

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

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The Honourable Myrna Driedger
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 30, 2016

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Madam Speaker: Introduction of bills?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee of Supply

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered and adopted a motion regarding concurrence in Supply.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Mayer), that the report of the committee be received.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Pivniuk), seconded by the honourable member for St. Vital, that the Committee of Supply has considered and adopted that the report of the committee be received.

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

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I am pleased to table the Report of Amounts Paid or Payable to Members of the Assembly for the fiscal year ended March 31st, 2016.

Madam Speaker: Ministerial statements—oh, the honourable Minister of Finance.

Mr. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I'm also pleased to table the Public Utilities Board Annual Report 2015-2016.

Madam Speaker: Ministerial statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Wilf Taillieu

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Madam Speaker, I rise today to put on the record some comments about the life of Wilfred Remi Taillieu, or Wilf as most of us knew him.

Earlier this week, Wilf lost his battle with cancer, but it was a battle he fought with courage and humour. I recall, in response to one of Mavis's

updates about Wilf, she noted he was having trouble swallowing food and that Black Russians was the only thing that kept him going. So I promptly dropped off some premium vodka and Kahlúa, which he received with relish.

Wilf was probably best known for leading the secession of Headingley from Winnipeg. He was a man of principle and conviction. He was of the view that the community was not being served by their municipal government, said that they were paying more but getting less. He tried to work within the system to remedy it, but when he failed, he decided that secession was the only option. Residents agreed with his viewpoint, with over 86 per cent of voters agreeing to leave Winnipeg.

As I noted, he stayed true to his convictions. He was not out to create his own fiefdom; he was out to create a better community, and he succeeded. Just drive through Headingley, and you will see the growth with a tax base increasing from 50 to 400 million dollars and the population more than doubling. To exemplify his attitude, I only need to quote Wilf when he was asked why RM councillors were among the lowest paid in Manitoba, and I quote: We had no intentions of taking money from the community. We were being screwed tax-wise by the City; that's why we left. We weren't going to do that here. End quote.

I want to conclude by extending my sincere condolences to my predecessor, Mavis, who retired as MLA so she could do what any one of us would do in similar circumstances: enjoy the time you have left with those you love.

And I want to put on the record that the NDP tried to use her very personal decision as political fodder in their shameless effort to seek re-election, including the MLA for St. Boniface, who as recently as April, at a Brandon debate, suggested her departure was a result of internal dynamics as opposed to a loving partner wanting to say goodbye.

Rest in peace, Wilf.

Madam Speaker, may I request a moment of silence in Wilf's memory?

Madam Speaker: Is there leave for a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

A moment of silence was observed.

MFL Occupational Health Centre

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): From its beginnings 32 years ago in a modest building on Sherbrook Street, the Manitoba Federation of Labour Occupational Health Centre has always had its roots firmly planted in the community. As a non-profit health centre specializing in workplace health and safety, it has played an important role in many of the health and safety innovations in our province.

The Occupational Health Centre helps workers, employers, and joint health and safety committees to improve workplace health and safety conditions and eliminate hazards. Workers have a right to a safe and healthy work environment and to go home safely every night.

One cannot help but be impressed by the tireless dedication of their staff and board to this task. They are absolutely committed to working for all Manitobans who are interested in creating safer and healthier workplaces. Their services are available free of charge, providing access to medical, clinical assistance to workplaces and information sheets on a variety of topics.

If you had attended their annual general meeting, as I did yesterday, you'd have learned of a remarkable outreach program that the OHC provides in Westman region. It features first-language health and safety training for newcomers to Manitoba working in the food processing industry. Fifteen workers learned how to provide workplace health and safety training to co-workers in five different languages. The practical benefit of this program is beyond question to the workers, the industry they work in and the families who rely on them to come home safely.

I know all members will join me in thanking the MFL Occupational Health Centre for their years of service to the community and wish them every success in the future.

Scleroderma Awareness

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): Madam Speaker, June 29th was National Scleroderma Day, and I rise to bring awareness to the House about this disease.

Scleroderma is a chronic autoimmune disease that literally means hard skin. This disease can lead to hardening and tightening of the skin and damage to internal organs, including the lungs,

heart, kidneys, esophagus and gastrointestinal tract. Scleroderma is life altering and can also be fatal.

I was honoured to join the Scleroderma Association of Manitoba on Sunday, June 26th, at the St. Vital Park Duck Pond for their second annual walk-run. This not-for-profit charity promotes increased public awareness, advances patient wellness and supports research in scleroderma.

Madam Speaker, this disease has touched my own family. My grandmother, Helena Love Chudley, passed away at the age of 39 years from scleroderma. I never had the chance to meet this remarkable woman, but my father would often share stories of how compassionate and encouraging his mother was, and how devastating it was, at the age of 14, to lose her to such a painful disease.

The trauma of such a loss is one of the reasons my father went into medicine. He wanted to find a cure for this and many other diseases. Although there has been progress in the research for treatment, a cure is still elusive. There is hope that, with new technologies and advances in understanding of the autoimmune disorders, that a cure can be found.

Scleroderma may not be as well known as diabetes, cancer or other illnesses, but it deserves no less attention or support from our province to help find a cure.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Gordie Howe

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I pay tribute to Gordie Howe, Mr. Hockey, also known as Mr. Elbows. His scoring prowess, his physical strength, his speed, his longevity and his ability to be ambidextrous were remarkable.

In the 1950s and 1960s, I grew up in Saskatoon, Gordie Howe's hometown. In his prime, in the top five in scoring for 20 straight seasons and 23 All-Star games, he was our idol. The size of his wrists and his strength were legendary. I remember playing golf in Waskesiu, where Gordie Howe had played. The stories of the lengths of his drives, and his ability to reach a very long par 5 hole with an iron on his second shot, were the stuff of local legend.

* (13:40)

As a rookie, his coach watched him fight. And he said, I know you can fight; now show me you can play hockey. He did. He led Detroit to first place in

the NHL for seven consecutive seasons and to four Stanley Cups, and the Houston Aeros to two Avro Cups, received the Harp Memorial Trophy as the NHL's most valuable player six times, the Art Ross Trophy as leading scorer six times and, at age 47, the WHA's Most Valuable Player award.

At age 24, he was the first NHL player to score more than 90 points. At age 40, he had 103 points; at 45, 100; at 47, 102. At age 49, it was only 96. For the regular season alone, Howe had 975 goals, ahead of Gretzky's 940.

Gordie was born in Floral, near Saskatoon. I passed through it often when it was still a town and there was still a sign on the highway, every time thinking of Gordie Howe, who went from newspaper shin pads to newspaper headlines and from clumsy, backward and awkward to being an iconic hockey giant. Today, both Floral and Gordie have passed on, but both will be remembered for years.

Gordie won't physically be at our Heritage Classic in Winnipeg this fall, but I'm sure he will be there in spirit.

On the Road Again

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): I want to thank you for allowing me to get up, and I want to thank Willie Nelson for the inspiration for today for my PMS.

Manitoba's on the road again. / Blue skies are here again for all my friends.

And we can't wait to get on the road again. / On the road again,

Poll numbers higher than they've ever been, / Winning seats that we may never lose again.

And I can't wait to get on the road again. / On the road again, / Big blue team rolling down the highway. / We're the best of friends, / Insisting that the world keeps turning our way.

Our way / Is on the road again. / Just can't wait to get on the road again. / Blue skies are here again for all my friends.

And I can't wait to get on the road again. / On the road again, / The big blue team's rolling down the highway. / And we're the best of friends, / Insisting that the world keeps turning our way.

And our way / Is on the road again. / Just can't wait to get on the road again. / Poll numbers higher than we've ever seen, / Winning seats that we may never lose again.

We're on the road again.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today Ms. Maria Nash, the goddaughter of the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine).

Also in the public gallery today we have with us Jennifer Fontaine and Kennedy Fontaine, who are the guests of the honourable member from Brandon East.

And on behalf of all members here, we'd like to welcome all of you here today in the Legislature.

* * *

Madam Speaker: Today we also bid farewell to another page, Adam Gislason. Adam is entering grade 12 next year at Oak Park High School. At this year's awards night, Adam was recognized with an award of academic excellence for having an overall average of 95 per cent. And I have to say, having been at that awards night, he looked pretty dapper.

Adam is very active in Air Cadets. He was awarded the glider scholarship and this summer will be able to get his glider's licence. He has won numerous awards from the cadet program, such as top cadet for the basic aviation course for western Canada as well as being a top musician. Adam is also able to compose as well as direct music. He is able to play any instrument after three hours of practice.

Adam's intention is to go to the Royal Military College and then enter the Air Force as a pilot.

And on behalf of all members here, we want to welcome you all the very best.

And while we did recognize Julia Antonyshyn last week, I would like to point out that her parents are in the gallery today, Kevin and Brenda Antonyshyn, and her grandmother, Verna Antonyshyn.

And I did give a brief bio last week, but if you'll indulge me because her parents are here, I would just like to add that today is her official last day and we would like to congratulate her on all of her achievements over her high school career, from serving as student council prime minister to co-chair of safe grad fundraising to valedictorian of her graduating class, Julia has been active in both her school and her community. She's received more than 30 academic awards during her time at

the University of Winnipeg Collegiate, the most prominent of being which was the medal for the highest standing in her grade for four consecutive years, culminating in a Governor General's medal at her graduation this spring. We also want to wish her all the best.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Also in the gallery today we have page Ceanray Harris-Read along with Sherina and Calesha Hams and with their parents Karen and Brian, who are visiting from Toronto.

And being a family day, we also have the children of the member for Morris (Mr. Martin), Jack, Kara and Tess, and we'd like to welcome them here in the Legislature today.

So on behalf of all of us here we'd like to welcome you all here and, as you can certainly see, there's very much family involvement in everything we do, whether it's family here or family that's able to come to visit us, so we appreciate everybody being here.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Madam Speaker: And now we'll proceed with oral questions.

Legislative Session Government Record

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, at the beginning of this session, we made it clear we would be a strong voice for everyday Manitobans, keeping this government accountable. To say that we've been busy is an understatement.

Day after day we have seen the contradictions and the inability of the Premier to come clean. Whether it's Costa Rica, being accountable for their budget cuts or defining what is a front-line worker, the Premier has refused to come clean.

Why has the Premier refused to level with everyday Manitobans?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I would like to say that I wish to congratulate the interim Leader of the Opposition on her performance of her duties in this first session. She has assumed a challenging role on behalf of her party of the official opposition and I think deserves to be congratulated on her efforts in this session.

I would also, Madam Speaker, like to offer, on behalf of all Manitobans, our condolences to the

people of Turkey for the tragedies that have befallen that country this week. This is an atrocious act by a vicious terrorist organization in ISIS. There are 41 people dead, 239 so far that we know of that are injured, some very, very seriously and critically. This is an opportunity, I think, for all of us to stand in solidarity with the peace-loving people of that country and to say that we offer them our condolences, our support, and we hope a full recovery to all who have been injured in that horrible act of terrorism.

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

Ms. Marcelino: On CPP reform, the sale of MTS, seniors' tax credits, the minimum wage, labour legislation, infrastructure, child care, the Premier has shown that his real agenda is his personal approach of cuts and support for his corporate friends.

Why won't the Premier admit that this is not the kind of change Manitobans wanted? Why won't he admit that he has already turned his back on everyday Manitobans?

* (13:50)

Mr. Pallister: Thank you to my colleague for the opportunity to say that this—that question is illustrative of the kind of specious, foundationless attacks that the NDP launched against the then-opposition party which became government, and Manitobans voted for change because they believe very strongly in the ideas that we laid out very clearly in the months and years prior to the last election.

I know that it's difficult for the members opposite to accept the verdict of the people of Manitoba, but it was a verdict that was clear. And the reality is that Manitobans this very weekend—in fact, tomorrow—will be celebrating living in the most beautiful and blessed country in the world, having the opportunity to grow together in freedom and to support one another in the pursuit of the—of a better life for themselves and their families. That is what we're dedicated to on this side of the House. That's what we'll continue to pursue with vigour.

Madam Speaker: The honourable interim Official Opposition Leader, on a supplementary question—final supplementary.

Ms. Marcelino: Manitobans voted for change. We accept that wholeheartedly, but Manitobans are realizing that that's not the change they had wanted.

Before my last question, Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank the Clerk's office, the pages we've had here and all of the staff of the Legislative Assembly, and tomorrow being Canada Day, happy Canada Day to everyone.

Madam Speaker, for members opposite, today is Christmas in June with nearly 40 per cent increase in their salaries while so many are left out, like the minimum-wage earners. And for those trying to do something as simple as completing their training, this government promises a program but secretly there's no program.

How is this an open and transparent government? We give the Premier one last chance to come clean with his answer.

Mr. Pallister: Well, I like—Madam Speaker, I would like to add our congratulations, certainly, to all members of this House and best wishes as they return to their constituencies to learn more from their constituents, the people who we are here to represent, and as they enjoy, hopefully, some time, well-earned time, with their family and with their friends over a beautiful Manitoba summer.

I also wanted to say a special congratulations to the many new members. I know this is a record number of new members in this House for decades in fact; in fact, I believe for over a century. And for all those new members, I hope that they found this first session of their new political endeavours to be rewarding and—though never always enjoyable—fruitful in what they had the chance to learn and what they had the chance to contribute through this session. I congratulate them on their choice of a career, and we will endeavour as best we can as a government to make sure it is an honourable career, not one which disrespects the truthful quality of the beautiful people of Manitoba.

Certainly, our endeavours, Madam Speaker, will continue as we move forward in the pursuit of an agenda for the betterment of Manitoba. They will not involve broken promises; they will involve kept promises.

Thank you.

Midwifery Program Funding for Program

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): The midwifery students of Manitoba want to continue with their program this fall, but the Minister of Education is failing to support the joint program.

The minister has tried to deflect responsibility by laying blame at the institutions and even, yesterday, at the students. But the bottom line is this: The minister gave his word that there would be a program this fall.

Will he do the right thing, put the funding on the table for the joint program between the University of Manitoba and the University College of the North and make sure that there is a program this fall, just like he promised?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): I appreciate the question.

