellers passing through our airport as a true taste of our home province. Thank you.

Joe A. Ross School Cultural Week

Mr. Frank Whitehead (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge a very important event that took place at Joe A. Ross at the Opaskwayak Cree Nation last month. From May 11 to 14th, students at the kindergarten to grade 12 Joe A. Ross participated in Cultural Week, learning about Cree culture and the traditions of the people from Opaskwayak.

This week-long event enabled students, teachers, parents and community members to engage in traditional activities and share their knowledge with one another. At the beginning of the week, the students in the land-based education classes were responsible for harvesting the food for the traditional feast. These students caught the fish, hunted the

ducks, geese and moose. During the week, all the students were involved in activities in the classroom. Students participated in arts and crafts making dream catchers and mini teepees. They were also taught how to make bannock and how to help prepare food for the feast. The library also arranged to have traditional stories and legends told to the classes. Elders were invited to share and teach the students about their culture and traditions.

The feast was held on Thursday, which was called Joe A. Ross Day, and involved students, staff and community members. Each class was assigned a fire pit where they would cook their food, and they participated in preparing the food. These students also participated in cooking the moose meat in an open fire, frying the fish and making fried bannock.

Throughout the day, students took part in teepee teachings where community members showed them how to set up the teepee and skin beavers and muskrats. The students were eager to learn and to participate, but what made this very important and significant was this year the school hosted the students from Kelsey School Division in The Pas and Tommy Prince School from Brokenhead. Broadening participation in Joe A. Ross's cultural week is an excellent example of how our young people are actively promoting good will, co-operation and cross-cultural communications.

Activities like these are enabling our youth to break down barriers and promote harmony between peoples of different backgrounds. I ask the House to join me congratulating Joe A. Ross School for keeping the culture and traditions of Opaskwayak Cree Nation alive and for creating dialogue and understanding amongst their peers. Thank you.

Ruth Rebekah Lodge No. 3—100th Anniversary

Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to rise in the House and convey my congratulations to Portage la Prairie's Ruth Rebekah Lodge No. 3, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary year.

The Rebekah Lodge has the distinction of being the oldest women's fraternity in the world and was established in 1851 by Thomas Wildey alongside the Odd Fellowship. The mission of the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs is to care for each other and their local communities through friendship, love and truth, which are the Three Links listed in the creed that binds members together.

The lodges are located around the globe and the organization as a whole boasts a membership of over 500,000. Major projects supported by the lodges include vision care, youth programs, Arthritis Society, Ability Fund, Afflicted Children's Fund, housing and care for seniors and educational scholarships.

The Rebekah Lodge No. 3 in Portage la Prairie was instituted on May 21st, 1909, after 18 years of persistent discussion, and by 1919 the membership had grown from 19 to 48 members. Today the lodge has a membership of 97 sisters, 10 brothers and one associate member.

The Ruth Rebekah Lodge No. 3, though, has the distinction of winning a President's Award during the president's term in 1968 for the most candidates initiated into the Manitoba Order. In 1982, the Ruth Rebekah Lodge No. 3 was renowned as the sixth largest lodge in the world, the only Canadian lodge with this distinction.

Ruth Rebekah Lodge No. 3 has been involved in many projects and has benefited their community. The very first project was to purchase a wheelchair for the Portage District General Hospital, and ever since they have proudly donated funds for needed equipment. Today, virtually every room in the hospital has an item that avail—made available through the great generosity of the Ruth Rebekahs.

Mr. Speaker, the Ruth Rebekah Lodge No. 3 is a model example of upstanding citizenship and leadership in the community, and I would like to thank all members for their continuous dedication to serving the needs of their community, and once again, I would like to congratulate everyone at the Ruth Rebekah Lodge No. 3 on the celebration of their centenary and wish them all the best in the years to come. Thank you.

Child Day Care Funding

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the recent investment that our government has committed to child care in Manitoba.

On May 27th of this year, our government announced the funding of 19 new child-care sites across Manitoba, providing 2,850 more spaces to be available in just the first two years of our new Family Choices' five-year child-care agenda.

This is especially exciting news for my constituency of Wolseley, where the issue of child

care is very important for many parents who are keen to take advantage of the relative economic success of our province in this global economic downturn.

It's, it's quite remarkable, Mr. Speaker, that our government's commitment of an additional \$11.4 million in, in new funding will support child-care sites and enhance learning, child safety and also improve the stability of the child-care work force.

This new funding will also go on to help existing child-care centres commit to renovations and to expand their existing operations. It'll create more spaces, enhance child safety and develop a curriculum to allow more workers to be hired.

This is just a small part of our government's overall vision to enhance child care with a number of new initiatives, including the building of a total of 35 new child-care sites and creating a total of 6,500 more spaces by the year 2013.

* (14:50)

I might point out, as well, Mr. Speaker, that for low-income people, child care in Manitoba is actually more affordable than in Québec, which is often cited as having a very progressive child-care system, which it does. But at \$5 per day in Québec, in Manitoba it's only \$2 a day if you are a low-income parent keen to, to participate in the economy outside of the home.

We are also working on a new curriculum where 70 child-care centres will launch enhanced play-based practices for higher quality early, early learning, as well as developing new safety measures in co-operation with the Winnipeg Police Service.

I would ask the House, in closing, to join me in expressing strong and meaningful support to all the child-care providers in our province. The valuable work that they do for our future generations cannot be overstated, and I am proud to be a part of a government that is continuing to invest in the future of our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Before calling for grievances, I'd just like to—as the House will be adjourning today—I am asking that all honourable members remove the contents of their desk here in the Chamber and, also, I would encourage members to recycle as much of the material as possible, and the blue bins here in the Chamber are designated for recycling of *Hansard* only. Any other material—any other material you would like to recycle may be placed in the larger

recycling containers in the message rooms located just outside the Chamber. I thank you all for your participation.

Grievances.

* (14:50)

GRIEVANCES

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member, Minnedosa, on a grievance?

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, on a grievance.

Mrs. Rowat: Mr. Speaker, regrettably, I must rise today in a grievance related to this NDP government's handling of Bill 6, the east side traditional lands planning and special protected areas act.

What we have heard from stakeholders and, in particular, from the First Nation communities from the east side of Lake Winnipeg, is that the government did not undertake proper consultation before Bill 6 was introduced. One might say this is somewhat ironic given the government's long-standing promises to consult on this proposed legislation.

Looking back to May 11th, 2007, during the last provincial election, the Premier (Mr. Doer) announced that his government was committed to introducing legis—a legislative tool for protecting designated areas and impl—implementing land-use plans on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. That May 11th press release explicitly stated that the new legislation will be drafted in consultation with First Nations.

On December 4th, 2008, during second reading on Bill 6, the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) stated, for too many years people living on the east side of Lake Winnipeg living in First Nations have been left out of the decision-making process.

Mr. Speaker, the minister also stated that his government takes First Nations participaction—participation—seriously, yet I have personally heard from the stakeholders who believe that the consultation process on Bill 6 was inadequate.

An example of the so-called consultation involved a 2008 meeting where provincial officials made a PowerPoint presentation to First Nation representatives. Rather than leaving behind materials

for the stakeholders to review and to provide comment on to share with their communities, the government staff promptly picked up every copy of the presentation. That did not constitute a thorough consultation process.

In their joint submission to this com—to the committee this week, the Island Lake First Nations commented on this very, very, very interesting consultation process. They stated, and I quote: The Island Lake First Nations do not accept the sugges—suggestion presented in the minister's letter to Chief Andrews, and Chief—Grand Chief Garrioch and the minister's February 12th, 2009, comments during the MK forum, that the single discussion of Bill 6 that took place in February 2008 satisfied either the WNO Accord or represents meaningful consultation on Bill 6 between Manitoba and the WNO First Nations. End quote.

The Island Lakes First Nations joint submission further stated, and I quote: Providing the WNO leadership a single brief glance at a proposed legislation framework that was developed by Manitoba in isolation from the WNO First Nations cannot satisfy any recognized standard for government-to-government relations. Similarly, the single discussion of Bill 6 in February 2008, followed by Manitoba's recovery during the meeting of all copies of the Manitoba's presentation cannot meet any standard that measures the participation and approval of First Nations. End quote.