I would like to put on record that we continue to work with post-secondary institutions to try and make sure that there is a program available for the students. But we also need to recognize that the former government, the NDP members sitting across the way, almost every one of them, had 10 years of management in this program of which they achieved a grand total of nine graduates, four of which ended up suing the institution, for a total of 8 and a half million dollars.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wishart: So if you want to talk about mismanagement issues, I think you should look to that group.

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

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, the minister can blame the NDP all he wants, but here are the facts.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Kinew: But here are the facts. When he took office, there was an accredited program with funding announced, with students ready to go into the next year. Now, as a result of his actions, he's got an accredited program with no funding and a funded program with no accreditation. Those are the results of his actions.

Will the minister admit that the program is not going ahead because of his mismanagement?

Mr. Wishart: I would certainly like to respond to that. We have worked very hard to make sure that there will be a program, and we continue to do that on behalf of the students, on behalf of the families of Manitoba. If the NDP—former NDP government had

worked half as hard as we are, we'd have a wonderful program at this point.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

The honourable member for Fort Rouge, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, today on the steps of the Legislature, hundreds of Manitobans came together to call for a midwifery program this fall. I'd like to table this petition of Manitobans who know how important it is to make this happen.

Two weeks ago, the minister promised these students a program. Then, the minister tried to muzzle these students and specifically asked them not to speak to the media. He then used his power as a threat, saying that the students speaking out might hurt their chances in the future.

Will the minister admit that he needs to stop playing the blame game and commit to funding the accredited—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Wishart: I want to make the facts really clear in this case: 10 years of NDP mismanagement on this program; nine graduates, four of which ended up suing the institution because of the poor quality; \$8 million.

This is what the previous government left to Manitobans, and this is the reason that we continue to struggle with this program. We are doing our best to try and rebuild a program in 10 weeks that they screwed up over 10 years.

Midwifery Program Funding for Program

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): This session, the PC government have made a string of decisions excluding women, while failing to protect critical policies ensuring women's equality and rights.

The Minister of Education has spent the last couple of weeks playing with the lives of midwifery students, culminating in pulling their funding securing their midwifery program, while shifting blame to the UCN, the U of M, to the NDP and to the students themselves, even going as far as to muzzle the students from speaking to the media.

Will the minister do what's right and immediately reverse his egregious decision and fund

the program with the UCN and U of M midwifery program?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): I would like, again, to put some facts on the record, something that this member seems to have a great deal of trouble recognizing.

Ten years of mismanagement in this program, 10 long years of mismanagement. There's a long history involved in that. Nine graduates, 8 and a half million dollars' worth of money spent. Do—does the member think that this is a good program?

We know that there's a need—we know that there's a need—for midwives here in Manitoba, and we will work to make sure that that happens. But I'm sure that their record is something that Manitobans should reflect upon.

* (14:00)

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

MMIWG Inquiry Government Position

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Throughout this session, I have been explicitly clear and have attempted to share, in the most respectful way, the gravity of the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls—[interjection]—which is not fun, and not funny to laugh at—and the very unique needs of MMIWG families so we can collectively move forward with the good work we've done, that Manitoba is nationally recognized for.

This government did not even once mention MMIWG in their Throne Speech, in their budget or in any of the ministers' mandate letters. And now we see they may or may not sign on to the national inquiry.

As we end this session, I remind this House again that we are literally talking about addressing the life and death—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I want to thank the member for the question, and it is a good one, and it's important that we indicate that we are very supportive of a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

We are in the process right now of finalizing the terms of reference. We had some clarifications that

we wanted in the original draft document that we got, and we're awaiting the clarification on those issues from Ottawa.

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

Child-Care Spaces Government Intention

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): This government's real values and priorities have become clearer during this session.

A Cabinet filled with men who refused to raise the minimum wage while topping up their own salaries have shown Manitoba single mothers who work full time and earn minimum wage that they're just not a priority.

The Minister of Families (Mr. Fielding) isn't worried about child care and hasn't planned anything other than chipping away at the list, four to six children at a time, with privatized child care.

Finally, the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) message to young women starting out in their careers while struggling with student debt is that they should, and I quote, just learn how to save better.

Will this government admit that by cutting midwives, hedging on MMIWG, ignoring child care, refusing to raise the minimum wage, they have actively worked—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Madam Speaker, I'm very proud to stand with our government, including the second female Attorney General in the province's history, the first female minister responsible for Indigenous Relations and a record number of female candidates.

Our government is standing up for women's issues, which is why, earlier on in my mandate, I met with the Women's Advisory Council, unlike members opposite, who failed to meet with this group for three years—in the last three years of their administration.

We're also going to provide stable funding for women's programs, unlike members opposite who reduced funding for women's programs by \$100,000 every year in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

We're standing up for—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Minimum Wage Earners Increase Request

Mr. Kevin Chief (Point Douglas): We know that minimum wage earners are more likely to be single parents, women and working full time. Young women like Shayna [*phonetic*] and her one-year-old son Joseph [*phonetic*], who's currently working a minimum-wage job right now, providing sport, rec and cultural activities for other low-income children in Winnipeg's North End.

Will this minister stand with single parents like Shayna [*phonetic*], who are working hard to make a better life for themselves and their families and who continue to give back in their neighbourhoods, and increase the minimum wage?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I do appreciate that question today.

This government, through Budget 2016, is standing up for Manitobans. We're standing up for Manitobans and giving them back more of their hard-earned tax money. We have increased the threshold in terms of which people start paying tax. This has allowed 2,200 Manitobans to come off the tax roll and not pay any taxes at all.

It's a step in the right direction. We have more work to do; we have 17 years to clean up. But we have more work to do, but this government is headed in the right direction.

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

Mr. Chief: All that low-income Manitobans are asking is to do for them what the members opposite did for themselves. They gave themselves a raise.

We know that it helps lift people out of poverty. We know that when you increase the minimum wage, it helps grow the economy because people spend more. I know the member from Thompson and the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), the member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry), ready all know—they all know low-income single mothers like Shayna [*phonetic*]. They should be proud of those low-income mothers working hard to make a better life for themselves and their families.

So I simply ask the minister: Will he stand with his own colleagues—single women—mothers—and increase the minimum wage?

Mr. Cullen: I do appreciate the member's comments.

Manitoba does have the fourth highest minimum tax—sorry, minimum wage across Canada. Certainly, we've had 17 years of tax increases under the previous government. This is a government that is changing that trend. We are going to be allowing more Manitobans to keep more money in their pockets and—with reducing the tax rates. We've increased the thresholds. We will be indexing that threshold to inflation. And we'll be continuing to increase that threshold as we move forward.

That's what Manitobans have asked us to do. We are delivering on those promises as well.

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

Mr. Chief: Madam Speaker, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Prince Edward Island—twice—have all decided to stand with single parents, have all decided to stand with women, have all decided to stand with families like Shayna [phonetic] and her one-year-old son named Joseph [phonetic]. They're—all have decided to increase the minimum wage.

If all of those governments can do it, why can't this one?

Mr. Cullen: I will indicate to the member that all of those provinces are also increasing their minimum thresholds. And this is very important to Manitobans.

We have some of the lowest places in terms of where we start paying taxes of any jurisdiction in Canada. We compare ourselves to Saskatchewan: \$5,000 difference in terms of where we start paying taxes. That's not right.

We're taking steps to change that, and we will continue to take steps to change that, and that's in the best interests of all Manitobans, especially low-income earners.

Seniors' Tax Credit Election Promise

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, during the election campaign, this Premier (Mr. Pallister) and all of his candidates knocked on the doors of Manitoba seniors, and they told them that their seniors' tax credit that they were counting on was not going to change.

We know, though, that once they had their votes, they went into their mailboxes, and they took that

cheque right out of there and took that tax credit away from seniors.

Why did this Premier say one thing to Manitoba seniors in the election and not keep his word on the Manitoba seniors' tax credit?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Well, in fact, Madam Speaker, we did knock on those doors during the election, and what senior after senior told us was that they were hurt by the NDP government who raised taxes on everything imaginable.

By raising the PST, they raised taxes on almost every consumable good. They put the PST on home insurance, where it had never been on before. They went, in 2011—and the former member for St. Boniface looked into a camera—he looked into a camera and he said, read my lips: I won't raise the PST. And what do they do after the election? They did exactly that.

Shame on this member for even raising this question.

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

Mr. Wiebe: You know, apparently, this minister wasn't listening on the doorstep during the campaign, and he certainly hasn't been listening when the seniors have come to this gallery. Seniors like Charlie have come to this place to tell him they feel deceived, to feel—to tell them that they are struggling to make ends meet. And they simply want this minister to listen and to come back to the table.

They are not interested in this minister and his fiscal narrative that their cut—they have to cut a certain amount of money just to meet the bottom line. The bottom line of seniors is what's important here, Madam Speaker.

Will this minister commit to seniors to bringing back the tax credit?

* (14:10)

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Madam Speaker, I know that my friend was here when hundreds of seniors stood in the front of the Legislature and demanded that the government reverse the decision to raise the PST and to keep their promise in 2011. I know that the member was here when hundreds of members were at committee—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Goertzen: –and demanded that the government not increase the PST. I know that the member was here, but I also know that the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), the former premier, didn't attend one of those rallies, didn't attend one of those committees. They didn't want to listen to seniors; we don't believe they want to listen to them now, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Wiebe: You know, Madam Speaker, I've given this Premier (Mr. Pallister) and this minister multiple chances through this legislative session to simply level with Manitoba seniors, to simply sit down and meet with seniors like Charlie to hear their concerns, to hear about the struggles, and to make sure that they can afford this province and for things to stay affordable here in this province.

The Premier walked right up to the mailboxes of seniors and he took that cheque right out of that mailbox. Will he simply come clean with Manitoba seniors and let them know that he deceived them?

Mr. Goertzen: I know that not every member of this House had the opportunity to sit in Estimates with me. I wish they would've because they would've heard the member for Concordia tell members of the committee that they'd put aside in a vault millions of dollars for seniors. That's what the member for Concordia said.

We've looked high and low for the vault. We wanted to find it. We wanted to find their combination. We couldn't find the vault. We couldn't find the combination. In fact, what we found was a \$1-billion deficit when we came to the government.

This is a member who is out of touch. We're looking for the vault. We're looking for the money. Maybe he can tell us where it is, Madam Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Feels like a Friday.

National Disaster Mitigation Program Inclusion of Wildland Fires

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, the Premier has on occasion asked for my help with ministers in Ottawa. Indeed, we have talked specifically about preventing wildfires from getting into our communities. In this context, I've talked and corresponded with Ralph Goodale in his

responsibility with regard to disaster management, federally.

I table a letter today in which Minister Goodale is wanting to work with the provinces to broaden the scope of the National Disaster Mitigation Program to include wildland fires.

I ask the Premier: Will he and his government support this initiative and be putting forward a proposal to protect Manitoba communities within the boreal forest region from wildfires?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, first of all Madam Speaker, I wanted to say thank you to my colleague for his endeavours in reaching out to his former colleagues in Ottawa.

I only wish that he had stood stronger for Manitobans in the 1990s when Ottawa was gutting the transfer support for health care to Manitobans. It was an extreme disappointment to all of us here in the Legislature at that time. Members of the then-opposition NDP were profoundly disappointed, as were the members of the government—of the Progressive Conservative government of the time—at the disappointing lack of support from the federal government at that critical time in the nation's history, not to mention in Manitoba history. And so, I am very pleased that the member is now reaching out to his former colleague Ralph Goodale.

In respect of his question as to protecting Manitobans against wildfires, I would also encourage him to reach out yet again to his colleagues in Ottawa to ensure that they restore the appropriate level of deductible so that provincial governments are not overburdened and their treasury is not overburdened at a time of flood or fire.

The federal government needs to step up to the plate. I am sure that the member would agree with me and would want to do his part in support of our efforts to make sure that that happens.

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

Diabetes Rates Reduction Plan

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, in addition to the issue of wildfires, the Minister of Health has asked that I call 1-800-Ottawa on behalf—on his behalf about addressing the diabetes epidemic in Manitoba. But the problem, in case of the diabetes epidemic, is that the Province has not yet even put forward a plan to address the diabetes

epidemic in order to ask the federal government for assistance with funding.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: The minister is known for asking others for a plan before finding funding. Now it is his turn to deliver on a plan.

When will the Province have its plan ready to address the diabetes epidemic so we can all push together on the federal government to help with the funding?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Well, Madam Speaker, certainly, myself and members within the Health Department are working every day to deal with issues around diabetes. We know that there is a particular concern in Manitoba, and we have people who, every day, are trying to address the concern, to ensure that people get the life-saving dialysis that they need.

But I would remind the member that there are many discussions already happening regarding funding in health care, and there's great concern about the future funding of health care from Ottawa. He may want to wait. He may want to wait a day; he may want to wait a week; he may want to wait a month to have those discussions with Ottawa. I would tell him he should have them today, Madam Speaker.

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

MMIWG Inquiry Children in CFS Care

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, the federal government is going ahead with a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. This clearly needs provincial co-operation. On Monday, as I pointed out, 84 per cent of missing women and men in Winnipeg are youth who are wards of CFS. With 80 per cent of the problem of missing people in Winnipeg being related to CFS and a high proportion of these being indigenous, it's essential that the inquiry look into why this is.

I ask the Premier (Mr. Pallister): Will the Province look into—be fully co-operating with the federal government to understand why so many

youth who are wards of CFS go missing, and what can be done to dramatically reduce this number?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I want to thank the member for the question.

As I indicated earlier, we are very much in support of a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. We are still in the process of finalizing the terms of reference with respect to the inquiry, and we are seeking areas of clarification. And that is where it stands right now, and we are continuing to have the dialogue across all the provinces in Canada, other provinces. Many of the other provinces have requested similar clarification as well, and so that's where it stands right now.

Trans-Pacific Partnership Government Support

Mr. Jeff Wharton (Gimli): Madam Speaker, the Trans-Pacific Partnership is an important trade agreement that would greatly benefit our province and country. I know this would have an enormous impact on my constituency of Gimli, with increased access to markets for our fishers and distillery.

Yesterday, President Obama endorsed the plan, while members opposite in this House continue to stand in the way of a historic international agreement.

Could the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade please inform this House on how the TTP is an important deal for all Manitobans?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I'd like to thank the member for Gimli for this important question.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership will be a huge benefit to Canada and Manitoba. Yesterday, President Obama in the House of Commons in Ottawa said the TPP would help us, and I quote, "to increase protections for workers and the environment, and promote human rights, including strong prohibitions against human trafficking and child labour." End quote.

Unfortunately, this NDP aren't supportive of the TPP and the \$250 million it would bring to the Manitoba economy in addition to the great effects mentioned by President Obama.

Madam Speaker, I call on the members opposite to support the Trans-Pacific Partnership, to support

Manitoba businesses and help fight human trafficking and child labour.

* (14:20)

Minimum Wage Earners Labour Management Review

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Manitobans are left wondering how the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and his Cabinet can give themselves very hefty salary increases while this government flatly refuses to raise the minimum wage this year.

Will the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade refer the question of the minimum wage to the Labour Management Review Committee and—for an opinion and then report back to this House on their opinion?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I appreciate this question, again.

And, certainly, we as this new government are supporting low-income Manitobans by allowing them to keep more of their hard-earned 'mondey'. We've had 17 years of tax increases year after year taking more money out of hard-working Manitobans' pockets. This is a government that has chosen a different path by allowing Manitobans to keep more of their hard-earned money.

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

Project Labour Agreements Rand Formula

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): When I brought up the free rider principle and the Rand formula regarding project labour agreements, the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Pedersen) told me that I was living in 1946 instead of addressing a principle that has contributed to labour peace in this country for 60 years.

Conservative Labour Minister Vic Toews, in 1995, said: I have no problem defending the Rand formula. The Rand formula, it's a historic compromise, and it in—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Lindsey: —fact does a good job speaking for workers' need for a collective voice.

If the Rand formula was good enough for Vic Toews, why is it not good enough for this Minister of Infrastructure?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I do appreciate the question.

Certainly, Vic Toews was a very strong representative for Manitoba, certainly a very strong minister of Justice and now a judge doing some great work for Manitobans and Canadians.

Certainly, we have taken the approach as this government to allow Manitobans to keep more money in their pockets. We think it's the right approach. Manitobans—we told Manitobans prior to the election this is the approach we were going to take. Manitobans agreed with us. On April 19th, they selected a new government.

We have more work to do, but we will promise to give Manitobans more of their hard-earned money back.

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

Bargaining Units Certification Change

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): The process for union certification the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade proposes in Bill 7 simply returns it to a method that was used for three short years in the 68-year history of The Labour Relations Act.

When the certification process was changed in 1992, then-Conservative Minister of Labour Darren Praznik justified it by saying: I accepted the argument made by labour representatives that where a significant number of people sign cards, there's sufficient enough representation or the will of the majority of that bargaining unit to certify.

If it was good enough for Darren Praznik, why is it not good enough for this minister?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Certainly, Mr. Praznik was a good representative [*inaudible*] Manitoba, as well.

Madam Speaker, we made a commitment on this very issue to Manitobans; 70 per cent of Manitobans agree with the premise that we've undertaken. We made it clear to Manitobans. They voted for us; we're delivering on that promise. We think it's a very important piece of legislation going forward.

I don't know why this opposition don't agree with a secret ballot. This is a basic premise of democracy, and we believe Bill 7 does not diminish protection for workers that have applied for certification.

It's the right thing to do. Manitobans want to do it. Why don't they get on board?

Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet Operational Timeline

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): The best way to include all Manitobans is to start with our youth, and bringing together ministers and deputy ministers responsible for justice, education, indigenous people, family services, early childhood education and immigration, among others, allows government to seek solutions and get better outcomes for children, our communities and taxpayers.

In Estimates, the Minister of Justice told me that Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet has not been continued and it was not her job to get it going.

Why has this minister not demanded the Premier and Cabinet get the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet into operation as required by Manitoba law?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): I am chair of the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet. We are in the process of reconstituting it and getting it back on track, trying to make it do the good work that Manitobans want.

We value children in Manitoba. There's lots of room for improvement in many ways, and we will deliver.

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

Aboriginal Issues Committee of Cabinet Operational Timeline

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Despite success in the last decade in reducing crime in Manitoba, we know that indigenous people are overrepresented in our justice system and, unfortunately, in our correctional facilities. The reasons are complex, and I think we can all agree they're not easy to resolve.

The Aboriginal Issues Committee of Cabinet brought together ministers and deputy ministers with different portfolios, including Justice, to work together to get better outcomes. I understand that the AICC has not been continued and, again, the Minister of Justice doesn't think it's her job to play a part and get it going.

Why has this minister not demanded the Premier and the Cabinet get the AICC into operation?

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I want to thank my colleague, the critic for Justice, for the question. I think it is a good one.

We do know that we've only been in office for a few weeks and certainly we have more things that we need to do, and we will continue to work on behalf of all Manitobans in these areas. And so, I look forward to working with my colleagues on this very important issue. We work as—together as a team, take down the silos to ensure that we work for what's in the best interest of all Manitobans.

LGBTTQ Manitobans Government Commitment

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, we know this Minister of Justice was given her priorities by the Premier, none of which actually involved improving public safety or advancing human rights.

The minister told me just weeks ago that despite her party's new-found and apparently fleeting interest in LGBTTQ issues, she had not even picked up the phone to tell her federal counterpart that her government supports the inclusion of gender identity in federal legislation. Until very recently, Manitoba led the country in advancing ideas for progressive and inclusionary laws.

When will this Minister of Justice put down her mandate letter and start demonstrating a commitment to include all Manitobans?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, congratulations on your first session as Speaker of this House. You've done an impeccable job.

We are a new government. We're very, very dedicated to the causes the member alludes to, and of course he alluded to the functionality of the committees of our House, something that is very important. It is important work that committees undertake in areas like representing the underrepresented, speaking up for the vulnerable, standing up for those who need our support. And it was unfortunate that the member was part of a historic rebellion to make those committees dysfunctional in the previous session and to take them out of production when it came to doing the great work that needed to be done.

We are reconvened now with a new government that will endeavour to make sure that those

committees function. The member himself was a significant contributor to the dysfunction of those very committees he raises today in the last weeks of the previous administration when he led a rebellion against the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), questioned his leadership and put his very party into jeopardy. So he should not now speak out of the other side of his mouth, speaking about how important these committees are when he himself took the functionality of those very committees and threw it away—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Bell's Purchase of MTS

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

The background of this petition is as follows:

Manitoba telephone system is currently a fourth cellular carrier used by Manitobans along with the big national three carriers: Telus, Rogers and Bell.

* (14:30)

In Toronto, with only the three big national companies controlling the market, the average five-gigabyte unlimited monthly cellular package is \$117 as compared to Winnipeg where MTS charges \$66 for the same package.

Losing MTS will mean less competition and will result in higher costs for all cellphone packages in the province.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to do all that is possible to prevent the Bell takeover of MTS and preserve a more competitive cellphone market so that cellular bills for Manitobans do not increase unnecessarily.

And this petition is signed by many fine Manitobans.

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

Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

(Continued)

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you please call the remainder of the main and capital supply procedure and, following that, the conclusion of that main and capital supply procedure, then call concurrence and third reading of Bills 3, 5, 11, 12 and 13.

Madam Speaker: For the information of the House, the business this afternoon will be the main and capital supply procedure and the third reading—concurrence and third reading of Bills 3, 5, 11, 12 and 13.

Concurrence Motion

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson), that this House concur in the report of the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence in all supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2017.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: As—I would just like to bring to everybody's attention, as we will be rising at the end of the—today until the fall, I encourage members to remove any personal items from their House desk and, should members wish to recycle any Hansard transcripts or other papers, please place them in the blue bins at the back of the Chamber. Thank you.

Supply Motions

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the member for Midland (Mr. Pedersen), that there be granted out of the Consolidated Fund for Capital Purposes the sum of \$3,283,753,000 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Friesen: I move, seconded by the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Cullen), that there be granted to Her Majesty for the public service of the Province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017, out of the Consolidated Fund the sum of \$13,276,317,000, as set out in part A, Operating Expenditure, and \$703,502,000, as set out in part B, Capital Investment, of the Estimates.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 12—The Appropriation Act, 2016

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson), that Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016, be now read a first time and be ordered for a second reading immediately.

Motion presented.

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

* (14:40)

SECOND READINGS

Bill 12—The Appropriation Act, 2016

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Indigenous and Municipal Relations, that Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016, be now read a second time and be referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion presented.

Mr. Friesen: As members are aware, this bill is intended to provide expenditure authority for the amounts shown in the Manitoba Estimates of Expenditure for 2016-2017. When Bill 12 reaches the committee stage, I can provide members with a section-by-section explanation. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Do members wish to ask questions of this bill?

Questions

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): Could the 'finance' minister—

Madam Speaker: Prior to proceeding, I would just indicate that a question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member in the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic or designate, subsequent question asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties, subsequent questions asked by each independent member, remaining questions asked by any opposition members. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Allum: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker, I think I understand all those rules, but we'll try to abide by them all the same.

Could the minister just elucidate on The Appropriation Act for us, describe what its intent and what its purpose is?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I thank the member for that question.

So, Bill 12, it provides a spending authority for the departments of government for the 2016-17 year. And it's in the same manner as it's set out inside the Estimates of Expenditure, which were tabled in the Legislature on the 31st day of May 2016.

So we'll be voting on these appropriations today later on, should our discussions go well.

Madam Speaker: Are there any further questions?

The time for the question—or as there are no further questions, are there any members wishing to debate the bill?

Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance, seconded by the honourable Minister of Indigenous and Municipal Relations (Ms. Clarke), that Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016, be now read a second time and be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 13—The Loan Act, 2016

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage, that Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016, be now read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

Motion presented.

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

SECOND READINGS

Bill 13—The Loan Act, 2016

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, that

Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016, be now read a second time and be referred to a Committee of the Whole.

Motion presented.

* (14:50)

Mr. Friesen: I'm pleased to introduce The Loan Act, 2016. This bill is intended to provide all new incremental borrowing authority required for the current fiscal year. It also provides for the advance and guarantee authority, which is required for non-budgetary capital programs for the fiscal year which began on April 1st, 2016. The loan act includes both the incremental and existing authority requirements for each of the non-budgetary capital expenditure programs including amounts required to cover existing commitments for expenditures to be made in subsequent fiscal years.

The amount of borrowing authority being requested is the amount required to fund the estimated non-budgetary capital programs and government's capital investment during the fiscal year. This borrowing authority will be used, and if necessary, supplemented in each annual loan act to reflect the incremental authority required in subsequent fiscal years.

When the bill reaches the committee stage, my colleagues and I can provide any necessary explanations for the information of members.

Questions

Madam Speaker: Do members wish to ask questions of this bill?

A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member in the following sequence: first question by the Official Opposition critic or designate, subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties, subsequent questions asked by each independent member, remaining questions asked by any opposition members. No question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): It's good to know the rules stay consistent from one to the next. That's good. You can't read those enough.

Can I ask the Finance Minister, in the schedule at the back of the act, there's new or additional authority given to many organizations, but in other instances, there is no new or additional authority. Why is that?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): In order to give the member an accurate answer, we're going to have Committee of the Whole in a few minutes here, and at that time, with staff here at the table with us, then we could perhaps give him a better explanation and a full explanation of the item that he's bringing a question on right now, so.

Mr. Allum: I respect the Finance Minister's non-answer there, but of course, we—in this question and answer session that this House has wisely developed, we're hopeful to get answers right away in respect to the questions we're asking.

The Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board, I see, has new or additional authority upwards of, looks like \$500 million. Could the minister tell us why that is?

Mr. Friesen: So, the member will remember that this bill basically permits the government to do the loans, but not just for the current year, but it also covers commitments for expenditures in other fiscal years. So, if he's referring to a variance between last year's and this year's, I want to have him recognize that it wouldn't be the exact same number in the book, and as projects progress and as the—Hydro has a more informed and more up-to-date view of its needs, then we loan in accordance with those requirements of Manitoba Hydro. And of course, on this issue, I would say again to him, happy to even have a greater discussion when we have the—when we have staff at the table.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I'd like to ask the Finance Minister a question regarding the loan act.

I notice that under Agriculture, the Agricultural Services Corporation has new and additional authority associated with it.

Can the minister explain what that is for?

Mr. Friesen: So the minister—or the member is asking a specific question about the difference between—*[interjection]* Yes—the difference between a new and additional authority and the existing authority. There's two columns there, so the member understands that we're loan—we loan for both under the capital program. We're loaning for new; we're loaning for existing.

There is an amount there that's under Agriculture—he's referring to the MASC, Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation, and so I'd be happy to provide a fuller explanation for him when we bring the staff members here to the table and we have Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Allum: This again goes back to my first question, but we have the Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority, Industrial Technology Centre, the Manitoba Film Loan Guarantee Program, Manitoba Opportunities Fund Limited, Manitoba Science and Technology Fund, Travel Manitoba, venture Manitoba—they do not have an increase in their authority.

Why is that, Madam Speaker?

Mr. Friesen: I would suggest to the member that in areas where he's not seeing a new or additional authority that's indicated for certain areas of expenditure, it would—I would suggest to him that it would signify that the existing authority is sufficient and no additional authority was requested for those amounts.

Mr. Allum: On page 1 of the bill, in section 2, Increase in government's borrowing authority, the authority of the government to borrow for purposes other than to refinance debt is increased by \$4 billion and more.

Could the minister tell us why that is?

Mr. Friesen: So the member is asking a question; is he asking how exactly that number was arrived at? I wonder if he's wondering as to how 4 billion and 50 million was the number that it came to.

I want to just again reassure him that when it comes to the loan act, so this is the amount of all authority that is needed to be borrowed for the current year, and that means required for the current fiscal year, but it's also providing advance and guarantee authority which is required for nonbudgetary capital programs. So it's doing both at one time. And this is the total number—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired—*[interjection]* The member's time has expired.