When we've questioned this government recently about this flawed listening process, we've received a rather flippant response from the minister in charge. The Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) stated last Thursday in this House, and I quote: "We've been there; we've done that consultation."

Well, clearly, the minister's so-called consultations did not meet the expected standard, otherwise the affected communities would not still be coming forward with questions and concerns about Bill 6.

I would like to briefly revisit a few of the concerns raised during committee as a reminder to this government that they need to be more mindful of the importance of the consultation process.

For example, several First Nations communities reflected in their submissions that the provisions of Bill 6 weren't jointly developed on a government-to-government basis as outlined under article 1.1 of the April 3rd, 2007, WNO Accord, nor were they

developed with First Nation governments participation and approval under article 3.8 of the WNO Accord.

As a refresher for the members opposite, the WNO Accord clearly states that the parties involved, which includes this NDP government, will commit, abide—commit to abide by a number of principles. One of these principles is identified in article 1.1 of the WNO Accord. It states, and I quote: "The relationship is on a government-to-government basis."

Moreover, article 3.8 of the WNO Accord states: The Province will develop regulations with First Nation governments' participation and approval pursuant to existing planning legislation to assist with the implema—implementation of the WNO Accord, the regional resource management boards and the traditional area land-use planning.

The Bill 6 presenters reiterated over and over again that the provisions of Bill 6 were developed completely in isolation from the WNO First Nations and contrary to the provisions of article 1.1 and article 3.8. They noted, too, that the principle of First Nation government's participation and approval, outlined in article 3.8, is not being met.

Concerns were also raised by stakeholders that, quote: There were no joint technical working sessions to explore the principles and processes that would implement the accord's objectives of exercising joint land-use planning and resource management between the WNO First Nations of Manitoba. There were no joint legal working sessions to review the existing legislative framework in accordance with ar—article 3.8 to see how our joint management relationship could be achieved. End quote.

Presenters stated that any legislative drafting process should, at the minimum, be maced—based on the principle of a co-dec—decis—co-decision authority similar to that established under the Northern Flood Agreement, God's Lake's presentation and Island Lakes First Nation's submissions.

Another issue that was raised at committee was the concern that Bill 6 is not believed to be consistent with Manitoba's duty to consult, justify and accommodate. I have raised the issue of duty to consult with different ministers of this government and it is clear that there is still more work to be done in this area. All stakeholders need to have a very

clear understanding of this government's duty to consult policies and protocols.

In their submission, the WNO Cree group submission expressed their concern that, quote: Minister Struthers proceeded to develop the principles and processes—[interjection] Conservation submission expressed their concern that, quote: Minister Struthers proceeded to develop the principles and processes of Bill 6 without working jointly with all WNO First Nations. End quote.

And I have noted previously in this House, the Norway House Cree Nation has also chastised this government for inadequate consultation on Bill 6.

In his written submission to committee, Northern—a Norway House Cree Nation Chief, Marcel Bal—Balfour, stated, and I quote: I find the lack of con—Crown consultation on this bill troubling. I want you to know that NHCN has received no correspondence or other requests for Manitoba to undertake a formal consultation with our nation to address the inclusion of a section of our reserve and a section of our resource management area which encompasses our traditional territory within the planning boundaries of the implementation and subsequent enforcement of Bill 6. End quote.

Stakeholders' concerns like those I've just outlined participated the, the two amendments that were brought forward by the Minister of Conservation in committee this past Monday night. If the stakeholders' consultations were indeed as thorough as the minister has claimed them to be, he would not have made it to introduce these two amendments. Those clauses would have already been contained in the legislation, proof positive that he had been listening to the First Nations communities' concerns.

The ball is now firmly in the government's court. If it is confident that it has undertaken the proper consultation with the stakeholders on Bill 6, it can try to pass the bill later this afternoon. After all, the Minister of Conversation stated, so, so definitely in this House last Thursday, and I quote: We've been there; we've done that. End quote.

* (15:00)

But if this government is truly interested in hearing what the affected stakeholders have to say about Bill 6, then it will be moved. This legis—we'll move this legislation over to the fall session with our support and encouragement. The government should

then spend the summer months meeting with stakeholders to fully apprise them of the contents of the bill and to look at ways to address the outstanding questions and concerns.

It is my understanding that report stage for this bill could be deferred until the fall sitting in the Legislature if the bill is carried forward. Theoretically, it would allow for the possibility of further amendments by leave following additional consultations with the stakeholders.

It is abundantly clear that stakeholders do not feel that they have been adequately consulted on this bill. If the government is truly interested in developing legislation aimed at helping our first–our east-side communities over the long then it will be—it will redouble its efforts to ensure stakeholders have input into its development.

Thank you for the opportunity to put a few words on the record about this important matter.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY (Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, just before I announce the bills I wonder if I might have leave of the House. As the members know, this morning the House agreed to concurrence and third reading of Bill 228, The Grandparents' Day Act, and I'm requesting leave of the House to have the bill be given royal assent today, insofar as Lieutenant-Governor is attending later in the day.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, as members know this morning the House agreed to concurrence and third reading of Bill No. 228, The Grandparents' Day Act. Because this Sessional Order provides that Bill 228 was to be concluded in the fall, the honourable Government House Leader is requesting leave of the House to have the bill given royal assent today.

Is that agreed to?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Okay it's been agreed to.

Mr. Chomiak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the House for their co-operation.

Mr., Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the—*[interjection]* oh, yeah, oops. You know 19 years and ay-yai-yai.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, it's the, the—what's the famous saying? You can begin the life—a lifetime of humor—humour by learning to laugh at yourself.

I'd like to call, Mr. Speaker, the bills in the following order: concurrence and third readings of bills No. 6, No. 5, No. 14, No. 18, No. 20, No. 27, then debate on second reading of Bill No. 16, and then return to concurrence and third readings on Bill No. 30.

Mr. Speaker: The order of business for this afternoon, we'll deal with concurrence and third readings in this order: Bill 6, 5, 14, 18, 20 and 27. Then once that's concluded we'll go to second reading of Bill No. 16, and once that concluded then we'll go to concurrence third reading of Bill No. 30. Okay.

So right now I'm going to call Bill No. 6, The East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 6—The East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the, seconded by the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers), that Bill No. 6, the east side traditional land planning and special protected areas act; Loi sur l'alagementis—aleménétiement des terres traditionnelles situées du côté et les zones protégées spéciales, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Attorney General, seconded by the honourable Minister of Conservation, that Bill No. 6, The East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, and I rise today in third reading of Bill 6 to put a few words on the record.

Back in the 2007 election campaign, the NDP announced that they would be introducing this type of, of planning legislation for the east side of, of Lake Winnipeg. But they also, Mr. Speaker, explicitly stated that they would consult with First Nations as the legislation was developed. Some communities were consulted, but many, many were not and do not feel that there was an adequate consultation process that took place.

Where we found that, Mr. Speaker, was during the second reading of this bill, Bill 6. The Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) reiterated that First Nations people had been left out of the decision-making process for too long and that this situation needed to be remedied, and he said that. But what we have heard in recent days and at committee is that many First Nations communities do not believe that they have been adequately consulted about this bill.

Mr. Speaker, concerns have been raised by First Nations on the east side of Lake Winnipeg that this NDP government disregarded key provisions of the WNO accord as it moved ahead with Bill 6, and my colleague the Member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat) reiterated and, and eloquently put what those concerns were today in her grievance this afternoon and, unfortunately, had to—you know, felt compelled to put those concerns in a grievance in this House. So I won't go into all of the details there because she has already done so.

But we have also been apprised of the very swift nature of some of the consultations that took place. In one instance, Mr. Speaker, government officials met stakeholders with a PowerPoint presentation and some handouts that they had with them, and the handouts were, after the presentation, were promptly collected back from the stakeholders following the presentation. And, of course, this gave the stakeholders virtually no opportunity to review the proposed legislation in a more comprehensive way and to provide valuable feedback to the government. So I think—if that's the way of doing consultation, I think it's, it's not adequate.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

The Minister of Conservation has made some pretty assertive statements in this House about the level of quality of his consultations. He has boldly stated, and I quote, we've been there, we've done that consultation, end quote. Well, that's a pretty definitive position from the minister. He really believes he's done his homework on Bill 6, but First Nation stakeholders made abundantly clear at the

recent committee hearings that they do not believe that they were properly consulted on Bill 6. They repeatedly expressed concern that the government developed this bill in isolation from them and, obviously, that is very concerning to us, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, if the government had, in fact, been so thorough in its consultations, it should not have had to introduce two amendments to Bill 6 in committee on Monday night. Those provisions would have been included in the bill when it was introduced had the government been listening to stakeholders in a more meaningful way.