Mr. Allum: We know that the Pineland Forest Nursery provides an invaluable service to Manitoba. I note here that there is no new or additional authority.

Does—is that bad news for the Pineland Forest Nursery?

* (15:00)

Mr. Friesen: So I would suggest to the member that the short answer to his question is wherever he is seeing that there's not a new or additional authority that is listed there. What it signifies in this bill is that the existing authority is sufficient for the purposes of

that particular area of expenditure. So, certainly, he should not somehow interpret that as some kind of a change in direction or a policy change; it simply means that the existing authority is appropriate,

Mr. Maloway: Well, just following up on what the Finance Minister just—the answer he just gave to the member for Riverview, on page 4, we have the Health capital program and the existing authority is—of the new or additional authority is just minuscule compared to the existing authority. Can he explain why that would be?

Mr. Friesen: So, pertaining to Health, once again I would say to the member that in no way does it signify with those changes that are going on that there's some kind of ideological change; simply this is the existing authority and then there's a request made for additional authority—new and additional. That total amount he'll see follows to the right-hand side and totals down the page. And so I think you'll see that this is representing again that existing authority, which is the carryover, and then the new whatever adds on to that existing authority to arrive at that new total comprehensive number.

Mr. Allum: I note that the Public Schools Finance Board has newer additional authority for over \$111 million. Does that mean there'll be a new school in Brandon?

Mr. Friesen: These members understand that they've just completed an Estimates process and a concurrence process where they had ministers behind the desk for hours and hours at a time, and I would suggest to the member that if they didn't find the answers that were provided by those ministers in the areas of their responsibility to be satisfactory, why did they excuse those ministers from that process?

Mr. Allum: One of the reasons we're asking these questions is because we couldn't elicit the proper kind of answers that we wanted during the Estimates process or during concurrence.

With respect to the Public Schools Finance Board, again on the additional or new \$111 million, does that mean the government's committed to building child-care schools whenever a new school is built?

Mr. Friesen: Once again I think my answer to the member would be that the rules of this House are such that we have a robust process in the Estimates process whereby ministers answer for specific questions on their appropriations. I remind the members that these discussions have all been had;

for 100 hours, those ministers sat in the chair and they faced off against their critic and they provided information.

I challenge the member that somehow he's trying to go around that process but wants the answers here. We won't have the time in this process to provide that.

Mr. Allum: Well, Madam Speaker, this House wisely developed this procedure of 15 minutes to ask questions about the bill, and the Finance Minister is taking exception to legitimate questions of public interest that we're asking, and I'm sorry that it frustrates him. I'm sorry that it causes him some concern, but the truth is we're looking for specific information here.

So let me finally ask him in the little time I have left just: What plans does he have for the Public Schools Finance Board since there is significant new or additional authorities?

Mr. Friesen: So the member understands that, when it comes to Public Schools Finance Board, as with other areas of capital expenditure within government, there are projects that are at various stages of completion. They are at various stages of consideration. The member will understand, for some projects that are currently under construction, those are orders-in-council that would have been received and passed some time ago.

So the numbers that he sees in the page reflect existing appropriation and new authority, as well, in respect of new commitments for school construction.

Mr. Maloway: Following up on the last question to the minister: with that in mind, I would like to get some information on the Crown services—the Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries Corporation, about their new and additional authority.

It's not that—not very high, and I'd like him to explain what is happening with Liquor & Lotteries, because we were unable to get any coherent answers whatsoever from the minister when we spent hours and hours and hours in Estimates.

So would the minister like to answer the question now? Because the minister would not answer the questions.

Mr. Friesen: The minister responsible for Crown Services was in the chair answering questions in the Estimates process for hours and hours at a time. I think he was most recently there only two days ago.

The member's asking me to provide, in the context of a 30-second question, information that can't be properly contained there. He sees the existing authority—new authority and the totals in the right-hand side.

Madam Speaker: The time for the question period on this bill is over.

Is the House ready for the question? Oh, pardon me. Are there any members wishing to debate?

Debate

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): Of course, it's important that we put a few words on the record and—in relationship.

I think that we, on this side of the House, certainly understand what the loan act is, and—but it became clear during questions that we just asked the minister and he's not too sure about what the purpose is, and he actually came into the House unprepared with answers, searching wonderingly, looking for answers when it's our duty and our responsibility as an opposition to ask questions on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

These are big numbers that we're trying to just understand the direction of the government, and I have to say that it was an unsatisfactory series of answers that we got, and it reflects, Madam Speaker, the unsatisfactory series of answers we got during Estimates and during Concurrence.

My friends ask questions about several matters of very important—whether it's on Liquor & Lotteries, or whether it's on new schools, whether it's on health capital and in terms of expanding the services that Manitobans rely on. So we were looking for genuine answers to be provided by the minister today. I have to say, on behalf of my colleagues, we are disappointed with the answers that we got.

It's another example, in our view, of a government simply unprepared for the task of governing. They demonstrated it from week 1, and nothing seems to have changed throughout that. And that's a considerable disappointment to him—to us, and to Manitobans. As my—the interim leader for our party—who, by the way, has done a spectacular job in that role for us and on behalf of the people of Manitoba—she said in her opening question to the Premier (Mr. Pallister): This is not the change that Manitobans thought they were voting for. We expected open and transparent government. Instead, what we've got is a very large, very significant cloak

of secrecy around this government that has left us on the opposition side mystified by their reluctance to come clean with the people of Manitoba.

The opposition—our duty is to ask questions that are relevant and meaningful to the people of Manitoba. That's what we tried today, Madam Speaker. We kept pitching. Unfortunately, the Finance Minister struck out.

* (15:10)

Madam Speaker: Any further debate?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance, seconded by the honourable Minister of Health, that Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016, be now read a second time and be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Is it the pleasure of the House adopt the motion?
[Agreed]

Bill 11—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Indigenous and Municipal Relations, that Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016, be now read a second time and be referred to Committee of the Whole.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance and seconded by the honourable Minister of Health that Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016, be now read a second time and be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been advised of the bill, and the message has been tabled.

Mr. Friesen: It's my pleasure to introduce Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016, that implements the measures and amendments to tax and financial legislation announced in Manitoba's new government's first budget, Budget 2016. These measures set a new course for Manitoba, a course that will lead to lower taxes, better services and a stronger economy through the Income Tax Act.

This bill will include indexing personal income tax brackets and the basic personal amount. It will modify the Seniors' School Tax Rebate by carrying forward the 2015 limit of \$470, reducing the rebate by 2 per cent of net family income above \$40,000 and by providing the rebate by way of a refundable credit under the Income Tax Act.

This budget modifies the Green Energy Equipment Tax Credit by enabling the Minister of Finance to make regulations specifying the types of equipment that will qualify for the credit. It is modifying the Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit by eliminating the 24-month and \$500,000 per project labour expense limits from the existing 40 per cent credit, and adding a 35 per cent credit for a corporation that pays less than 25 per cent of its wages to Manitoba employees but pays wages of at least \$1 million each year to Manitoba employees working on eligible projects, and it extends the Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit by three years.

Bill 11 also includes amendments to The Retail Sales Tax Act, such as requiring sellers that hold inventory in Manitoba to register and collect and remit sales tax and providing an exemption for exhibits purchased by a museum or art gallery.

Bill 11 amends The Property Tax and Insulation Assistance Act to limit Seniors' School Tax Rebate under that act to 2015 and earlier years and correct a coming-into-force provision of BITSA from 2015.

Bill 11 amends The Health and Post Secondary Education Tax Levy Act to enable the director to provide tax relief for corporations that are sold from an associated group.

Bill 11 updates the dividend tax credit because of a change to the federal gross-up rate for taxable dividends while also updating references to the minister in the Paid Work Experience tax credit provisions and clarify the minister's power to delegate.

And Bill 11 amends The Tax Administration and Miscellaneous Taxes Act and The Tobacco Tax Act to ensure that rules prohibiting possession of unmarked tobacco also apply to those who arrange for others to bring in unmarked tobacco in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, a strong fiscal plan is the foundation for a healthy economy. Our goal is to make Manitoba the most improved province in the country. Therefore, I commend Bill 11 to members of this House representing, as it does, the steps we will take as Manitoba's new government to restore

fiscal discipline as we correct Manitoba's course and move our province back into balance.

Questions

Madam Speaker: Do members wish to ask questions on the bill?

A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member in the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic or designate, subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties, subsequent questions asked by each independent member, remaining questions asked by any opposition members, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): One of the great misdirections of the budget, and it's reflected in BITSA as well, is the minister's contention that he didn't raise taxes, but, in fact, he clearly did. He—will he concede now for the House that he raised taxes on seniors?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): Thank you for that question.

We're very proud of the Budget 2016 and the measures that it actually takes to reduce the costs of taxation to Manitobans. Two important measures in this respect are indexing tax brackets and raising the basic personal amount. Both of these measures serve to allow Manitobans to keep more of their hard-earned money. It was the NDP who was intent on raising taxes each and every year; this budget is designed to go in the opposite direction of that and provide real tax relief for Manitobans, not just now but into the future through indexation.

Mr. Allum: Of course, the minister's answer on Seniors' School Tax Rebate is unsatisfying, to say the least.

Would he agree that, in fact, for all of the changes that he made on the Seniors' School Tax Rebate, the net result was to simply increase taxes on seniors?

Mr. Friesen: The member and I have had these discussions in the Estimates process; we've had these discussions in question period. I'm happy to have these discussions again.

Our party was not elected in order to—in—with a mandate in order to keep NDP broken promises. There is no principled stance when a government, in its last dying breath, as a desperate measure, attempts

to solicit the vote of unsuspecting seniors by jacking up a credit to them by more than four times when they've got a \$1-billion deficit. It's not principled. We didn't do it.

We know that what seniors really want is access to health care; they want affordability, and working on those things for seniors in the province right now.

Mr. Allum: The difficult position that the Finance Minister has when it comes to the BITSA act and his contentions around seniors is that he—his leader, his Premier (Mr. Pallister), said quite clearly during the election campaign that they wouldn't touch the rebate. So why is it that he has reached into the mailboxes of seniors and taken out money that they much—they sorely need in order to stay in their homes? Why has he done that?

Mr. Friesen: Yes, Madam Speaker, and the member knows we've had these discussions at length. It was an unscrupulous way to proceed the way the NDP went about this business. A government that was low in the polls, facing the real probability of defeat in a provincial election and chose, as a desperate maneuver, to try to solicit the votes of seniors.

This government was not elected by Manitobans with a mandate to keep the broken promises of our predecessors. We have a mandate and we want to help keep—help Manitobans keep more of their hard-earned money, but what the member is not acknowledging is that the Seniors' School Tax Rebate is now making sure that those who need it the most are receiving it.

* (15:20)

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): You know, the minister should know, it was well demonstrated in the Legislature here that, in fact, the Seniors' School Tax Rebate on that issue, the current Attorney General's (Mrs. Stefanson) office sent a memo out—an email out indicating only four days, I believe, before the actual election on April 19th, that they would do—they would not take that tax rebate away from seniors. And only a month later, they're bringing in a budget here doing exactly what they promised not to do. How does he reconcile that inconsistency?

Mr. Friesen: We're proud to be maintaining the Seniors' School Tax Rebate at \$470 and applying an income test to make sure that those seniors who most need those measures will receive them. This member's not acknowledging that his own leader, the interim Leader of the Opposition, went out into the

hall on that budget day, and said that she agreed with the measures that we were bringing. She agreed with the income test. The member is not acknowledging that the vast majority—that the average rebate will be \$300, still, and that thousands and thousands of Manitobans will receive this.

Mr. Allum: The minister's contention here that he is being fair flies in the face of the very words spoken by the Attorney General (Mrs. Stefanson), now, who's responsible for upholding the laws of Manitoba. So it's a disturbing circumstance that he finds himself in, but why does he think that seniors with household incomes of 30, 40 thousand dollars, why do they think that they should be subject to the mean, very mean thing that he did to reach into their mailbox and take the cheque right out of it?

Mr. Friesen: You know, this is a quarrel that we can continue to have, but we took a principled stance and they did not. Their stance as a government that was desperately facing off against Manitobans who were dismayed at them having hiked the PST when they said they wouldn't do it—we took a different stance. We understood what they were doing; we just didn't agree that it was right. So that's why we've brought measures that really maintain that Seniors' School Tax Rebate for those who need it. At the same time, we know that the average rebate will be \$300 for those who are receiving it, and that is significant.

But what seniors really want is access to health care when they need it. We need personal-care-home beds. We need access to affordable ambulance rates. These are all things we are doing on behalf of seniors, all things they did not do.

Mr. Allum: These are really unsatisfying answers being provided by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), and he definitely has a different dictionary of—than we do when it comes to principled approaches to things. His leader said during the election campaign they wouldn't touch the seniors' rebate. The now-Attorney General said they wouldn't touch the rebate, and yet, at this very same time, the first thing—at the first blink of an eye, the Finance Minister did so.

There's also within BITSA—the Finance Minister has the ability to make regulations specifying the types of equipment that will qualify for the Green Energy Equipment Tax Credit. Can he tell us what he contemplates in those regulations?

Mr. Friesen: So the member is referring to that section of the BITSA that talks about

eligible manufacturers of green energy transmission equipment. And so, in this respect, basically, what we're saying is that the minister is going to be able to make the regulations specifying the types of equipment that will qualify for the credit. My officials have indicated to me that this is the most appropriate place to locate this responsibility and it will allow us to make changes or to make the kinds of adaptations that will ensure that the credit works as it was intended.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): The minister says the credit is for those who need it most will receive it. Our senior citizens are our elders and have built this country and are deserving of any rebate. Therefore, by his definition, all seniors—all seniors—should receive the full rebate. Why—what is the benefit to his government of not giving it to the seniors?

Mr. Friesen: Well, I thank the member for the question, but I don't agree with her premise that a senior should be eligible to receive any rebate. Then why not \$10,000? Why not \$20,000?

Certainly, the member must acknowledge the ability to pay. So she must acknowledge that a government that has \$1-billion deficit has to think hard about where it's going to put its dollars, that the dollars that government has are finite and that it must—and it must make difficult choices.

I would remind this member that many groups have already stood up in favour of the income test applied to the Seniors' School Tax Rebate. So she's questioning that—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): The question that I have is regarding the PST.

The plan has been to keep collecting it. Is that correct?

Mr. Friesen: The member is incorrect. He is in possession of our mandate letters as ministers that we have tabled and made public. He knows very well that there are a number of key areas of responsibility that have been charged to me as the Minister of Finance, and one of those is to accommodate the decrease of the PST, within the first mandate, from the 8 per cent reverting back to 7 per cent.

He knows the rationale for that. He knows how his government broke their fundamental promise to all Manitobans when they raised that tax. We will restore it to 7 per cent.

Mr. Marcelino: Thank you for the answer. I think I heard that they will continue collecting the PST.

It was intended for infrastructure, and there was a reporting requirement under the law that there should be a five-year report of—on the core infrastructure—the five-year core infrastructure plan. Are you getting rid of it?

Mr. Friesen: I agree with the member's suggestion that accountability matters when it comes to reporting on infrastructure commitments. And certainly the member can be assured that as we go forward as a government, not only will we be committing to, you know, record amounts of infrastructure investment, but that Manitobans will know where the money is going.

Not only are we committing to spending the money, but we're committing to a value-for-money approach that will ensure that it's good projects, worthy projects that are being studied and measured for maximum benefit for Manitobans; these are the ones that we will favour.

Mr. Marcelino: If that were true and correct, will the honourable minister then explain why the five-year core infrastructure plan, which is an indication of the outcomes, why is it being ditched or why is it being taken out of the law?

Mr. Friesen: This new government—this new PC government for the province of Manitoba is going to be setting, of course, our own agenda. We won't simply adopt every measure that the NDP had in place. We know that the NDP's legacy is one of broken promises and underspending, even in the area of infrastructure that he's now referencing—in most years—and then just pushing out additional amounts in an election year.

And anyone who knows how industry works knows that that's not a way to maximize our investment. It's a way to actually get less value for your money. So that's not an approach we will take.

Mr. Allum: BITSA does have a few amendments to The Health and Post Secondary Education Tax Levy Act.

Can the minister assure the House that in future he will not touch The Health and Post Secondary Education Tax Levy?

Mr. Friesen: So the member wants to know if there are specific taxes in the province of Manitoba that we will now commit to not ever touching? No, I would give him no such assurance.

* (15:30)

We've made a fundamental commitment to Manitobans, in one of the highest taxed jurisdictions in all of Canada, that we intend to move that tax down.

Now, we know that year after year, that NDP government always was raising taxes for Manitobans. The average family in Manitoba pays thousands of dollars more just in taxes than the same family living in Saskatchewan. It's not an approach that we favour.

We favour an approach of making sure that government can manage its finances, but that families have more income in their own households.

Mr. Allum: That's a remarkable answer that the minister just gave, because he took the whole affordability section right out of the budget papers so that we couldn't actually compare.

But we on this side of the House know the real truth about taxation in this province. And we know that who's imposing taxes is the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), and he's doing it on seniors.

The reason I asked about the health and education levy, Madam Speaker, is because during the election campaign the Liberals promised to decimate it.

I just want to get the same confirmation from the minister, that he won't do the same—

Madam Speaker: The time for the question period on this bill is over.

Are there any members wishing to debate the bill?

Debate

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): Madam Speaker, we asked a series of questions to the minister on what is called BITSA, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act for 2016, because we wanted to get more clarity from him. As usual, what we got is greater fog and more unclarity, if that's the appropriate word. But it speaks, quite frankly, to the kind of government that we've seen under the Conservatives.

The fact of the matter is that they campaigned on a certain way of doing things, on a—apparently on change, and yet it's quite clear to us on this side of the House that this is not the change that Manitobans were asking for. In fact, it's—quite

arguably, Manitobans were sold a bill of goods during the election campaign that is going to come back and haunt the Conservatives and haunt the Finance Minister, haunt the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and haunt the government over the next few years, because in fact of the matter is they haven't come—they didn't come clean with Manitobans during the election campaign. And in the first two months of this House and of this session, they didn't come clean with Manitobans on what their real agenda is.

Several matters were quite surprising to us, Madam Speaker, when it came to the Finance Minister's first budget. There was, in the first instance, a clear reversal on the seniors' tax rebate; that was quite astonishing. The Premier said, I'm not going to touch it. The Attorney General, now Attorney General (Mrs. Stefanson), during the campaign, types a message to a constituent and says, have faith, have trust, we're not going to touch it. And the first opportunity that the Finance Minister got, he did touch it.

And for seniors who were depending on that rebate, they were cheated of something that they fully expected to have. And that comes as a colossal disappointment, not only to them, because I don't think, in this case, for those seniors who voted Conservative, and my friend from Concordia was in touch with one senior who brought it to our attention, representing probably thousands of more seniors, who felt that they, quite properly felt, that they had cast a ballot for their local Conservative and then woke up the next day to find out that, in fact, the Finance Minister was taking something that they had depended on.

And for that, it's an example not only of an absence of openness and transparency, but, in fact, was a clear reversal from what the Conservatives had campaigned on during the course of the election.

And what we end up seeing, of course, is really the movement toward a Harper-style government here in Manitoba, something we are—we know for a fact that Manitobans are not prepared for, are not interested in. Federal election made that crystal clear, Madam Speaker, when several Manitoba Conservative MPs lost their jobs. They don't want Harper-style austerity here. They don't want Harper-style secrecy here.

And yet every time we've put questions to them of significant importance to the people of Manitoba, of profound public interest, they've consistently refused to answer questions that are significantly—of

great significance to the people of Manitoba. And that's not the kind of change that people were voting for. And, in fact, I've—I'm—I have no doubt that, not unlike the recent referendum in the UK, people are already having second thoughts about the ballots that they cast during the election, because what they've got was a promise on the one hand and then a failure to live up to those commitments on the other.

This budget doesn't provide—quite clearly, doesn't provide the necessary supports to families, not the necessary supports to seniors, obviously. They betrayed a sacred trust with seniors during that time. Certainly, have betrayed students; they were not mentioned in the budget, not mentioned in the Throne Speech.

But the most egregious betrayal that happened during the whole budget process was that we asked the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), we asked the Minister of Education to help us to understand the alleged \$122 million in savings he says he found, only to find out that it was \$108 million of cuts. And then, as we tried to move through what those actual cuts were, Madam Speaker, we—there was \$9 million in relation to education here in Manitoba. And we asked for a breakdown of what those cuts did. I, certainly, asked the Finance Minister, in Estimates, if he could explain that to the people of Manitoba. He refused to do so and, in fact, he redirected me to the Education Minister, even though he's the Finance Minister responsible for the finances of the Province of Manitoba, should know what the numbers mean, should know where he's making cuts, should know where he's having a devastating impact on Manitobans. And he wasn't able to do that, leaving us to wonder just exactly what they were cutting. And then we found out.

And we had a terrible example of that in the House, over the last couple of days, when we found out that a significant cut had been made to the partnership between UCN and the U of M on the midwifery program. Fourteen students enrolled, about to enter their second year—already enrolled in the program—14 students thrilled with the program—they spoke to each of the MLAs, on this side of the House, because we spoke to them—my sister from St. Johns, my brother from Fort Rouge taking a leading role in that, spoke to those midwives students in the program, said they were very, very pleased with the state of the program. And what happens? In the dark of night, under cover, anything but accountable, anything but transparent, that partnership was cut, and those 14 students, who were in the gallery of this

House today, were robbed of their future by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) and the Minister of Education.

My friend from Selkirk across the way says, oh, it was my fault. I didn't—my name's not on the two—2016 Budget; I didn't cut that program. And the member from Steinbach and the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living (Mr. Goertzen) should actually know that. He doesn't know which side of the House he's still on. He still thinks he's in opposition, and it's unfortunate that, when we have the opportunity to make a speech here and debate on the budget implementation act, the member from Steinbach, the now-Minister of Health doesn't know what his responsibilities are as a Minister of the Crown. And that's unfortunate.

The fact of the matter is that, on this side of the House, when we were in government, we created that partnership between UCN and the University of Manitoba that resulted in the intake of 14 students who are, now, hoping to go into their second year next year. And what happened, Madam Speaker, is that the Finance Minister, the Education Minister, and now abetted by the Minister of Health, came in and took the rug out from under them and took their future away.

That's not the kind of change that Manitobans voted for. He might be proud of it; it's clear the Minister of Health is quite proud of the actions that he's taken, in taking the future away—he, as Minister of Health he could have fought—he could have fought—for that funding. He could have fought for the future of midwifery in Manitoba. He could have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with those 14 brilliant young students today, who were in the gallery during question period. And, instead, he abandoned them. And he betrayed them. And so did the Minister of Finance, and so did the Minister of Education, and so did the Premier (Mr. Pallister).

* (15:40)

And one would expect, at a minimum, that the first woman Attorney General in the province of Manitoba would have stood with those midwife students, and would have made an effort to defend them and defend that program and saying, this is funding that should have happened.

And, instead, all of them abandoned those students. They betrayed those students and they robbed them of the future that many had sacrificed for. And that was, I think, maybe one of the lowest

moments that I've witnessed in my short time here as an MLA proudly representing the constituency of Fort Garry-Riverview.

And then we have the terrible example, Madam Speaker, one of the most disturbing contrasts ever in the history of Manitoba, when the Finance Minister looked across to those who make the least in our province, minimum wage, and said to them quite clearly, quite directly, you haven't earned a raise this year. We're not going to increase the minimum wage. And yet, at the same time, in that same budget, was a raise for himself, a raise for the Minister of Health, a raise for the Attorney General, a significant raise for the Premier, but for the chosen 12—and I'm sorry to say, not for the rest of those new members, keep making the same wage as the rest of us—*[interjection]*—no, no. Those left out of Cabinet, those who aspire to be in Cabinet, they didn't get a raise, but for the chosen 12, big fat raise for themselves, but the people who learn—earn the least in our province, what do they get? They got a shrug. They got a no. They got a message from the Minister of Finance that says you don't deserve to have a raise this year. We not interested in it.

In fact, what that reveals is that the only measures that will be taken by the government when it comes to enhancing the benefit and its economic circumstances of Manitobans, they'll only take it if it benefits themselves. Because what's true—tried and true about the Conservatives, it's never changed; the Tories with the same old stories, is that they're only interested in what serves themselves. And so you can say to the—you can look quite clearly with the minimum wage and say, no, we're not going to raise that. We're not going to continue a great tradition here in Manitoba to keep bumping up the minimum wage, to get it to a living wage, to give everybody an equal opportunity, to make sure there's sufficient resources in households all across Manitoba, and at the same time, take a big fat cheque for themselves, put it in their wallet, leave other Manitobans earning minimum wage high and dry.

So not only do we have the disturbing circumstances with the midwives students and pulling their future out from them, they've padded their own futures by giving themselves big fat raises, and yet, at the same time, said to those making minimum wage, you're out of luck. Sorry. I guess they're just going to have to wait for the new—NDP to come back into government, and we'll begin to raise that minimum wage again, and we'll start working toward a minimum wage. And I hear

members around me, my friends behind me, and I've come to enjoy their company quite a bit, notwithstanding some, but their company, I've quite enjoyed getting to know them and I think they're working hard on behalf of their constituents. They're saying, well, don't hold your breath; it won't happen any time soon. Classic example of the entitlement that already exists within a government within eight short weeks—eight short weeks—already feeling utterly entitled—utterly entitled.

And what is the classic example of that entitlement but raising your own salary but saying to everybody else, forget it, you're out of luck? It's a disturbing feature, Madam Speaker, of the Tory way of governing, that the only thing that matters is that what benefits themselves are the things they'll do, and if it doesn't benefit them, minimum wage being a classic example, you're out of luck. Forget about it.

Then we had the really remarkable circumstance, Madam Speaker, over the past couple of months, is the Finance Minister goes downstairs, going to make a big show out of his—out of the deficit. It was quite remarkable.

Of course, in his office, we know he said, what's a—sounds like a good round figure to take out to the people of Manitoba? They spitballed around a few numbers. One—somebody said, oh, why don't we try \$800 million? Somebody else said, \$900 million. And then somebody said, well, how about \$1 billion, and the Finance Minister said, that's great; figure out how I can pretend that there's a \$1-billion debt here in Manitoba. So he goes down into the theatre, he invites all the media to come and he says, guess what? I found a \$1-billion deficit. And they said, well, how did it get there? And he says, well, I don't know, I'm really not sure. And they said, well, give us the backgrounder and we'll study it. And he says, geez, madam, I don't have that either. I don't have the backgrounder; I don't have the information.

And so when—and then—and he goes from there. So we get into Estimates and we say, well, how did you get there? You know, how—it's a—you know, 250, 300 million more than our government had projected in the fiscal outlet—outlook, and we look at it, and the first thing you see is that half of that is money owed to the people of Manitoba from the federal government. And so I don't know if he understands the concept of deficit, Madam Speaker, but that's the money that you owe; not money owing to you, but money that you owe.

So right in half—cut that, his bloated deficit, in half right away because \$150 million of that was money owed to the people of Manitoba from the Government of Canada who are slow to make payment. And then you look closer at some of the other numbers in the—in his so-called increased deficit, his bloated deficit that turned out to be bogus deficit, but another was \$66 million that normally belongs in a summary budget except for the purposes of trying to enhance the deficit to get to that phony \$1-billion number. Let's just take it, for this time, out of the summary budget; we'll move it into the core side, make it look worse than it is.

So now we're at two thirds of his phony deficit. Half of it is money owed to the people of Manitoba from the Government of Canada, and others—and an accounting sleight of hand. How disappointing for a government that campaigned on being open and transparent and yet failed to do—failed to be so, when two thirds—two thirds—of his bogus increased deficit, in fact, was part money owed to the people of Manitoba by the Government of Canada, and part of it were accounting tricks. And we know that there are several more of those kinds of items in his so-called explanation, that came several days late, that accounts for it.