First Nations leaders have called on this government to defer Bill 6 until the fall legislative session so that further consultation and analysis can take place. This is a significant piece of legislation, Mr. Acting Speaker, and it's significant for many stakeholders, including those on the east side—the communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. The stakeholders have a reasonable expectation that the government will engage in thorough consultation process, that questions can be raised and possible concerns addressed.

The government has a choice to make today. It can choose to use its majority in this House to pass this Bill No. 6, or it can acknowledge that its consultation process was inadequate, listen to the stakeholders and hold Bill 6 over until the fall so that more work can be done on it. And we believe that that's the right approach because we believe in a more thorough consultation process than has taken place to date, Mr. Speaker.

I thank you for the opportunity to put a few words on the record, and we hope that the government sees fit to do the right thing, to reach out to those communities who have expressed serious concern with respect to the consultation process that, unfortunately, was not adequate enough for those stakeholders with respect to this bill. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

* (15:10)

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to put a few words on Bill 6, dealing with the east side of Lake Winnipeg, the co-decision-making in terms of land-use planning, and after some last-minute amendment, the reference to the WNO Accord.

It was very clear from the communications that we have received from a variety of people in

northern Manitoba and from the presentations by Chief David Harper, Chief Andrews, Chief Fontaine and others at the committee stage, that there was totally inadequate consultation by this government with respect to this. That inadequate consultation was reflected in the inadequacies of the bill which were present, that it wasn't even referring, until it was amended, to the WNO Accord, from which really is the basis on which people on the east side of Lake Winnipeg have been working, not everybody, but most people.

Certainly, it is our view that a bill like this, which really is about working together, co-decision making, joint planning, that such a bill is fatally flawed if it is based on inadequate consultation. And, and if the government is not going to delay this until the fall and we have a vote today on third reading, we will oppose it. We will vote against it. And I know our voice may not be loud, but, but we disagree strongly with the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) in approach that he has taken to lot—and not adequately consulting with people on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. And I think it is very sad. I think it is tragic in many ways, because many of the First Nations may withdraw, but that is the situation and that, Mr. Speaker, is our position.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rob Altemeyer): House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill No. 5, The East Side Traditional [interjection]—Bill No. 6, thank you. The East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Voice Vote

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): All in favour of the motion, say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): All opposed to the motions, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Some Honourable Members: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): On division? So noted, on division.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Yes, Mr., Mr. Acting Speaker, it's just, be noted that it's on division. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): So noted. Thank you. On division.

Bill 5—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Promoting Safer and Healthier Conditions in Motor Vehicles)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): The next bill we are considering is Bill No. 5, the highway traffic amendment act—oh, no—honourable Government House Leader,

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Yes, oh, sorry. I'm sorry.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): The next bill we are considering for concurrence and third reading, highway traffic amendment act, Bill No. 5.

Mr. Chomiak: I move, seconded by the Minister of Healthy Living (Ms. Irvin-Ross), child healthy living and related matters, that Bill No. 5, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Promoting Safer and Healthier Conditions in Motor Vehicles); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (promotion de la santé et de la sécurité dans les véhicules automobiles), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): It is moved by the honourable Government House Leader, seconded by the honourable minister for Healthy Living, that Bill No. 5, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Promoting Safer and Healthier Conditions in Motor Vehicles); loi modifiant le Code de la route, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker—Deputy Speaker, I wish to put a few words on the record in regards to the third reading of Bill 5, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Promoting

Safer and Healthier Conditions in Motor Vehicles), as you've pointed out.

I just want to bring to attention that, you know, there's, there's no concerns, as we pointed out in committee the other night, with the no smoking under 16 in vehicles. From that particular point of view, Mr. Speaker, many of the presenters came forward and felt that that was a, a, a, a plus in Manitoba. I believe that other provinces have done it and we're co-ordinating with them.

I also just want to say, though, that, that this bill is about not being able to use hand-held cellphones in vehicles while you're moving, Mr. Speaker, and, of course, you can pull over and use them at that point. There were amendments brought forward by the minister the other evening to include police, paramedics, firefighters in emergency situations being able to continue to use these facilities. I thought the government could have put that in the bill to start with.

And there were many issues that the minister said she will bring in by regulation. But, it wasn't satisfactory to those who were at committee the other night, particularly in school bus drivers across the province, taxicab operators in the city of Winnipeg and beyond in the province, and the areas of operations of semi operators and ham operators in the province, Mr. Speaker, if you could, Deputy Speaker.

And so those are the concerns and, and even though the minister brought in a, an amendment that will take—in her mind take care of the situation with a number of these people under the—falling under the radio and communications act, I only brought, and I believe the member from Inkster brought forward, two amendments that were ruled out of order. We brought those forward only because we felt that, in discussions with the individuals that we were talking with, that the minister's amendment may not cover their needs.

And so I know that they will be watching, bus drivers particularly and semi operators particularly, in this area. The equipment that they have today, I think, is probably more technologically advanced than the minister's bill and, and if not now, will be soon.

So, I, I'm hoping that they will consider the needs of all of these areas when they're—when the government is implementing the recommendations through the regulations. I, I know both ministers are

here—the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Lemieux) and the Minister of Healthy Living (Ms. Irvin-Ross) that kind of co-sponsored this bill and brought it forward, and I appreciate their efforts in regards to trying to bring forth the amendments that would've dealt with the concerns that we had at committee the other night, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And so with those few words, I just wanted to say that we were only trying to put into the bill, do what the members had asked for at committee the other night, so that it could've been in, rather the next—than do it through it through regulations. That it could've been part of the, of the bill and implemented in such a manner to take out any doubt as to what might have been and might not be able to used in the future in some of these cases, particularly in, in regards to safety 'cause that's what we're talking about here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is about the safety of the citizens of Manitoba and the citi—the safety of the people operating these vehicles and all of the vehicles and people around them. And that qualifies for bus drivers, semi operators, the ham radio operators, as well as the others in the province, including the agricultural industry that we spoke about the other night as well.

So, with those few words, I look forward to this bill moving forward, Mr. Speaker, and look forward to the implementation of this bill, but urge the government to, to be cognizant in regards to the needs of these areas when they're bringing the regulations in around this particular bill. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about Bill 5. This is a bill which we support. We are pleased that the government has incorporated in legislation the recommendation that we made some time ago, that the smoking in cars with kids should end and that we should have legislation to end this.

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the—on this occasion, the government has recognized that this is important for the health and safety of kids. When I talked recently with Dr. Rick Stanwick, who's a renowned Canadian epidemiologist, he said that, you know, Manitoba needs to make sure there are three things in place: one, was end smoking in cars with kids; two, was to make sure that we have mandatory bicycle helmets; and three, we need to make sure that we have mandatory booster seats. That—I told him we were working on all three, and we've managed to pressure the NDP to make the change in one of them, which is the ending smoking in cars with kids.

And I want to say a special word of thanks to the efforts of the MLA for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) who was front and centre at the effort to improve child safety and to end the smoking in cars with kids, and ran a very effective campaign to make sure that everyone was aware of the importance of this issue and that there was sufficient public pressure that, in fact, this was included in this particular bill.

* (15:20)

So thank you to the MLA for Inkster in this regard and, and thank you to the government in terms of taking up this issue, and we now have this bill which we certainly support.

We have, you know, some concerns about certain areas of implementation. The cellphone issue is one, for example. We know that in the initial bill that certain areas like taxis and school bus drivers and firefighters were not adequately considered. We're hoping that this will be adequately covered by the amendment that was brought forward.

But, in view of what has happened with the implementation of the photo radar, we are always particularly cautious with this government, and so we are putting them on notice that we're going to be watching very carefully in terms of the implementation of this process.