So, Madam Speaker, what we know for sure on this side of the House is that on April 18th, Manitoba had among the lowest unemployment rates in the country. We know that Manitoba led the country when it came to job creation and we know that we had the best projections for economic growth, going forward, in the country.

In fact, the financial circumstances, the financial foundation of this province was very strong, and in very short order, in only eight weeks, under a cloud of secrecy, under a cloak of secrecy, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) has put us already into a perilous situation on account of the fact that he hasn't been open, he hasn't been transparent. In fact, he's been anything but those things. He's tried to pretend that there's something else there when there isn't and tried to pretend—and it's a classic Conservative strategy, tactic, is to create a crisis that doesn't exist so you can do the kinds of things that benefit yourself but don't have any benefit for anybody else and the people of Manitoba. That's the formula that was at work during the Harper years, and that's the formula that the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister) is bringing it back to Manitoba. We don't want any part of it on this side of the House. We're going to battle it every step of the way.

And then we came—and then we got onto the \$122 million in alleged savings. And the minister holds a party for himself and he gets a hat for himself and he's going around and he says, I found \$122 million in savings. Turns out they were \$108 million in cuts—\$108 million in cuts—on the programs and services that the people of Manitoba are—depend on, he went ahead and cut them.

* (15:50)

So where does that leave us, Madam Speaker? It leaves us with a Finance Minister that has already betrayed the trust of the people of Manitoba. I talked about the \$9 million in cuts to schools and universities, part of which is on the midwifery program that we advocated so hard for, but working with the students on their behalf because they're the true advocates. They're the ones who want a future that they were robbed of by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), but then there's the \$35-million prevention fund that we had in place. Prevention. So important—so important to ensuring that we can keep kids in particular in a position where they're healthy, where there—where they're having opportunities, where they have the ability to engage in activities that will prevent—prevent them from undertaking other activities that doesn't lead to a productive life.

I hear the Minister of Health already—already has a problem with the \$35-million prevention fund. I bet you he was the first one to stand up and say oh, we don't need that. We don't need to prevent anything. In fact, we're not going to do anything, but we ought not to prevent anything either, and that's—that's very disappointing.

So, now we have cuts to education; we had cuts to prevention; we had new taxes imposed on seniors, and then we get to the infrastructure and find out that it's also being cut by \$48 million. It took the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Pedersen) all of eight weeks to cheese off the heavy construction industry so much so that they called him down for a meeting the other day, gave him a good spanking, and sent him on his way and told him to get his act together.

That was one of the most remarkable things. He gets up each time and he says I'm so proud of that meeting. Yes, he got slapped around a little while he was at the meeting, I'm sure; if that's what he's up to, that's fine. But there's no doubt that he went down to that meeting and took a beating from the heavy construction industry because he's cut the budget by \$50 million. It's putting the brakes on needed infrastructure renewal in this province, and

connected to that, and so important to that, Madam Speaker, is the jobs that come with it.

The heavy construction industry said quite clearly, jobs are in jeopardy. Jobs are not being filled. The work isn't happening. The \$50 million in cuts imposed by the Minister of Finance on his—Minister of Infrastructure—I showed real discipline there, Madam Speaker—has resulted not only in the slowdown of infrastructure projects; it's costing Manitobans jobs, and good jobs. Jobs that directly, in terms of building the roads, but there's the engineers and the planners and the environmental folks all involved in those kinds of programs that will also be losing their work.

We said, quite categorically, before the election, during the election, and we're saying it again now, people are going to lose their jobs in this province because of the budget put forward by the Minister of Finance that has resulted in significant cuts to education, cuts to prevention, and cuts to the Infrastructure budget that it's going to slow this province down, put the brakes on this province, and at the end of the day, leave Manitobans out in the cold. And that's unfortunate.

But you know what? It's us on this side of the House that have had to come clean on their agenda because the Minister of Finance won't come clean on his agenda, and the perfect example of that was that that there were no—absolutely no projections—multiple-year projections in the budget. That was bizarre, as one of my colleagues just said. It's unprecedented. It's unbelievable to not lay out a road map so people of Manitoba can see what you have in store for them, and it only leads—it only leads people to conclude that—

Madam Speaker: Order; order. I would just ask, there are several conversations going on here and they're quite loud, and it's making it difficult for me to hear—it's difficult for me to hear the debate, so I would ask members, if they're having conversations, to please take it to the loge so that we can respect the fact that there is somebody trying to put some comments on the record and we should be listening to those comments.

So, member for Fort Garry-Riverview.

Mr. Allum: It is true, Madam Speaker. As a minister's kid, my voice also tends to rise as the volume around me, so I will try to speak in a way that doesn't appear as though I'm going over volume, but we were just trying to make the point that there

was an absence of accountability and an absence of transparency in the budget because the Finance Minister, among the other things that he actually did try to be out there on, although they were hardly accountable or transparent, failed the transparency and accountability test because he didn't include multiple-year projections in the budget so we could get a sense of what he has in store for us in the years to come. And that only leads to people being very suspicious and unsure and a little afraid and frightened of what he might deliver in the years to come.

And so, I think on this side of the House, it's our obligation, when we stand up to ask questions in Estimates, to try to get answers from him and he didn't do it. Then we get into concurrence and we try to get answers from him—from ministers and we don't get them. And so we're left now in BITSA to only—during the BITSA debate to only surmise what might be in store for the people of Manitoba next when the other shoe drops. What kind of cuts, what kind of Harper-style austerity will the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) be delivering?

He—one thing we know for sure is that the first thing—one of the first things he did was to put out a tender for a secret audit, and he's going to say to the private sector, you know, why don't you come in here; this'll be stuff that probably have never encountered before or not experienced with. And because we don't really want to—we don't really know what we're doing ourselves, we're going to ask you to come up with a series of cuts that we can try to sell to the people of Manitoba. Except the problem is with all of that, that clearly written within the tender is that the recommendations of the private sector partner who'll be brought in to do the kind of dirty work that the Finance Minister has in mind, those recommendations will be kept secret. Nobody's going to know. Nobody's going to know what they are.

And then we had a series of bizarre answers coming when the questions put to the Finance Minister and to the Premier (Mr. Pallister) about just how transparent they are when they've got a secret audit going on, we get a series of multiple answers, a series of multiple answers, to the point where the Premier ultimately says, oh, you know what? None of it will be secret, 97 per cent of it will be open.

What? Huh? It says quite clearly in the tender the recommendations will be kept private and confidential. And let those be the bywords

of this government going forward. They're not for accountability and transparency; they're for confidentiality and privacy, not for release to the public. And so Manitobans unfortunately will be left in the dark in the future.

So, Madam Speaker, as we begin to think about the budget that was put together by the Finance Minister and, you know, I gave members opposite the opportunity to exercise the sovereignty of their new position as MLAs because it wasn't the budget that they campaigned on. It's not what they said at the doorstep nor is it what they heard on the doorstep when they were there.

I gave them the opportunity to stand against a budget that they clearly didn't campaign for, and when they—we came to vote on the budget, sadly, they chose to give in to the will of the Premier, they chose not to exercise their sovereignty of MLAs—*[interjection]* No, you couldn't have—they said, you know, they said—I'm hearing all around me oh, no, they did—they did.

But they know, they know deep down in their hearts that that was not the budget that they campaigned for, and every one of them who's looking over at me now knows that's not the budget they campaigned on. They can hardly believe that the Finance Minister, Mr. Financial Austerity himself, would blow through a deficit so quickly as he did, that he would reach into the mailboxes of seniors and take cheques right out of them, that he wouldn't raise the minimum wage, that he'd engage in a secret audit. This—none of these things he campaigned on, not the things you wanted, and now when they say they exercised their sovereignty as MLAs, they didn't do it. They genuflected to the Premier instead.

But they have another opportunity today. We'll give them one more chance. We're going to have to vote on this BITSA legislation, and you've got a chance now to exercise your sovereignty one last time. You have a one time to stand up to the Premier and to the Finance Minister who betrayed you on the campaign trail and say, I'm not going to take it anymore, I'm not going to put up with it, I'm an MLA, I can stand up for my constituents and I'm not going to get into the kind of business their bill of goods that was sold to us by the Finance Minister.

* (16:00)

So you now have the chance, one last chance in this session, sometime today, to do what's right on behalf of your constituents. Say: I'm going to stand

up for the people of Manitoba. I don't support that budget; I made a mistake in voting for it. But today—today—I'm standing up for my constituents, and I'm going to vote against BITSA, because it's the right thing to do for the people of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? Is the House ready for the question?

It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), seconded by the honourable Minister of Indigenous and Municipal Relations (Ms. Clarke), that Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016, be now read a second time and be referred to Committee of the Whole.

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

* * *

Madam Speaker: Prior to doing that, as the 100 hours allocated for consideration of the business of Supply has expired, there is no debate allowed on bills 12 and 13 in the Committee of the Whole. However, as the Finance Minister has indicated a willingness to discuss those bills in committee today, is there leave of the House to allow question and answers on bills 12 and 13 in the Committee of the Whole? *[Agreed]*

The House will now resolve into Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016; and Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016; and Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016 for concurrence and third reading.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Mr. Chairperson (Doyle Pivniuk): The Committee of the Whole will come to order to consider the following bills: Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016; Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016; and Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016.

During the consideration of these bills, the table of contents, the enacting clauses and the titles are postponed until other clauses have been considered in their proper order. If there is an agreement from the committee, due to the size and structure of Bill 11, I will call clauses in blocks that will conform to the parts of the bill with the understanding that we can pause at any point of—for questions. For bills 12

and 13, I will call clauses in blocks that conform to pages.

Is that agreed? *[Agreed]*

Bill 13—The Loan Act, 2016

Mr. Chairperson: The first bill of—for our consideration is Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016. In accordance to the rules of 76(3), as the 100 hours allotted for the consideration of Supply has expired, there will be no consideration—there should be no debate, but we—the House will actually have—the House has given leave debate to happen the bill in this committee.

I'll ask the Minister of Finance if he has opening statement? Okay, he does not.

Does the critic have opening statement?

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): No, thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, we'll continue.

Shall clauses 1 and 2 pass—*[interjection]* Questions?

Mr. Allum: We do have a series of questions. Is—this is the appropriate time to ask them?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, this is the appropriate time to do it.

Mr. Allum: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, and is it agreed with the Minister of Finance? *[Agreed]*

So we'll start with questionings.

Mr. Allum: We want to be as efficient as possible, but I do want to thank the staff for hustling over here and to help the Finance Minister out.

We see three point—almost—if I read this correctly, over \$3.2 billion in increased new or additional authorities for the Province. And so we were trying to just understand what some of these new or additional authorities were for.

So, for example, I believe my friend from Tyndall Park asked about the two point—no, I was—actually myself who asked about the \$2.5-billion new or additional authority to the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board.

We just wonder what was the purpose of that new or additional authority? For what purpose will it be used?

* (16:10)

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): So the member is talking about the Capital Authority inside the loan act and providing for the capital programs of Crown corporations and agencies, including tangible capital assets, working capital and other financial activities. So this is an incremental requirement that is funding Manitoba Hydro's capital program. So the loan amounts are incremental, so year over year as the utility is assessing its needs in respect of its existing authority and adding a new amount, in this case, that new amount would be specific to including but not exclusive to new generation and transmission, so think about Keeyask and the Bipole III transmission line as well as other major and base capital items and other cash flow requirements.

Mr. Allum: So, if I understood the Finance Minister properly, the first words out of his mouth were incremental, yet when I look at the new or additional authority, it's—it almost doubles. So I'm—hard to understand how that incremental is part of the equation when it's, in fact, more than double. Although I heard him say that this is for supporting projects like Keeyask, Bipole III, so I take it, then, that this is a commitment on the part of the government to continue with bipole and with the Hydro buildout that we had—that had happened under our government to provide clean, renewable energy for Manitobans and energy security for Manitobans for—to come. So is that what I understood, that this is a clear commitment on the part of the government to continue with Bipole III?

Mr. Friesen: So, first of all, the member's not correct that the new authority is doubling the amount. Like, it's—there's an existing authority amount of \$2 billion and then there's a new or additional authority of \$2.5 billion inside of the—inside of that particular line item for the Hydro-Electric Board. But the member understands that when a large capital project is undertaken inside of a utility, it's not like it writes all of its bills in one fiscal year, and I know he understands that. And so that is why always, in respect of the authority, that is debated and, hopefully, passed today, there is an analysis of what is the existing authority now and what will be needed to continue on the path. So, as I mentioned to him, there are incremental requirements that are necessary to continue to fund, to pay the bills, in essence, for Hydro.

The member should understand that in no way, shape or form are we suggesting that, you know, our government is planning to do infrastructure investment in exactly the manner and exactly the way that the previous NDP government did it. But he understands that right now, today, we're considering this bill, and right now there are amounts needed for generation and transmission activities that are taking place inside Hydro, and that this new and additional authority speaks to that as well as other cash-flow requirements.

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): I wanted to ask the minister and his staff: What are the rates of interest we're getting on borrowing, short term, long term? Can you give me an idea of what interest rates we're paying for the capital that we borrow and when we issue the bonds?

* (16:20)

Mr. Friesen: So the member's referring to the borrowing requirements for the Province for this year, which are found on page B6 in the budget. And—but in answer to his question, I'll indicate to him that right now a five-year bond is at about 1.6 per cent interest, and a 10-year bond at about 2.7 per cent interest.

Mr. Selinger: Yes, for long-term borrowing, say, 30 years, do you have a number?

Mr. Friesen: We are attempting, just right now with the department, to get that precise information for the member. So maybe what I'll do is I'll say that we will provide it here from the table if the information is forthcoming. Otherwise, we'll take it on advisement and provide it to you after this committee.

Mr. Selinger: Yes, I understood that there could be some placements for around 3 per cent for 30 years, and I just wanted to confirm if that's what the minister understood was possible, as well.

Mr. Friesen: You know, I can indicate to the member that—like I was saying to him, that the five year at 1.6 per cent and at the 10 year at 2.7, I can indicate to him that just a few weeks ago the 30 year was being offered at just over 3 per cent. So it looks like the rates right now are just a little bit higher, perhaps, than they were a few weeks ago.