But, that being said, we certainly support this bill and look forward to it becoming law.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 5, the highway traffic amendment act.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 14—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Payday Loans)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): Up next, we have Bill No. 14, the consumer protection amendment act.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the

ministers—the Minister of Advanced Education (Ms. McGifford), that Bill No. 14, the consumer protection act, payday loans; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur (prêts de dépannage), reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Altemeyer): It has been moved by the honourable Government House Leader, seconded by the honourable minister for Advanced Education, that Bill No. 14, the consumer protection amendment act; loi modifiant la loi sur la protection du consommateur, reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill 14, which deals with payday loans.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Mr. Speaker, we are opposed to this legislation. We feel that this was not necessary. As Antoine Hacault showed eloquently at the committee stage, that it is very likely that this bill, this bill, this bill would have got through the courts faster than it would've got through the Legislature and we would already had this implemented.

The fact is that there are good reasons, and not only the fact that, that this could probably have been implemented faster in terms of having the interest rate set if it had gone through the courts and have due process than if it'd gone through the Legislature, but also because we see that there is an important balance here and that it is important to set the interest rates as low as possible, so that lenders will benefit from as low as possible interest rates, but we also see that the interest rates have to be high enough that people will actually lend the money under these conditions and so the money will be available because it's no use in having an interest rate which is so low that there's no money gonna be men-lent out to, to people who, who need it and are under straightened circumstances or difficult circumstances.

And, and lastly, we see that the—there's a fundamental issue here. You know, there is—was a process set up through the PUB, the Public Utilities Board. Public Utilities Board listened very carefully to people and after listening to both sides and trying to strike the right balance, they came to what they

saw as a resolution. It may not be perfect. The government may not like the PUB. I don't know exactly what it was, but the fact is that we believe that the PUB is an infinitely better process than having the Minister of Finance decide the interest rates, and, quite frankly, there's a number of reasons we believe that. As smart as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) may think he is, we still think that the process in the Public Utilities Board is a better process and is likely to end up in a better result.

And, second, quite frankly, we have some concerns with the credibility of the Minister of Finance after the handling of the Crocus issue. We have some concerns about the Minister of Finance after the legislation which brought in—which called an \$88-million deficit in core spending a balanced budget. And when we have a Minister of Finance who is losing credibility, we are much less likely to support him on an issue like this. And so, Mr. Speaker, that is why we are opposing this legislation and we will vote against it.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the, for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House, concurrence and third reading of Bill No. 14, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Payday Loans).

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Bill 18—The Regulated Health Professions Act

Mr. Speaker: I'll now call Bill No. 18, The Regulated Health Professions Act.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the

Minister of Labour (Ms. Allan), that Bill No. 18, The Regulated Health Professions Act; Loi sur les professions de la santé réglementées, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: Moved by the honourable Attorney General, seconded by the honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration, that Bill No. 18, The Regulated Health Professions Act, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I'm pleased to have the opportunity to rise and speak to this legislation on third reading. Certainly, we've been very supportive of the legislation, the intent of the legislation. There certainly have been some issues that have arisen throughout it, but as for the intent of the legislation and the principle of the legislation, we certainly are supportive of it, and we also want to commend the Department of Health for the work that went into pulling this legislation together.

This was a monumental task. It was a very thick piece of legislation, and it was probably many, many years in coming, and so we want to acknowledge the work of the Legislative Counsel in particular, who, I'm sure, put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into ensuring that that legislation was as good as it could be here in Manitoba.

I do note that there are a couple other provinces—three, I believe—that have brought forward similar legislation and Manitoba is now joining their ranks. And it is legislation that's important to Manitoba. It is important that we see all the health-care professions regulated under one act. There are going to be many, many benefits from that, particularly as we move forward in collaborative practices. And I think, as we see health care moving forward and changing and we see the opportunities before us to be innovative, I think this legislation will help to make that happen because it, while it strengthens certain aspects of what people do in their jobs and parts of it can be dealt with in reserve acts, it also opens up opportunities for physician assistants, nurse practitioners and others to be very, very involved in health-care delivery.

And I think the intent in all of this was to create a better, safer health-care system. Patient safety has certainly been a huge component of the genesis of

this legislation, and everybody that came to committee and everybody that has commented on it has certainly spoken to it.

So definitely, in principle, we do support the legislation. I do want to note that all of the people that came to present at committee spoke very, very knowledgeably about this, and they all spoke with great passion and put forward their views extremely well. The one concern that certainly was raised for all of us was around the issue of pharmacy and the division within that profession. It became very apparent throughout the hearings that that division is fairly significant, and the concern we certainly had around it was the fact that that division was allowed to go on for as long as it did, and it was disappointing that the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) hadn't intervened in a more timely way to ensure that some of that might have been nipped in the bud before it reached this point of legislation. And we do feel that she dropped the ball on that component of this legislation.

And I think it's going to take a long time for the pharmacy profession to be able to work cohesively within their own profession, and that is really too bad. I do think that the problems were evident a number of years ago, and action should have been taken long before it erupted into what the minister even referred to as a war, and as I said before, I'm not sure I would have labelled it as such, but you know, certainly the anxieties and anger within that profession are certainly there, and I think the government needed to have intervened earlier, and it's disappointing that they didn't because it's going to create somewhat of a setback in all of the health-care professions working together, and it could create a serious setback, and it's also now set up some, you know, further stumbling blocks along the way as we're trying to move all of these professions to be regulated under one piece of legislation.

* (15:30)

The legislation itself other than, you know, the, the feelings and, and dismay, I think, around that one aspect of it, is certainly positive and we are very supportive, as I said ar-related to the intent and the principle of the legislation, and we look forward to seeing the opportunities that this is going to provide for health care as we move forward.

There are many challenges in health care. The health-care professions that are out there are to be commended for their incredible amount of effort and tenacity, their commitment to health care, despite

having to work in very, very challenging circumstances. Some areas there is certainly more challenges than in other areas, but, you know, it really is the health-care professions that are holding it all together. And the doctors and nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, you know, lab technologists, and, and, you know, it goes on and on, chiropractors, there are many occupational therapists. They all contribute so much to the health-care system. And while everybody plays a varying role in the delivery of health care, all components are important because you cannot provide good quality health care unless you've got all those levels functioning together and functioning well and functioning collaboratively.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're certainly pleased to sp—you know, speak, in, in favour of this legislation in third reading. We certainly wish that, we certainly wish that it might have not seen the challenges that it had in it, and we do urge the minister, work very closely with the profession of pharmacy to ensure that we can move some of those challenges forward and have them fixed.

So, with those few comments, Mr. Speaker, we're pleased to see this legislation go forward.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill 18. I speak in support of this legislation. I believe it's a significant step forward in terms of moving health professions in Manitoba in a positive direction. I'd like to acknowledge the many who have worked very hard for quite a long time to bring this bill to being, and I would like to thank the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) for accepting our amendment, which provides greater equality between complainants and members of the colleges when there is an investigation of a complaint.

I think this is going to be important in providing a balance and is also a greater respect from the general public who will have a little more opportunity where they are complainants in terms of access to the process and understanding of the process, and I, quite frankly, think that will be beneficial and help, not only the complainants understand the process that happened, but also help them to get a better appreciation for the efforts made at the college level to investigate complaints.

So that—with those comments, the Liberal Party supports this legislation and looks forward to it being enacted and coming into play and being implemented.

Mr. Speaker: House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Oh, the honourable Member for Inkster.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Very briefly, I just wanted to take the opportunity to emphasize an area in which I do believe that the Minister of Health, in particular, needs to give more attention to, and that is the issue of foreign credentials and recognizing the medical doctors that come to our province and get a very high sense of frustration because they're not able to, to get their skills and professional skills and talents recognized and allowed to practice medicine in the province of Manitoba, and the frustration that they have to go through has ultimately led to, to many of them look and explore and quite often act on leaving the province of Manitoba. And to that end, the other day on June the 9th, I stood up and indicated I would provide some background to such doctors.