But, if the information comes in just now, we'll provide it from the desk here. But certainly the member wouldn't be out of the ballpark suggesting around—it looks like it's a little higher than 3 per cent at a 30 year.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, thank you, member.

Mr. Allum: In the interest of our proceedings this afternoon, I think we'll thank the staff and thank the minister for this opportunity to ask some additional questions.

Mr. Chairperson: Clauses 1 and 2—pass; clauses 3 and 4—pass; clauses 5 through 7—pass; schedule—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

Bill 12—The Appropriation Act, 2016

Mr. Chairperson: Next bill for our consideration is Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016.

Has the House granted leave for questions and answers?

Does the minister have any opening statements?
The minister doesn't have any opening statements.

Does the critic have any opening statements?
The critic doesn't have any opening statements.

Are there any questions? There's no questions.

Clause 1—pass; clauses 2 through 5—pass; clauses 6 and 7—pass; schedule—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

Bill 11—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016

Mr. Chairperson: The last bill for our consideration is Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016.

Does the minister responsible for the—Bill 11 happen to have any opening statements?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I do not.

Mr. Chairperson: We thank you—for the minister.

Does the critic of the official opposition have any opening statements?

We thank the member.

Clauses 1 through 4—pass; clauses 5 through 17—pass; clauses 18 through 24—pass; clauses 25 through 30—pass; clauses 31 through 33—pass; clauses 34 and 35—pass; clause 36—pass; table of contents—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

That concludes the business before us.

Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

* (16:30)

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered the following: Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016; Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016; and Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016, and reports of the same without amendments.

I move, seconded by the honoured member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 13—The Loan Act, 2016

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Stefanson), that Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

It has been moved by the honourable Government House Leader and seconded by the minister of—honourable Minister of Justice, that Bill 13, The Loan Act, 2016, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Speaker: On division.

Mr. Goertzen: I move, seconded by the Minister of Education—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: I did indicate it was on division.

Sorry, the honourable Government House Leader.

Bill 12—The Appropriation Act, 2016

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I move, seconded by the Minister of Education, that Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? Oh—the honourable member for River Heights.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, I just have a few brief comments on the appropriation act before we wind up. I think there are some areas of concern that I would just like to mention.

I'm concerned for the midwifery students who seem to be caught in the middle of a dogfight here, and I would hope that somehow there's a way found that they can continue their program.

I'm concerned that the objectives of reducing wait times in child care, that the plan, to the extent that the government has produced it, it's not clear to me that those objectives are anywhere near going to be met.

I'm concerned that there's not a plan by the Minister of Health to address the diabetes epidemic or the issues of severe problems with dental cares.

Issues of child and family services are numerous, as we all know, but we have not really seen a constructive plan, even though we have the appropriations here. Addressing the issue of missing and murdered women is clearly critical, and this is clearly linked, now, to what happens in Child and Family Services, and, once again, there is not yet a plan.

I'm concerned about the lack of a plan presented in terms of flood prevention, storing water on the land. There's been some talk, but it's not at all clear how the government is going to meet the objective of no net loss of wetlands and making sure that we are prepared for both floods and droughts with a much better water management strategy.

I'm concerned that we haven't had an adequate strategy for economic growth. There's been a lot of talk about infrastructure but, really, there's a lot of other components. In terms of—and we've heard

about 'taxbots' but have a slow plan to balance the budget. We have no real evidence of any investments in science and research, which is critical if we're going to be ready for the future and develop the products and services for the future.

As far as our major lakes, Lake Winnipeg, Lake Winnipegosis and Lake Manitoba, I think it is good that we got moving forward on eco-certification. But, you know, to be—actually make sure that these lakes are doing well is a lot more than just that.

For First Nations communities, Lake St. Martin, Little Saskatchewan and Dauphin River, many are still evacuated. The plan for the outlet from Lake Manitoba to Lake St. Martin has been talked about, but it's not clear when that's going to be ready or when that will proceed and, clearly, one of the things that must happen is that if we're going to be putting more water in, we need to be make sure that the outflow from Lake St. Martin to Lake Winnipeg is adequate.

There are issues, which my colleague from Burrows has raised in terms of community justice and the Provincial Nominee Program, which badly need to be addressed, and we hope that this government can do better than they've shown so far.

And there's clearly many needs of people on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, as my colleague from Kewatinook has outlined and advocated so hard for. And that is an area where we would've expected much more, and we hope that next time we meet, there will be a better understanding of the needs and better readiness to address those.

So with those few words, Madam Speaker, thank you. I want to thank everyone for the session. I think, in a number of ways, it was productive, and I look forward to the fall session coming up.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Government House Leader, seconded by the honourable Minister of Education, that Bill 12, The Appropriation Act, 2016, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: Agreed—no?

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Speaker: On division.

Bill 11—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), that Bill 11, The Budget Implementation, Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: It is been moved by the honourable Government House Leader and seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance, that Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Act, 2016, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and now read for a third time and passed. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: No?

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Recorded Vote

An Honourable Member: Madam Speaker, I'd like to ask for a recorded vote.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been called, call in the members.

* (16:40)

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 11, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Act, 2016.

Division

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

Yeas

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Mickelfield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Pivniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith, Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Nays

Allum, Altemeyer, Chief, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Selinger, Swan, Wiebe.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 39, Nays 17.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Mr. Goertzen: Just for certainty, would you please call Bill 3 and 5, in that order?

Madam Speaker: We will now move to concurrence and third reading of Bill 3 and Bill 5.

It has been moved by the—are we doing?

Bill 3—The Mental Health Amendment Act

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eichler), that Bill 3, The Mental Health Amendment Act, reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

* (16:50)

Motion presented.

Mr. Goertzen: Just briefly, I know the bill has received debate and consideration both at second reading and at the committee stage. I want to thank the presenters who came to committee, who offered advice on the bill and also support generally. I appreciate the support of the members of the

oppositional—both opposition parties who have offered support to the bill.

I also recognize that there's a great deal of work that needs to happen after the bill is passed in terms of identifying the individuals who'll be designated within the bill to work with law enforcement in terms of providing different care for individuals taken under an order under The Mental Health Act, so I know that this bill is something that all members have offered their support to.

But there's also been advice from the public and from those who presented at committee. We will take that advice and involve those in the process that need to be involved in, in terms of drafting the regulations, and look forward to the bill being built up as the regulations are drafted and as individuals are designated.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): It's my pleasure to put just a few words on the record with regards to Bill 3 as well. And, as the minister alluded to, there were a number of fine Manitobans that took the time out of their busy schedules to come to the Legislature and put some words on the record and speak to this piece of legislation. Certainly, we heard a lot of support, and I think that's—it goes—that is definitely in line with the fact that this was a piece of legislation that has been here before, been before this Legislature before, and it's important now that it returns so that we can have full consideration of it.

But I also wanted to echo the minister in regards to the work that now needs to be done with regards to regulation. We certainly heard some very strong voices at the table at committee, you know, who are interested in seeing this legislation move forward but only with the proper consultation. Need to make sure that front-line workers have a seat at the table, that they are part of the process in terms of developing those regulations, and there also needs to be a process, we feel, to determine the levels of risk to ensure that staff have proper training to deal with any risks that might come up.

Ultimately, we need to ensure that it's not a burden to our already taxed front-line workers, and to, at the foremost, always ensure that safety is maintained. So we heard that loud and clear from the folks from Labour who came down and from other organizations, and we certainly feel that that's an important part of this. We hope that the minister takes those words seriously and undertakes this

process with the input from those important stakeholders, and we believe that we're on the right track, if that's done.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I wish to put a few words on the record as well.

From the committee the other night, the presenters that were there made it very clear that they want to be a part of drafting the regulations. They want to be consulted. They want to make sure that their concerns are heard and heard loud and clear. They want to make sure that this bill does what it's intended to do and doesn't just off-load the responsibility onto someone that isn't prepared, that doesn't have time, that doesn't have the training to meet the very serious requirements that are there.

So I really encourage the minister to take to heart the offer to be involved by the various union leaders that were there, that represent workers in the health-care sector, to make sure that their concerns are met. The devil is in the details, and we need to make sure we get the details right. Because finding out later on that you've missed something, that somebody is left in the lurch, is not the right way to go. So, again, I just want to make sure that the minister consults and consults properly with the right people to get the right answers to make the regulations support the bill and work properly.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): I, too, would like to put a few words on the record for Bill 3, The Mental Health Amendment Act.

I'd like to start by saying that I'm very pleased to take part in the First Session of this Legislature and the discussion on mental health. A discussion on mental health this early on leaves me with hope that positive changes to addressing mental health issues such as the one on Bill 3 will continue in great numbers during this government's term.

Mental health is a subject that Liberals have fully supported. And, as MLAs, our Liberal caucus will continue to use our voices to be a strong advocate for those suffering with mental illnesses.

Anything that factors our emotional, psychological and social well-being constitutes as mental health. Good mental health is critical and it directly affects our actions, our thoughts and our feelings. Our decision-making abilities, our social

interactions and our internal reactions are a result of our mental health.

I believe we have reached a point in Manitoba, Canada and internationally where we have recognized the need to address mental health issues as they are—health issues.

The number of individuals that suffer with mental health is becoming more known, hence why the stigma attached to individuals who suffer with mental health issues is decreasing. If you are in the percentage of people who are not affected by mental health, personally, I'm confident in saying that you likely know someone who is.

Detection of mental health at an early stage is crucial, as it can determine a person's future. It has been proven that, with treatment, individuals suffering with mental health issues can lead successful, fulfilled lives.

As Liberals, we understand that investing in treatment is crucial to today's—to truly addressing mental health and the problems that derive because of it, whether that be examples such as poverty or employment.

Wait-lists within the public health system is too—are too long. Manitoba has the lowest number of psychologists of any province in Canada. This, all the while we have the highest child apprehension rates in Canada, we have the highest homicide rate for eight years in a row now and we have declining education rankings across all subject areas.

During the election, the Liberals were strong advocates of the need to recognize mental health as a health issue. As one of our earlier commitments, we promised to invest \$20 million over four years in mental health services to train, recruit and retain psychologists in Manitoba. We believe that Manitobans who are suffering with mental health issues are not properly offered the services needed to treat their conditions.

This plan to invest in mental health was supported by the president of Manitoba Psychological Society, Dr. Andrea Piotrowski, who is quoted as saying: It is time that any Manitoban that wants to see a psychologist for an assessment or treatment can do so in reasonable amount of time without financial burden.

In talking specifically about The Mental Health Amendment Act, it is a step forward to enable a person who is not a peace officer to have the ability,

after being properly trained, of course, to remain with a patient who is involuntarily awaiting a medical examination or a psychiatric assessment.

I will reiterate it again that detection is key to addressing mental health issues and I am pleased that this bill would allow for the detection process to be made slightly easier.

There are aspects of this amendment that still need to be discussed. For example, I would like clarity on what sort of training will be necessary. There are many forms of training a person can receive, and that is why the definition for required training needs to be clarified, to ensure that Manitobans' well-being is not on the line when they are needing medical health services—mental health services.

Another aspect of this bill that is of great importance is to discuss the safety precautions of the bill. There are cases where doctors, nurses, other health professionals and patients are being physically harmed, all for being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

What will this bill do to ensure that the individuals accompanying patients have additional means of protection for themselves when they are awaiting for their examination or assessment?

In conclusion, we as Liberals support Bill 3. And, as I stated earlier, we are looking forward to seeing improvements and investments to our mental health services to ensure that Manitobans who are suffering with mental health are getting the help that they need.

In closing, I would also just like to say that it has been a pleasure getting to know and working with all of you in the House today and I'm looking forward to having a great summer and a happy Canada Day, as I hope you all do, too.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Madam Speaker, as the opposition Justice critic, it's a pleasure to put a few words on the record.

This bill, of course, comes out of requests by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities and certainly police officers themselves who often have to wait for an extended period of time with someone that they've brought in because of a mental health concern.

* (17:00)

The bill is permissive. It allows, where there is a designated person that has been properly trained, the police officers can then hand that person into the care. If it is somebody who there is a real concern, we expect the police officers will continue to do the work that they do.

From what was heard in second reading, and also it was heard at committee, I believe the Minister of Health is aware of the concerns. There will be regulations that have to be drafted, and we do expect those will be drafted in consultation with affected front-line workers and unions to make sure that the designation of the person is right and the training that's provided to those people will be right as well.

And we know those regulations must also consider the health and well-being of all parties involved to get the best possible result for Manitobans. We don't want police officers to be tied up unnecessarily. We want them back on the streets doing the best that they can do. We also want to make sure that health-care workers are safe.

At second reading, I did joke with the Health Minister that I would be just as reasonable with him on bringing this bill into effect as he was with me as a critic. In the spirit of the last day of the session, maybe I'll be even a little bit more reasonable. We look forward to this bill passing and our police officers being able to be as effective as they can, keeping us safe as Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I was grateful for the chance to attend the meeting on this bill recently. It was a great learning experience and there were legitimate concerns raised by the key stakeholders. When I heard the presenter state that about half of the nurses have experienced violence themselves, my mind quickly flashed to Jackie Healey. I mentioned her previously here in the House, and for those of you that don't recall her story, Jackie Healey was a 23-year-old student addictions worker, and on her last day of practicum at the Selkirk Behavioural Health Foundation she was violently attacked and beaten with a bat and pool balls.

When we speak of the training, many of you heard my struggles through media on the campaign trail. It was harder than you think. I had to deal with two separate cases of people calling me, talking about and thinking about committing suicide. I am

not trained for that, but I knew the worst thing that I could do at that moment was to stop talking to them.

Given the history of my people, I knew that it was real and I knew that I was the person trusted in that moment. We talked and we talked for hours. I don't remember what was said specifically, but I managed to talk them out of it. I am still working today to get them the resources they need.

As an indigenous woman, I don't feel safe when I'm in the vicinity of RCMPs or city officers, and this has been ingrained into me from as far back as I can remember. The numerous shared stories on social media of brutal attacks or outright neglect on indigenous women by authorities perpetuate my fear, so when we speak of the training required as well for the designated person, I urge that culturally sensitive training is a—as a vital component of that training.

It was quite a learning experience in the House thus far, and I—when I'm visiting Kewatinook this summer, sharing with them all my learnings and experiences here, I want to pass on the message that knowledge is key. And happy Canada Day to everyone here in the House.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 3, The Mental Health Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure to adopt the motion? [*Agreed*]

Bill 5—The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I move, seconded by the Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage, that Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, reported from the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): Madam Speaker, the francophone community is a key part of Manitoba's past, present and future. Bill 5 will recognize that clearly by enhancing services available to francophones, making the French language a more central part of Manitoba's governance and legally establishing a minister for francophone affairs.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank all the members of the francophone community who presented at committee the other night, showed their support for this bill, and I especially want to thank the leadership of Société franco-manitobaine and Daniel Boucher and Ms. Jacqueline Blay for their leadership and guidance and wisdom in the creation of this bill. And I appreciate the leadership from all the Francophone community and all the support from the members of this House for this bill.

Thank you.

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): Madame la Présidente, j'aimerais commencer par mon remerciement pour la ministre, pour son introduction de ce projet de loi ici dans la Législature.

Il y a longtemps qu'on a entendu une situation où on peut avoir un consensus dans la Législature, où tout le monde est sur la même page pour voter pour ce projet de loi. C'est un—quelque chose très important.

J'aimerais reconnaître toutes les organisations et leur chefs qui ont présenté au comité l'autre soirée, le lundi soirée—mardi soirée : Jacqueline Blay, de la Société franco-manitobaine et Daniel Boucher; Annie Bédard, Santé en français; Michèle Lécuyer-Hutton de Pluri-elles; Mathieu Allard avec l'Association des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba; Edmond Labossière, qui a travaillé dans le gouvernement pour les Affaires francophones, qui est maintenant le président du Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba; Justin Johnson pour son travail avec le Conseil jeunesse provincial; Ibrahima Diallo, l'ancien président de la Société franco-manitobaine, très impliqué dans la communauté — une personne, la première personne d'Afrique d'être le président de la Société; Madeleine Arbez de Francofonds; et Rénald Rémillard, comme un citoyen privé, mais aussi un avocat qui a fait beaucoup de cas dans le domaine des droits de la Francophonie; et aussi, Alphonse Lawson, un citoyen privé; et aussi Bernard Lesage de la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine; Gisèle Saurette-Roch du Réseau action femmes qui a montré son intérêt dans le projet depuis un long temps; et Paulette Carrière-Dupont de l'Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba, la première organisation pour les Métis dans la province; et André Doumbè pour l'organisation qui s'appelle African Communities of Manitoba, ACOMI.

Ils ont montré leur patience, leur persistance, leur leadership d'avoir ce projet de loi passé.

Le projet de loi numéro 5 a suivi l'histoire de la province du Manitoba. En 1890, la communauté a perdu le droit de s'exprimer en français. En 1915, les écoles confessionnelles étaient abolies dans la province du Manitoba, et avec ça, le droit d'enseigner en français. En 1978, Georges Forest a commencé la renaissance des droits linguistiques dans la province du Manitoba. Et dans les années 80, nous avons vu une énorme « chicane dans la cabane » dans la province du Manitoba, où la haine était un problème avec la communauté quand le gouvernement du jour — Pawley — a essayé d'avancer les droits linguistiques dans la province du Manitoba.

Mais aujourd'hui, nous avons une chance de faire la réconciliation, avec ce projet de loi. On habite dans un monde de violence. On habite dans un monde où il y a le terrorisme. On habite dans un monde où il y a même encore le génocide.

Translation

Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the minister for tabling this bill here in the Legislature.

We have been waiting for a long time for a situation in which we can have a consensus in the Legislature, where everyone is on the same page to vote for this bill. It is a—something very important.

I would like to acknowledge all the organizations and their leaders who presented to the committee the other evening, Monday evening—Tuesday evening: Jacqueline Blay, from the Société franco-manitobaine and Daniel Boucher; Annie Bédard, Santé en français; Michèle Lécuyer-Hutton from Pluri-elles; Mathieu Allard with the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities; Edmond Labossière, who worked with the government for Francophone Affairs, who is now the President of the Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities; Justin Johnson for his work with the Conseil jeunesse provincial; Ibrahima Diallo, the former chair of the Société franco-manitobaine, very involved in the community—a person, the first African person to be chair of the Société; Madeleine Arbez from Francofonds; and Rénald Rémillard, as a private citizen, but also a lawyer who has worked on many cases in the area of francophone rights; and also, Alphonse Lawson, a private citizen; as well as Bernard Lesage of the Division scolaire franco-

manitobaine; Gisèle Saurette-Roch with Réseau action femmes, who has shown her interest in the project for a long time; and Paulette Carrière-Dupont of the Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba, the first Metis organization in the province; and André Doumbè for the organization called African Communities of Manitoba, ACOMI.

They showed their patience, persistence and leadership in having this legislation passed.

Bill 5 traced the history of the province of Manitoba. In 1890, the community lost the right to express itself in French. In 1915, denominational schools were abolished in the province of Manitoba, and with that, the right to teach in French. In 1978, Georges Forest launched a renaissance of language rights in the province of Manitoba. And in the eighties, we had a major conflict in the province of Manitoba, during which hatred was a problem in the community when the government of the day—the Pawley government—tried to advance language rights in the province of Manitoba.

However, today, we have an opportunity for reconciliation with this bill. We live in a violent world. We live in a world in which there is terrorism. We live in a world in which there is even genocide.

English

Genocide's occurring with the Yazidi people.

Donc, quand nous avons la chance dans la province d'avoir l'opportunité d'amener tout le monde ensemble, d'appuyer les droits minoritaires, on doit le faire.

Merci beaucoup.

Translation

So when we have the chance in the province to have the opportunity to bring people together, to support minority rights, we must do so.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madame la Présidente, premièrement je voudrais dire merci à tous les gens qui ont fait les présentations.

Translation

Madam Speaker, first of all I would like to thank all the people who made presentations.

English

It's a sign of a healthy democracy when we have as many people coming out and presenting at committee, as we did on this legislation, and I think it's a sign of a healthy province when we have all parties in support of this legislation and in support of this effort at reconciliation and making amends for the past and setting the way for the future.

* (17:10)

Je voudrais dire juste quelques mots qui sont présentés : notre statut n'enlève rien de la langue anglaise. Il ne fait qu'ajouter le français dans une perspective où le bilinguisme représente une valeur ajoutée. À l'heure de la mondialisation, le bilinguisme et les affaires représentent une opportunité économique importante pour les communautés francophones et, en effet – je veux ajouter – pour toute notre province.

Le rêve de Louis Riel – d'un Manitoba bilingue inclusif – me semble toujours vivant. Ce nouveau visage de la francophonie présent dans cette loi 5 nous correspond bien.

La loi 5 affecte beaucoup les femmes et les familles. Nous savons que la transmission de la langue maternelle est encore la majeure responsabilité de la maman. Afin d'appuyer ces efforts, nous avons besoin des appuis d'organismes francophones tels que les centres préscolaires. Quand l'état répond aux besoins des femmes et de leurs familles, toute la population ressent les effets bénéfiques.

Translation

I would just like to say a few words that were presented: our status does not take anything away from the English language. From the perspective in which bilingualism represents value added, all it does is add French. At a time of globalisation, bilingualism and business represent a major economic opportunity for the francophone communities and, indeed—I want to add—for our entire province.

Louis Riel's dream—of an inclusive, bilingual Manitoba—is still alive, it seems to me. This new face of the francophone community present in this Bill 5 reflects us well.

Bill 5 greatly affects women and families. We know that the task of passing on the mother tongue still falls mainly to the mom. To support this effort, we need support from francophone organizations such

as the preschool centres. When the state meets the needs of women and their families, the population as a whole experiences the benefits.

English

This is a positive step, and it is a good one to end the session on.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you all.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 5, The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act.

Is it the pleasure to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): That's great. A great introduction.

On House business, Madam Speaker.

I want to do as tradition for House leaders, as—as the session ends, I want to thank a few people. In particular, Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for the work that you've done in your new position. I think there are many of us, maybe almost all of us, who felt a little uncomfortable coming back into the Legislature. We all had new roles, and I think all of us wondered how it would go. You've done a magnificent job, and I know it's only going to get better as the sessions go, and congratulations to you and to all of your staff.

I also want to commend everyone who works in the Legislature and helped each of us in new positions, but also all of the new MLAs. And I think is a remarkable time after an election when new MLAs come into the Assembly, the number and the amount of work that needs to be done at a given time, whether that's Members' Allowances doing training or training happening on the procedure of the House, or just instructing us where to go from time to time. Each of the staff did a tremendous job.

As always, the clerks and the table officers helped us again tremendously as MLAs, but also helped draft and get us through into another

sessional agreement. I think that the era of sessional agreements may be coming to an end. I hope they are coming to an end in this form as we move into the new rules in November, but once again you managed to get us through a difficult period, as it often is, and thank you for working that long weekend when I know you would rather not have been working.

To the two House leaders, the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) and the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), it was a pleasure to—well, it was mostly a pleasure, not always a pleasure. There were sometimes it wasn't quite a pleasure, but generally it was a pleasure to work again with both of you—*[interjection]* Well, I know, the Free Press reports. And we won't negotiate in the Free Press anymore. But I appreciate the discussions that we had and we were able to, I think, come up with a sessional agreement that works for all parties and that measures the balance for everyone.

I wish everyone a great break. I was told when I got elected into office 13 years ago that long after your constituents forget you were ever an MLA and long after the media ever forget that you were elected, your family will cherish the fact that you were a good mother, a good father, a good son or a good daughter. So I hope that each of you have time to spend with your family during this break and that you return safely to us in October.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Official Opposition House Leader): I wonder if there would be a will of the House to revert back to Bill 5, because we would like to make certain that there's—the record shows that the vote was unanimous.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to revert back to Bill 5? Oh, to revert back? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Maloway: I thank the members for that, and I'd like to also thank all the members of the legislative staff, the Speaker, the Clerk's office, Hansard, pages and, in fact, all the members of the Legislature here. This has been, in my opinion, after my 30th year here, and I have to say I've enjoyed this session more than any of the others, and I think people have been very, very, very co-operative, and people have been very co-operative.

You know, in the old days there was acrimony in the Legislature on almost every front, and I say in the far past. In fact, in the 1980s Public Accounts didn't really function at all, you know, with members on both sides fighting with one another.

You know, the new rule changes that have occurred over the years have been a progression more towards the House of Commons model and we see now we've gone through this entire session without a single point of order or a matter of privilege, only except for one, but a good one. But you would've never seen that, you know, 20 years ago.

So we are on the right track and we are operating on a very, very co-operative basis, and I think the members—the House Leader—Government House Leader knows exactly what I'm talking about when I say that there's been really no acrimony on—among any of the participants in this process—*[interjection]*

Thank you very much, look forward to seeing you all in the fall.

Madam Speaker: Just so the record's clear, is there—are we willing to show unanimous support that Bill 5 was passed unanimously? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: I just want to echo the comments of the other House leaders and wish everyone a good summer.

Madam Speaker: And I would just like to put a few comments on the record, as well, just to indicate that I have been very honoured to be in this role. And I would like to thank you all for your patience as I am learning a new role. There—I don't know that there is a role as humbling as this one where you can, you know, come up here and get to make mistakes in front of everybody and be forgiven and supported and shown a great deal of patience. So I thank all of you for that.

And I do want to thank everybody for the efforts that have been made in this sitting to try our very best to improve decorum and show respect for each other. I do think we've come a long way. We may have a ways to go yet, but I think there was some really good effort and we do have a rare opportunity at this time to make a big difference in how our Chamber functions.

So, to all of you, because I know that you're all part of this, I do want to thank all of you because I think this is showing that we are moving in certainly the right direction and for the right reasons.

We do have amazing Assembly staff and I have to say that probably, you know, until I was in this role I never recognized how valuable and how amazing and intelligent and just unique amount of

knowledge that they bring to this job. It really is quite different, and we are very well served in this Assembly by all of the Assembly staff that we have here.

So I am very glad to hear all of you acknowledge that, too, and I do want to publicly acknowledge it as well. And there's many of them behind the scenes you don't always get to see either, and it does take everyone to make this House function as well as it does.

* (17:20)

And I just want to end by saying that the—a lot of the speeches in this sitting were some of the best I've ever heard, and they were, you know, very, very personal, many were very emotional, many people laid out, you know, a lot of struggles, and it elevated the whole tenor of what being an MLA is about. And I would just urge everybody to remember those speeches and remember why you came here and that we do have an opportunity for making a good difference for our province, no matter what side of this House we sit on, because everybody can make a difference, no matter whether you're government or opposition.

And I think those speeches that were given—and especially by our new members who—and we have a lot of them—who really gave it their all in their speeches. I think this has set the tone for a great Legislature in the next coming years, and I, too, would like to wish everybody a wonderful summer, a safe summer, and we look forward to seeing you in the fall. And I hope everybody enjoys Canada Day, recognizing that next year Canada's turning 150. And that will be a great time.

So now we are going to prepare the House for royal assent.

ROYAL ASSENT

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

Her Honour Janice C. Filmon, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the throne, Madam Speaker addressed Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor in the following words:

Madam Speaker: Your Honour:

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

Clerk Assistant (Mr. Claude Michaud):

Bill 3 – The Mental Health Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale

Bill 5 – The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act; Loi sur l'appui à l'épanouissement de la francophonie manitobaine

Bill 11 – The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2016; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2016 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité

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

Madam Speaker: Your Honour:

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba asks Your Honour to accept the following bills.

Clerk Assistant (Mr. Claude Michaud):

Bill 12 – The Appropriation Act, 2016; Loi de 2016 portant affectation de crédits

Bill 13 – The Loan Act, 2016; Loi d'emprunt de 2016

Clerk: In Her Majesty's name, the Lieutenant Governor thanks the Assembly and assents to these bills.

Her Honour was then pleased to retire.

God Save the Queen was sung.

O Canada was sung.

Madam Speaker: In accordance with our rules, the House being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until October 3rd, or the call of the Speaker.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 30, 2016

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