So I'd like to have a page provide the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) what it is I had committed to, to doing just the other day in regards to the two doctors in question. It was during a member's statement.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill No. 18, The Regulated Health Professions Act.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

**Bill 20—The Manitoba Hydro Amendment and
Public Utilities Board Amendment Act
(Electricity Reliability)**

Mr. Speaker: I'm now calling Bill No. 20, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment and Public Utilities Board Amendment Act (Electricity Reliability).

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) and rural development and deputy leader, that Bill No. 20, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment and Public Utilities Board Amendment Act (Electricity Reliability);

loi modifiant la loi sur l'Hydro-Manitoba et la loi sur la Régie des services publics, fiable du réseau électrique, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Attorney General, and seconded by the honourable minister for Agriculture and Food, that Bill No. 20, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment and Public Utilities Board Amendment Act (Electricity Reliability), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain): It is indeed a pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to Bill 20. Of course, it's a very important piece of legislation moving forward, and this particular legislation has to do with electricity reliability in Manitoba, and as you know, Mr. Speaker, we are a very important component of the North American grid in terms of electricity transmission around North America.

And the premise behind this legislation as it comes forward is because of the blackouts that occurred back in the year 2003, and a great portion of eastern North America was, was impacted by that very serious blackout, and it has had very serious repercussions for the public and the business community. So, as a result of that, the North American electricity reliability corporation is the entity that actually oversees the reliability of electricity and electricity transmission lines throughout North America.

In essence, what we're doing with this particular legislation, we are making amendments to the hydro act, and we're also making amendments to the public utilities act, Public Utilities Board Act, Mr. Speaker. So the intent of the NERC for short, that's N-E-R-C, or the North American electricity reliability corporation, is to make sure that there are standards in place across North America, that we don't have blackouts occurring into the future. Now, what the corporation will do, they will kind of keep an eye on Manitoba Hydro, in our case in Manitoba, because Manitoba Hydro is the predominant transmission company in the province of Manitoba. So they will keep an eye on what Manitoba Hydro are doing in terms of standards and making sure the standards are in place so that the transmission is reliable for the future. And it will be their, their duty to make sure that everything is looked after, and if there is

situations that do arise, that they feel that Manitoba Hydro is not operating up to standards, they can in, in fact, make a recommendation for a violation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is where the Public Utilities Board comes into play because the Public Utilities Board is acting as the judge and jury on these particular violations, and when violations are brought forward to the Public Utilities Board, the Public Utilities Board will decide if, in fact, there is a violation of the standards that had taken place and from there they ar—there'll be a decision in terms of a fine relative to, again, in most cases, Manitoba Hydro. Now, we don't expect that Manitoba Hydro will be encountering too many violations, because we know that Manitoba Hydro are, are very prudent and they certainly watch out for, for situations that may develop. They're, they're certainly one of the more reliable corporations in terms of transmission in North America, so we do not anticipate that Manitoba Hydro will be suffering too many violations, and, subsequently, not subject to too many financial fines.

* (15:40)

You know, Mr. Speaker, the one issue that we do have a little concern with—and it follows once the Public Utilities Board makes a ruling—the Cabinet has the ability to decide where that particular fine would go and that was the intent of my, my amendment yesterday that I brought forward to the House was to, to clarify what that money could be used for. As the legislation exists now, it's, it's quite open-ended, so the, the Cabinet could use any fines that are levied under this legislation for their own particular pet projects. And we just have some reservations in terms of giving the government of the day an open-handed cheque to look after what may be some of their pet projects.

Unfortunately, from our perspective, the, the amendment did not go forward, so we are stuck with the, the legislation as it is, is written today, Mr. Speaker. Now, I know the minister has assured me that they will be using any fines that are levied for the, the benefit of Manitobans. We will be taking his word for it until we—such time as we see the regulations, which will be part of this legislation. So, quite frankly, we are looking forward to, to the regulations that, that the minister will be bringing forward.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about reliability of transmission in Manitoba, there's also industrial companies that have a, a very important role to play

in that regard as well because some, some, some of the industrial users do use a lot of electricity. And, you know, if, if their particular infrastructure causes some issues, too, they, they could be on the hook for some of these fines, so it's very important that their, their facilities are up to a standard as well.

And we mentioned it yesterday in question period, where we see the provincial government is really—not stood up to some of the policy decisions that they should be making, and, in fact, they've left the Public Utilities Board to establish public policy on industrial rates here in the province of Manitoba. And we think the Province of Manitoba should be taking a leadership role, in terms of deciding what the policy is going to be for electricity rates going forward because it does have a real bearing on, on business in Manitoba and trying to attract business to Manitoba and trying to keep business here in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, other provinces such as B.C. and Québec have put forward an open public policy so that all companies who want to do business in those respective provinces fully understand what the rules are when it comes to hydro-electricity and the rates. Now, it's some—it's time that the government stood up and, and made some kind of a policy. It's quite clear the Public Utilities Board is struggling with the issue because the, the hearings on this particular issue closed almost five months ago and we're still waiting for a board ruling on that particular issue.

Now, the, the reliability of electricity in our energy grid here in Manitoba's very important because I see in the future where other companies would like to be involved in producing energy for, for the province of Manitoba, and maybe for Manitobans and maybe for resale into other jurisdictions. Now, the Province has gone ahead and we have established one wind farm here in the province of Manitoba a few years ago. We do have one 99-megawatt wind farm here in the province, and the government has promised additional wind farms will be set up here in the province of Manitoba and we know there's been lots of interest. There was over 80 submissions to the provincial government, to Manitoba Hydro, to establish wind farms in Manitoba, but, unfortunately, we're not sure where that—negotiations are in terms of the next wind farm in, in Manitoba. There was a news release quite some time ago—well over a year ago—on the St. Joseph project, a 300-megawatt project, but, unfortunately, nothing has come to fruition on that, on that side of things.

But the point of the matter is, there is potential for wind farms or other types of energy forms to be incorporated into the grid. And I know the, the government is, is pretty excited about biomass and that source of, of fuel for electricity, and I think it is a tremendous option for the province of Manitoba. And I think it's where the government should be in terms of looking forward, what can be done in terms of facilitating development and not just biomass but other types of, of types of issues. And I look at landfills, Mr. Speaker. We know landfills produce a tremendous amount of greenhouse gas and, in other jurisdictions, those other jurisdictions are actually capturing the greenhouse gas out of landfills and turning it into energy, turning it into electricity.

So it just stands to reason that there's, there's tremendous opportunities out there and unfortunately, this government, by their own policy and by their own legislation they're bringing forward, are actually stopping some of that potential development, Mr. Speaker. Now, we know there's going to have to be some changes in terms of how electricity is generated in Manitoba because the government legislation says that coal-fired plants will have to be shut down except for emergency use in the next few years. So there's going to have to be something come on-line to replace that particular form of energy and obviously, that's very important to how the grid system will work here in the province of Manitoba.

When we talk about reliability, probably the biggest, the next biggest financial investment we'll have here in the province of Manitoba is the addition of another hydro transmission line in the province, or, as we would know it, Bipole III, Mr. Speaker. And the expert tell—experts will tell us, and common sense tells us, the shorter the transmission line, the more reliable that particular line will be. So if you're going to build a line that's four or five hundred kilometres shorter, not only will it be less expensive, it will be more reliable.

It really is a security issue, as the member from Steinbach points out, and it's, it's exactly what this particular bill talks about, so if the government listens to their own legislation, common sense will tell them build the shorter line on the east side of the province of Manitoba, just like Manitoba Hydro have been studying for years, exactly what Manitoba Hydro wanted to do, until the NDP government got its nose involved in Manitoba Hydro business, Mr. Speaker.

I know there's other members that want to, want to speak about this particular legislation. We certainly don't have any—certainly don't have any problems with the concept behind this particular legislation. We do, we're—obviously are going to be watching very close to some of the, some of the holes in this particular legislation and we'll see what the, the minister brings forward in terms of regulations, Mr. Speaker. But certainly from a conceptual point of view, we'll look forward to having this particular legislation pass in the very near future. Thank you very much.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to add just a few words prior to its passage in recognizing that this particular bill assists in terms of the North American grid and ensures that there is a basic standard that is, that is maintained. It comes out of a blackout situation that arose a couple years back in the Ontario area and as a result, I believe that what you're seeing is legislation from different jurisdictions to, in essence, protect the integrity of the grid for Manitoba. From what I understand, there puts more of a responsibility on the PUB to ensure that Manitoba Hydro does at least adhere to basic standards with respect to the grid and in that sense, we see it as a positive bill.

There is much other things that are happening within Manitoba Hydro that I'm sure that the public is very much wanting to hear more about—the issue in terms of the bipole and where the bipole is going to be built is just one of those examples.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to see the bill pass and receive royal assent. Thank you.

* (15:50)

Mr. David Faurichou (Portage la Prairie): I do appreciate the opportunity to participate in third reading debate of Bill No. 20, the Manitoba Hydro amendment and Public Utilities Board amendment act, the electricity reliability, as presented to the House.

I, I want to state, though, at, at this juncture in time, a rather personal disappointment insofar as the amount of wind generation capacity as it exists here in the province of Manitoba at the present time. One only has to look immediately south of the border into North Dakota to see hundreds of, of wind generating facilities throughout that state and we here in the province of Manitoba, they have, have one developed site of 64, I understand, generating

wind turbines. And yet, why are we waiting so long to, to see more, more wind generation here in the province of Manitoba when it is so compatible with that of, of water ge-generated electricity? Water can very easily be stored and the gates quite quickly modified in, in their positioning to allow more electricity to be generated or less, dependant upon the, the wind velocity that could be harnessed through wind-turbine generation throughout Manitoba.

And so I say that we are, we are falling farther and farther behind. Even though the government has heralded that there will be a second site developed near St. Joseph, there is scepticism still there as to whether this particular site will, in fact, see development in the near future.

Also, too, Mr. Speaker, I want to say I also regret that there seems to be a lack of, of willingness to co-operate with potential wind-turbine development-developers. And it is very frustrating when, when a particular wind generation development corporation comes to Manitoba and they're very familiar, very, very familiar with jurisdictions worldwide, and then when they come to Manitoba they are left with the feeling that we are a jurisdiction that truly does not want wind generation. And these are, are comments that have, have been made based upon worldwide experiences and to be com-and to-for the comment to be made that, in essence, Manitoba is a jurisdiction that really does not want to see wind power and the level of co-operation shown is, is very frustrating. And they put a lot of money into development plans through their own studies and research, and the level of co-operation seen by this, this government of ours is, it's very disappointing. Also, too, I would like to make mention about wind generation in the province of Manitoba, when Manitoba Hydro put out a request for proposal, expecting approximately 1,000 megawatts of production, they actually received in excess of 10,000 megawatts of production through proposals in a very short time frame.

So, Mr. Speaker, I, I regret that-to say that we are not, are not leading in any way, shape or form the, the world in, in, in energy, in green energy generation here in the province of Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill No. 20, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment and Public Utilities Board Amendment Act (Electricity Reliability).

Is the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 27—The Gaming Control Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill No. 27, The Gaming Control Amendment Act.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson), that Bill No. 27, The Gaming Control Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Commission de régie du jeu, reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Attorney General, seconded by the honourable Minister of Education, that Bill No. 27, The Gaming Control Amendment Act, reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): I wish to put a few comments on the records in regards to Bill 27, certainly wish to point out to the House some of the issues that we certainly have some concern with when it comes to gaming.

For instance, the fact that this is a government, that the first time in the history of the province of Manitoba, is advertising gaming and gambling to its own citizens, something that it was never intended to be. We know that there is now a large portion of our population that has addiction issues and have, have a lot of, a lot of problems with that. We've had individuals coming—certainly, when I was a critic, I had them coming into my office and explaining in tears how difficult this gaming policy of the New Democratic poli-Party has been on them. And, even worse, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that now we have an NDP government that is putting ATM machines in the, in the casinos and the bingo halls.

And it is, it is just the most unbelievable argument that they make is that they have to put the ATM machines into the, into the casinos cause there's too much crime in the parking lots. You know, perhaps the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chomiak)

should be doing his job and seeing to it that there isn't so much crime in the parking lots of the casinos, that people wouldn't be fearful of their lives and of their money, of their wallets, if they walk across the parking lot and go to a bank or financial institution.

Some Honourable Members: They have to go home eventually.

Mr. Schuler: And, and, and one of the members is saying they have to go home eventually. I mean, unless it's the policy of this government that they're just going to have crime in the parking lot so that nobody ever goes home and just keeps gambling. And, and we've heard, heard previously that this government has, is eventually going to end up where they will have the ATMs right by the one-armed bandit or the, the VLTs. And, unfortunately, this government should be taking a leadership role, have a moratorium on gambling and have a study done whereby the social and economic impacts on Manitoba are studied properly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill No. 27, The Gaming Control Amendment Act.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 16—The Police Services Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay. I will now call Bill No.—second reading of Bill No. 16, The Police Services Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Steinbach, who has 12 minutes, and also standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I understand that I have a very short period of time as a result of some of the sessional orders that we are th—going through. I know that I've already raised publicly some of the concerns that I have regarding a police force being foisted upon a small municipal police forces. I've had the opportunity to meet with many of them and hear correspondence. They're very concerned about the fact that they have a system that works well in the majority of small municipal police forces outside of

Winnipeg, throughout the province of Manitoba, and that putting in a police board could simply cause problems where no problems currently exist.

So, while I understand why the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chomiak) and the department put forward the—this particular piece of legislation, I think that they probably over-thought—over-thought this segment of it, and I would hope that the Minister of Justice and department staff would look at a different solution to have voluntary boards for police outside the city of Winnipeg so that where things are working, they can continue to work well and to not put a problem into a place where there needs not to be a change.

So we are going to have this bill at committee at some point in the future, and I know that there will be those who have come forward from police representatives and from municipalities. And I know in the past the minister has listened to amendments that have come forward, and I hope that he'll listen to the presentations at committee and be agreeable to amendments to strengthen the police act.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Bill 16.

* (16:00)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Yeah, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to acknowledge the, the, the need for reform of the, that's necessary—it's Bill 5? Oh, five sec—the importance for the need for the—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lamoureux: —reform, and we support the bill going into—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

In accordance with the sessional order adopted in the House on June 1st, at 4 p.m., on June 11th, the Speaker must interrupt proceedings and, without seeing the clock, put all questions required to conclude the second reading stage on Bill 16, police services act. The question must be decided without further debate or amendment.

Therefore, we will now proceed to deal with the second reading of Bill 16, The Police Services Act.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

House Business

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Justice will meet on Wednesday, June 17th, at 6 p.m., to consider Bill 16, The Police Services Act.

Mr. Speaker: It's been announced that the Standing Committee on Justice will meet on Wednesday, June 17th, at 6 p.m., to consider Bill 16, The Police Services Act.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 30—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2009

Mr. Speaker: Now we will continue on, and we will now deal with concurrence and third reading of Bill No. 30, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2009.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the minister of child and Family Services, that Bill No. 30, the budget implementation and tax statute amendment act, 2009; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2009 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité, as amended and reported in the Standing Committee on Human Resources, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Attorney General, seconded by the honourable Minister of Family Services and Housing (Mr. Mackintosh), that Bill No. 30, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2009, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): I don't think it comes as any surprise to the members opposite that the Progressive Conservative Party will not be supporting the BITSA bill, Bill No. 30, for any numbers of reasons. But the main reason, Mr. Speaker, is that we believe very strongly that there's a, a false impression out there that, in fact, the budget that was tabled was a balanced budget, and, in reality, the budget that was tabled is anything but a balanced budget.

Quite frankly, when—I, I, I don't—I can't understand—and I've, I've tried to analyze it, but I can still not understand how you can have an \$88-million loss on a core operating—meaning that there's \$88 million less money coming in in revenues than going out in expenditures, and yet, they refer to that as being a balanced budget. I can't, for the life of me, Mr. Speaker, understand how even the Finance Minister, knowing full well that he is putting \$110 million of, of fiscal stabilization funding into the core operating, yet identifying that as a balanced budget and stand constantly in this House and crow that he has a balanced budget.

Now, they did change the bal—the balanced budget act, Bill 38. They did change it to, to reflect a summary budget, which, again, is, is smoke and mirrors, Mr. Speaker, because even with that summary budget bringing in Manitoba Hydro net revenues and bringing in MPI's net revenues and bringing in other Crown corporations' net revenues, they only, at that time, show a surplus of some \$48 million, which I find rather interesting because Manitoba Hydro themselves are going to have somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$360 million of, of net earnings this year. So there's smoke and mirrors; there's playing with numbers, and certainly that's reflected in the budget.

But the big issue, the absolutely No. 1 issue of not supporting the BITSA bill is the fact that, not that long ago, about six months ago, the Finance Minister decided to change the ba—balanced budget legislation, al—albeit he doesn't agr—admit to it. And what they did is they—and that balanced budget legislation said that they were going to retire debt, which was a long, well thought out debt retirement plan that was put in place back in 1995. That long, well thought out long-term plan had indicated \$110 million per year was going to be paid off the, the accumulated operating debt. And they agreed to that in Bill 38, but a month or two later, Mr. Speaker, when the minister filed his budget—which is reflected now in the BITSA bill—he changed that 110 to 20, and, in order to do that, he had to, to make some amendments, either to Bill 38 or to the BITSA bill. And he showed 20 million in the budget initially. Then, when the BITSA bill came out, there was a clause in there that said that he wasn't even going to do that; he wasn't going to repay \$20 million. He was simply going to repay nothing for the next three years.

Then, as it was, putting enough pressure on him and suggesting that maybe there should be at least a

minimum payment on his credit card, the minister decided at that time that he would flip-flop and go back to the original budget of \$20 million and reflect that into BITSA. I'm absolutely shocked that there's been so much flipping and flopping by the Finance Minister that I'm actually rather distressed for the financial well-being of the Province of Manitoba, when the Finance Minister cannot even come up with a, a, a simple plan to retire the operating debt of the Province of Manitoba. And I'm scared, I'm worried, I'm frightened, frightened for the fiscal well-being of the Province of Manitoba. So BITSA itself, now, after much harangue, reflects the budget but the budget doesn't reflect what Manitobans really want. They want an honest and open and transparent government.

Michael McCain today, in his speech at the Chamber of Commerce was very forthcoming, and he explained to the Chamber of Commerce that he's had some very difficult times over the last 12 months with respect to the listeria, listeriosa outbreak, and he was very honest with Canadians. He was open, and he was transparent, and what that amounted to, Mr. Speaker, was accountability, and I would like you to hear those words: open, honest, transparent, which leads to accountability. And I wish that the members opposite and the Finance Minister would listen to those words, 'cause all I want is honesty, openness and transparency and I want him to stand in this Legislature and say, in fact, the finances of the prov–Province of Manitoba are not balanced for this budget year. And I, quite frankly, don't think that they were balanced for the last budget year.

We haven't seen the financial statements year ending March 2009. We haven't got those financials. I know they're done. I know they're ready, but the Finance Minister won't give us those financials till probably sometime in late September or early October if he can hold off–never give us the financials because he doesn't want us to know the truth about what he's done over the last 10 years to this province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed, first of all, with the budget; secondly, with the flip-flops the Finance Minister had perpetrated up–upon the province of Manitoba, and, certainly, very disappointed in the fact that it's reflected in this BITSA bill. And, as I said, it should come as no surprise to the members opposite that we will not be supporting Bill No. 30 simply because it's our belief, our strong belief and others who believe what we believe that this province is heading in a tailspin and

our finances are going down faster than, than anything that we've seen before in the province of Manitoba.

So thank you for allowing me to put those words in the, on the record, and as I said, it should come no surprise. We've talked to this bill for many times and we'll continue to, continue to fight the good battle to try to keep them accountable for the finances of this province. Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I, too, wanted to put a few words on the record before the passage or befil–before this bill ultimately, no doubt, will pass. But hav–having said that, Mr. Speaker, I think the member from Brandon has done a good job in terms of raising what is a very important issue for all of us to realize, and that is to, to, to a significant degree, Manitobans need to be aware of the impact that the recession is actually going to be having on the Province's source of revenue, that, that being federal transfer payments. Manitoba, more than most provinces in Canada, are very reliant on federal tax dollars coming to the Province of Manitoba so that we're able to be able to provide the type of programmings that Manitobans expect us to, to provide. And that reaches everything from the health-care delivery to, to education, to crime on the streets.

* (16:10)

All of those public social service–services provided by this government are heavily subsidized by Ottawa tax dollars, and because of the recession, you will see that there will be significant decreases in revenue coming from Ottawa to the Province of Manitoba, and that is, in fact, going to cause additional pressure on the Province of Manitoba to be able to start spending smarter, Mr. Speaker. Like–and, and I do think that this government has demonstrated an inability to be able to, to spend smart in areas like health care. So it is going to put more pressure on, on the government and we wait to see how the, the government will, will respond, and we hope that the government is going to be in a better position than what we are anticipating, but, unfortunately, I think there's going to be a heavier responsibility of government to start spending smarter.

We are concerned that the government does quite often try to give the impression that Manitoba's books are, in fact, balanced, when, in fact, they are not balanced, and the legislative changes that we have seen in the last year allow the government of

the day to manipulate the books to give the impression that they are following some form of balanced budget legislation that has virtually been gutted, Mr., Mr. Speaker. And that does cause some, some concern for us because we believe that the issue of transparency and accountability is important, and the government is going to be avoiding that by some of the measures that it has actually taken.

All in all, the economy is of, of great concern going into, into the year and we look forward to additional reports and additional opportunities to be able to express our thoughts on, on the economic performance.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on House business.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to revise the announcement about the consideration of Bill 16, The Police Services Act, by the Standing Committee on Justice. Instead of the meeting taking place on Wednesday, June 17th, at 6 p.m. as announced, the meeting will take place on Thursday, June 18th, at 6 p.m. instead.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. It's been announced—it's been announced consideration of Bill 16, The Police Services Act, by the Standing Committee on Justice, instead of the meeting taking place on Wednesday, June 17th at 6 p.m. as announced, the meeting will take place on Thursday, June 18th, at 6 p.m. instead.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Okay, do we go back to debate?

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and it is, indeed, a pleasure to enter into debate, once again, on Bill 30, and as the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Borotsik) did point out, quite succinctly, that we are not going to be supporting this particular legislation at is—as it's brought forward.

Before I get into the details of Bill 30, though, I do want to just take a, a moment to, to, to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for presiding over the, the affairs of the Chamber here over the last few months. I know we've had some, some interesting question periods develop over the last little while, and it just goes to show the, the passion that's around the Chamber on

a, on a daily basis, especially when we get some, some hot, hot topic and timely issues brought forward.

I do also want to acknowledge the pages that have been with us for the last number of—the last year. I want to thank you for all your support and also we certainly wish you the best in the future. So thanks again for a, for looking after us here in the Chamber.

I do also want to thank all the, the attendants in, in here with us today and here day after day, and sometimes night after night, too, making sure that, that things are, are running smoothly. So we certainly appreciate your support. We've had a great bunch there—a good social bunch—nice to get a—have a chat with, with all those people, and we do thank you for all your time you put in around this building. And I know you're here day and night, and often goes without thanks, but here's a little thanks and hope you have a good summer as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Bill, Bill 30, as the min—as the Member for Brandon West pointed out, there's been some interesting flip-flops in the government side over the last few months, and the public of Manitoba have every right to, to express their dissatisfaction with some of the deceitful activities that they've seen under this particular government. And the idea of being open and transparent government is one that I think most governments should be looking forward to and trying to uphold that. But after 10 years in government, it seems to be the furthest thing from this particular government's thought. It's a government we see now with a heavy hand of government. We've seen a number of people get—have their positions terminated, and especially when it comes down to people that bring out some serious allegations against the government of the day, whether it's in Workers Compensation or whether it has to do with some of the activities that the NDP are doing during elections.

Mr. Speaker, this, this government is all about trying to leave the public with a warm and fuzzy perception and the reality is a lot different than that. They always like to come out with some nice warm and fuzzy legislation that has the perception that they're doing something good. And you look at their record on the environment, you know, they bring out this climate change and remission reductions act, but you really get down into the nuts and bolts of that particular legislation and then you look at the results

that we're getting. Well, quite frankly, the results are, are almost catastrophic.

There's certainly a lot more work that has to be done on that particular file and, and we talk about greenhouse gas emissions and we talk about the water issues. Again, when they bring out legislation and regulations pertaining to water, you know, it's all about leaving the perception with the public that they're doing something on that file. But the reality is they don't listen to the science that is being done out there; they don't listen to the professors and the people, the doctors that are studying all that type of, of information and putting forward positive information on, on those, in that regard. The ministers just choose to ignore that and go with whatever the public will like to hear on a given day, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about Bill 30 we have to keep reminding the government that they have a \$21-billion debt here in the province of Manitoba and the public in Manitoba has a right to know. And every province in western Canada over the last few years when the economy has been good have taken the opportunity to pay off their debt. What happened in Manitoba? The NDP government didn't pay off the debt; they ran up the credit card debt instead.

Mr. Speaker, then they bring forward their budget and they try to leave the perception with Manitobans that they balanced their budget. Well, if the members opposite would look at the budget document it clearly shows an \$88-million deficit. It's the creative accounting that the NDP are using; it's just like Enron accounting a few years ago. Now they have a summary budget, though. They can use the summary budget. They can fall behind the summary budget so they can bring in the numbers from Manitoba Hydro and, and make things look relatively well when we talk about summary accounting.

But the fact of the matter is we've got more debt now in the province of Manitoba than we've ever had before. That wouldn't be too bad, Mr. Speaker, if we had results to show for it. Look at the infrastructure deficit we have here in the province of Manitoba: the highway infrastructure, the bridge infrastructure, the sewer and the water infrastructure. Municipalities are clamouring for money to put into the infrastructure requirements of this province.

Under the Canada-Manitoba infrastructure grant system that just came out not too long ago, that

particular, in the first instalment was oversubscribed by a factor of eight to one. So there's eight times the requirement out there than there is for the money and that was just the projects that were supposed to be shovel ready, Mr. Speaker. So we know there's a huge deficit there in terms of what's needed on infrastructure and across the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, when the federal government, when the federal government—here's a very good point—the federal government has come to the table to Manitoba in the last few years. In fact, the provincial budget being \$10 billion now, almost 40 percent of that money comes directly from the federal government, unprecedented amount of money from the federal government.

In fact, even when there was some extra money showed up here just a little while ago for some infrastructure, \$123 million that just landed on the laps from the federal government, who do you think took the credit for it? Well, the NDP government took the credit for the \$123 million, and the reality is that money came from the federal Conservative government, Mr. Speaker.

* (16:20)

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other thing would be—if you look at the budget document too, we're, we're still the highest taxed people in western Canada. Unbelievable, the taxation levels that we have here. The scary part about the budget, too, there was actually some promises last year in the budget that, that it would go forward and there'd be some, some reduction in income tax levels. But, in this year's budget, there was no forward thinking. That line of the budget was taken right out.

The Member for Brandon West (Mr. Borotsik) talked a little bit about it. Most provinces are looking to the future. You know, they want to pay off their debt. They want to be able to function on their own. They don't want to be reliant on the federal government for transfer payments. The NDP government doesn't have that view. They're satisfied to sit back, don't set the bar too high and take the cash from the federal government on behalf of other municipalities.

An Honourable Member: Vote tax. Don't forget the vote tax.

Mr. Cullen: And the vote tax. You know, there's just another example of the government of the day trying to get their hands in the pockets of the average, hardworking Manitoba families, Mr. Speaker. That's

why the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) introduced legislation today in the House to rescind the vote tax.

Mr. Speaker, when I talk—we'll look at Bill 30 here, if we will. There's quite a few odds and ends that are thrown into Bill 30, and quite a few different tax regimes included in here. And one that I find quite interesting is a new tax, and it's called The Waste Reduction and Prevention Act, and some changes to that particular act. And this is one of the changes in this particular bill that has got municipalities across the province quite excited—

An Honourable Member: Not in a good way.

Mr. Cullen: —and not in a good way. Thanks for the clarification.

Because the government of the day has such a poor record on recycling here in Manitoba, and they have not had the ability to come up with a good, solid program to have an effective recycling program here. So, in view of that, their fall-back position, what is it? Well, it's to establish a new tax. Well, that's the NDP way. Establish a new tax. So here we are, now they're forcing on this, on this particular—under this particular legislation, they're now taxing every municipality, every town and village in the province of Manitoba an extra \$10 a tonne to try to set up a recycling program that they were so inadequate at in trying to set up in the first place, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on. But I do want to thank you for this time to, again, debate Bill 30, and we look forward to the vote on this particular legislation. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill No. 30, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2009.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Formal Vote

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Official Opposition House Leader): Recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (16:30)

Order. The question before the House is concurrence, third reading of Bill No. 30, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2009.

Division

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

Yeas

Allan, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Blaikie, Braun, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Jennissen, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Marcelino, Martindale, McGifford, Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wowchuk.

Nays

Borotsik, Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurshou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Hawranik, Lamoureux, Maguire, McFadyen, Mitchelson, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 32, Nays 20.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, His Honour is on the way—

Mr. Speaker: Okay, so we will—

Mr. Chomiak: —for royal assent.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. We will now prepare for royal assent.

ROYAL ASSENT

The Acting Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Ray Gislason): His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

His Honour John Harvard, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the Throne, Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in the following words:

Mr. Speaker: Your Honour:

At this sitting, the Legislative Assembly has passed certain bills that I ask Your Honour to give assent to:

Madam Clerk Assistant (Monique Grenier):

Bill 2—The Animal Care Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le soin des animaux

Bill 3—The Forest Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les forêts

Bill 5—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Promoting Safer and Healthier Conditions in Motor Vehicles); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (promotion de la santé et de la sécurité dans les véhicules automobiles)

Bill 6—The East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act; Loi sur l'aménagement des terres traditionnelles situées du côté est et les zones protégées spéciales

Bill 7—The Food Safety and Related Amendments Act; Loi sur la salubrité des aliments et modifications connexes

Bill 11—The Highway Traffic Amendment and Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba

Bill 12—The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation

Bill 13—The Medical Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi médicale

Bill 14—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Payday Loans); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur (prêts de dépannage)

Bill 15—The Victims' Bill of Rights Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Déclaration des droits des victimes

* (16:40)

Bill 17—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail

Bill 18—The Regulated Health Professions Act; Loi sur les professions de la santé réglementées

Bill 19—The Mortgage Dealers Amendment and Securities Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les courtiers d'hypothèques et la Loi sur les valeurs mobilières

Bill 20—The Manitoba Hydro Amendment and Public Utilities Board Amendment Act (Electricity Reliability); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Hydro-Manitoba et la Loi sur la Régie des services publics (fiabilité du réseau électrique)

Bill 21—The Labour Mobility Act; Loi sur la mobilité de la main-d'œuvre

Bill 22—The Cooperatives Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les coopératives

Bill 23—The Buildings and Mobile Homes Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les bâtiments et les maisons mobiles

Bill 24—The Colleges Amendment and le Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface Amendment Act (College Degrees); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les collèges et la Loi sur le Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface (grades des collèges)

Bill 25—The Statistics Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les statistiques

Bill 27—The Gaming Control Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Commission de régie du jeu

Bill 28—The Private Investigators and Security Guards Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les détectives privés et les gardiens de sécurité

Bill 29—The Environment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement

Bill 30—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2009; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2009 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité

Bill 32—The Centre culturel franco-manitobain Act; Loi sur le Centre culturel franco-manitobain

Bill 228—The Grandparents' Day Act; Loi sur la Fête des grands-parents

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): In Her Majesty's name, His Honour assents to these bills.

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

* * *

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I just want to say thank you, as the members have said, to all the staff workers and everyone who makes this, this cradle, this—of democracy work. And I wish all—I wanna thank the other House leaders for their honesty and integrity in dealing with the House, and yourself and everyone who works in—having said that, and getting to—and the staff and everything that they do to try to make us look as good as possible.

And, having said that, and, perhaps we should call it 5 o'clock?

Mr. Speaker: Okay, is it, is it the will of the House call it 5 o'clock?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. Before I call it 5 o'clock, I just wanna wish everyone all the best in the summer—the—for the summer.

And now that it's being 5 p.m., the House is adjourned and stands adjourned until September 14th, or the earlier call of the Speaker.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 11, 2009

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